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Indian Cricket Team is On to The Next One

By Harrish Thirukumaran

On July 2, 2019, India beat Bangladesh by 28 runs to advance into the semi finals of the 2019 Cricket World Cup in England and Wales. The final score was 314/9 to 286. This victory came about thanks to Rohit Sharma, who turned in a century set-up a total in excess of 300 and a facile win. Sharma was named Player of the Match.

Regarding the honour, he said, "I had a great feeling right at the start. The pitch was good to bat on, a used pitch. Initially wanted to take some time, assess, and see where we go from there. This World Cup, the first game against South Africa the conditions were challenging, last time against England too, the pitch wasn't coming onto the bat as I would have liked and they used the conditions well. Batting first, there's no scoreboard conditions so we wanted to come out and be positive."

Following the match, Virat Kohli, India skipper, had the opportunity to meet Charulata Patel. The 87-year old woman is considered a superfan known for her passionate and viral support for the Indian cricket



One of #TeamIndia's passionate fans, Charulata Patel ji all smiles as she blesses Virat Kohli for the remainder of the tournament. - pic via Team India Facebook page

team.

Kohli said on Twitter "She's 87 and probably one of the most passionate and dedicated fans I've ever seen. Age is just a number, passion takes you leaps & bounds. With her blessings on to the next one."

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Details on pages 24 & 25



Poor water management exacerbates drought the City of Chennai currently experiencing

By Harrish Thirukumaran

The city of Chennai in Tamil Nadu, also known as "India's Detroit" for being an auto manufacturing hub, has been experiencing a drought. While it received rainfall in early July, it lasted only for 30 minutes, it caused some floods and stalled traffic. Floods are typical in Chennai along with water scarcity, but they simultaneously speak to the larger issue of poor water management and infrastructure in India's sixth largest city.

Bangarampettai, a small village 30 kilometres from Chennai, had around 150 people who "captured" a water tanker, breaking its windscreen and deflating its tires before handing it over to a police station nearby. Accordingly, people living on the outskirts of Chennai are blocking roads and attacking tanker lorries due to fears their water reserves are being sac-

rificed so city dwellers, businesses, and luxury hotels don't run out.

Some, including residents like G. Yogesh, have resorted to contacting private tankers to get water once wait times for water delivered by the government grew. It is six times the price of government-run trucks at \$10. A lack of political will and public ignorance is what Yogesh blames for the scarcity of water in the area.

This poor water management seems to be due partly to economic aspirations of the city. Writer, Nityanand Jayaraman, notes the drive to be an economic hub in information technology and auto manufacturing has caused pressure on scant resources that has neglected the region's water infrastructure.

The Government of Tamil Nadu needs to reassess its values regarding how it treats water and land,

asserts Jayaraman, along with promoting policies that promote more land-friendly economies in the state's hinterland. From there, governments can make it easier for people to migrate out of the city in a feasible manner.



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Premier's Council on Improving Healthcare and Ending Hallway Medicine Releases Second Report

Report Provides Recommendations on Building a Sustainable Health Care System

June 25, 2019 8:00 A.M.

Premier's Council on Improving Healthcare

TORONTO -The Premier's Council on Improving Healthcare and Ending Hallway Medicine today released its second report, providing advice on how to build a modern, sustainable and integrated health care system and solve the problem of hallway medicine.

"The Council is encouraged by the government's vision and progress being made to build a connected and sustainable public health care system in Ontario," said Special Advisor and Chair of the Council Dr. Rueben Devlin. "By speaking with Ontarians from across the province, the Council has heard support and enthusiasm for meaningful change in health care."

Developed in consultation with more than 1,500 health care providers, patients and caregivers, the Council's report - A Healthy Ontario: Building a Sustainable Health Care System - provides advice and makes key recommendations focused on:

- Integration - Putting patients at the centre of all interactions within the health care system, making it easier to access and navigate the system while providing better digital access to personal health information.
- Innovation - Improving options for health care delivery with more virtual care options, modernizing the home care sector and providing a more flexible mix of health care and community supports.
- Efficiency and Alignment - Strengthening partnerships between health and social services and providing open and transparent data to improve health outcomes.
- Capacity - Addressing wait times for specialist and community care by maximizing existing assets and skills, making strategic investments in health



care, designing financial incentives to promote better health outcomes for patients and populations and championing collaborative and interprofessional leadership.

The Council will provide advice on the development of Ontario Health Teams and the Ontario Health agency, which are key components of the government's plan to modernize and integrate health care. Future reports from the Council will focus on the progress being made in delivering better health care services and recommendations on long-term planning for the health care system.

"Health care should be organized around each patient's individual needs," said Dr. Devlin. "Health providers must work collaboratively, and services should be more readily available and accessible within our communities. These are the changes that matter to Ontarians and this is what the health care system of the future should look like."

Ontarians can provide feedback on this report by visiting the following website or email address:

- Website
- Email

Via ontario.ca

Ontario Helping Protect Communities from Disasters

New pilot program will help build infrastructure that can withstand extreme weather

June 27, 2019 8:00 A.M.

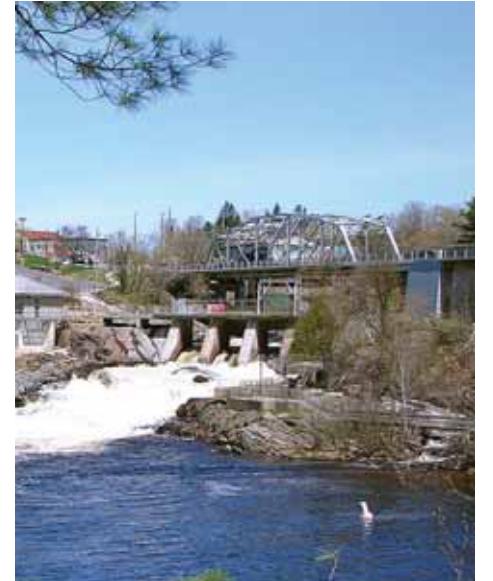
BRACEBRIDGE — The Ontario Government is putting people first by ensuring communities across the province are protected from future extreme weather damage by funding a new pilot program.

The Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance (MDRA) program provides financial assistance to eligible communities that face extraordinary emergency response and repair costs after a natural disaster.

"This spring we saw the devastating effect of flooding in many Ontario communities," said Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "We want to help municipalities build back better - to flood damaged roads, bridges and other infrastructure to a higher standard, so it can better withstand extreme weather and we know that some municipalities have limited financial resources to improve local infrastructure. By not having to rebuild the same washed-out road or bridge again and again, communities will save money over the long-term."

As part of a \$1 million pilot project, the province will provide municipalities that qualify for MDRA funding with up to 15 per cent above the estimated cost of rebuilding damaged public infrastructure to make it more resilient to extreme weather. Examples could include raising roads to provide better overland flow of water, improving the columns or footings of bridges, or increasing the size of ditches and catch basins to increase their capacity to hold water. Communities that were affected by spring flooding that occurred after March 1, 2019 are eligible for the enhanced funding under the pilot.

Investments that help reduce the risk of repeated damage due to extreme weather can save municipalities, small businesses and homeowners time and money, and keep residents safer when disasters do strike.



"Given that we've had two 'hundred-year' floods in a few years, I am pleased that we are going to support municipalities to redesign and rebuild essential municipal infrastructure so that it will be better able to withstand future flooding," said Norm Miller, Member of Provincial Parliament for Parry Sound-Muskoka. "Our government's Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan supports updating government policies to improve climate resilience. This is something our local mayors and I raised with the Minister a few weeks ago and Minister Clark has acted quickly to make these changes to help the communities that suffered flooding in the spring."

"The Town of Bracebridge applauds the provincial government for this initiative to help municipalities recover from extreme weather events such as the flooding that hit Bracebridge and the Muskoka region this spring," said Bracebridge Mayor Graydon Smith. "The opportunity to improve the quality of municipal infrastructure impacted by a flood or other significant weather event saves time and money and allows municipalities to better manage their finances in the long term."

Via ontario.ca

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Working to end trafficking and moving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals forward

By Harrish Thirukumaran

July 30 is World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. Its roots are traceable to 2010 when the General Assembly adopted the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, urging Governments worldwide to take coordinated and consistent measures to defeat this scourge.

The Plan calls for integrating the fight against human trafficking into the UN's broader programmes in order to boost development and strengthen security worldwide. One of the crucial provisions in the Plan is the establishment of a UN Voluntary Trust Fund for victims of trafficking, especially women and children.

In 2013, the General Assembly held a high-level meeting to appraise the Global Plan of Action. Member States also adopted resolution A/RES/68/192 and designated July 30 as the World Day against Trafficking in Persons. This resolution declared that such a day was necessary to "raise awareness of the situation of victims of human trafficking and for the promotion and protection of their rights."

Importantly, goals and targets around addressing trafficking in persons was recognized in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. These goals call for an end to trafficking and violence against children; as well as the need for measures against human trafficking, and they strive for the elimination of all forms of violence against and exploitation of women and girls.

These goals are diverse and were briefly teased in previous pieces on UN Days of Observances for the Monsoon Journal. What are these goals exactly?

According to the United Nations, the Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice. The Goals interconnect and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve each Goal and target by 2030.

There are 17 goals in total:

- Goal 1: No Poverty
- Goal 2: Zero Hunger
- Goal 3: Good Health and Wellbeing
- Goal 4: Quality Education
- Goal 5: Gender Equality
- Goal 6: Clean Water
- Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
- Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
- Goal 10: Reduced inequalities
- Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

- Goal 12: Responsible Production and Consumption
- Goal 13: Climate Action
- Goal 14: Life Below Water
- Goal 15: Life on Land
- Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
- Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, stated "the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals are our collective response to building a fair globalization."

To monitor the progress in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda, the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development is the main global forum for reviewing successes, challenges and lessons learned on achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – and for countries to present their Voluntary National Reviews. These national reviews are the experiences of member state governments including successes, challenges and lessons learned in implementing the 2030 goals.

In 2019, the High-level Political Forum will be convened twice: first under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (9-18 July 2019); and then under the auspices of the General Assembly, at the Head of State-level (24-25 September 2019) – the first SDG Summit since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015.

There are five campaigns that aim at advancing the goals of the 2030 Agenda. The five campaigns focus on gender, youth, water, and climate. The water campaign is the Water Action Decade, 2018-2028: Averting a global water crisis. It prioritizes mobilizing action on how to manage water, considering there is a 40 per cent shortfall in freshwater resources by 2030 coupled with a burgeoning world population.

An ideal way to get involved in the advancement of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals is the Be the Change Initiative. This initiative provides an opportunity for all of us to better "walk the talk" when it comes to the SDGs. This Initiative guides and encourages us to live more sustainable at work and at home by changing our consumption patterns, using active transport such as cycling, and buying local foods. Everyone is welcome to participate. Every little step helps – inform your family, your friends and your community about simple actions they can take in their daily lives.

Readers like you can capitalize on the toolkit located on the UN Sustainable Development Goals website to organize an initiative such as teaching children the importance of climate action.

So, get out there and work towards ending trafficking in persons and moving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals forward.

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Canada Historical Milestones:

July 20, 1871

British Columbia joins Canadian Confederation after Ottawa agrees to certain conditions. The main one is a promise to construct a permanent railroad link between the East and West coasts.

In 1867, the governors of British Columbia and Vancouver Island wrote to the British government asking that a clause be inserted into the British North America Act that would permit them entry into Canada.

One reason for the urgency was that the United States had purchased Alaska, and they were concerned that their territories might be annexed.



“Everyone of us needs to show how much we care for each other and, in the process, care for ourselves” - Diana, Princess of Wales (born Diana Frances Spencer- 1 July 1961 – 31 August 1997)

Printing the Winds of Change around us All lands home, all men kin.

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Andrew Scheer Unveils A Real Plan to Protect Our Environment

June 19, 2019

GATINEAU, QC – The Hon. Andrew Scheer, Leader of Canada's Conservatives and of the Official Opposition, today unveiled his plan to fight climate change and protect Canada's environment.

"Conservatives have a proud legacy when it comes to protecting Canada's natural environment and improving Canada's environmental performance," said Mr. Scheer. "Our record of environmental achievement stands in stark contrast to the Liberal record of failure."

Conservatives created and expanded the National Parks system, negotiated the Canada-US acid rain treaty, brought in the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, and much more.

A Real Plan to Protect Our Environment builds on our proud Conservative legacy and is based on three guiding principles:

1. Green technology, not taxes is the best way to lower Canada's emissions.
2. We will work with farmers, hunters and anglers, Indigenous peoples, provinces, and territories to promote a cleaner and greener natural environment to protect our air, land, water and wildlife.



3. Greenhouse gas emissions do not recognize borders. Canada has a leadership role to play and we must take our fight against climate change global.

"A Real Plan to Protect Our Environment is Canada's best chance to meet the Paris targets, without a carbon tax," said Mr. Scheer. "We will balance the need to fight climate change by lowering emissions with our core promise of leaving more money in Canadians' pockets and letting them get ahead."

For full policy details, please visit: ARealPlan.ca

Via conservative.ca

Prime Minister announces enhanced cooperation with the United States

Washington, D.C. - June 20, 2019

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today concluded a successful visit to Washington, D.C., where he met with United States President Donald J. Trump and committed to closer collaboration on a number of priorities.

The Prime Minister and President discussed recent progress toward the ratification of the new North American Free Trade Agreement, which will create good, middle class jobs and new opportunities for people in both countries. They also exchanged views on trade issues, including softwood lumber, and agreed that Canada and the U.S. should work together to safeguard and expand trade between our two countries.

The two leaders discussed rising tensions between the U.S. and Iran, including reports of Iran shooting down a U.S. drone in international airspace.

The Prime Minister raised the issue of China's wrongful detention of two Canadian citizens, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. The two leaders called for their immediate release.

The leaders also discussed ways to improve mineral security and ensure future competitiveness of their minerals industries, and work more closely

to ensure secure and reliable supply chains. To that end, they announced that Canada and the U.S. will develop a joint action plan on critical minerals collaboration.

The Prime Minister highlighted the importance of Canadian uranium to North American energy security, and underscored how Canada has been a reliable supplier of uranium to the U.S. for over 75 years.

The Prime Minister and President emphasized their shared concern for increasing opioid-related deaths on both sides of the border, and announced that Canada and the U.S. will work more closely together to find solutions to the opioid crisis, including through the North American drug dialogue and multilateral organizations. The two countries will also boost their collaboration to combat opioid trafficking, including through law enforcement cooperation and the sharing of information and best practices.

Prime Minister Trudeau and President Trump announced their intention to implement the new preclearance agreement this summer, which will make it possible to extend preclearance for travelers at land, rail, and marine facilities in both countries, as well as at

The NDP is on Your Side to Make Life Better and More Affordable

June 20th, 2019

OTTAWA – NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh marked the end of the parliamentary session on a strong note reminding people that an NDP MP is someone who stands up for everyday people. Over the last four years, the NDP fought to make life more affordable, to protect our environment, to reduce inequalities and defend workers' rights. Meanwhile, Trudeau's Liberals and Scheer's Conservatives took the side of the richest corporations and helped them profit on the backs of everyday Canadians.

"Trudeau's sales pitch doesn't match his actions. When push comes to shove, he always picks the rich and the well-connected over everyday Canadians. And people are still paying the price from the last Conservative government. The Conservatives are telling people they have to go at it alone. This is the wrong approach," said Singh. "People deserve a government that will fight for them and put their interests over those of rich corporations. With different choices, the NDP will get better results for people."

Over the course of this parliamentary session, the NDP introduced bold solutions to make people's lives better. The NDP caucus passed motions to encourage the buying and production of local food, to create a national suicide action plan, and to encourage buying Canadian wood for our buildings. Alongside stakeholders, the NDP finally got the oil tanker ban that will safeguard our coastline, communities, and sea life from the risk of a devastating oil spill. NDP MP Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou) introduced the historic bill C-262 that aims to harmonize Canadian laws with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

additional airports, and will enable the preclearance of cargo.

They also reaffirmed their commitment to implement the Entry/Exit initiative at the land border this summer, which will provide a streamlined and more secure process when crossing our shared land border, while protecting individual privacy and rights.

The leaders also highlighted our countries' close collaboration in space. The Prime Minister underlined Canada's partnership with the U.S. on the Lunar Gateway, which will push the bounds of human space exploration. The project represents the first step to future missions to Mars and beyond.

They also discussed ongoing reform efforts in Ukraine, rising tensions in the Persian Gulf, and the crisis in Venezuela, including Cuba's role to play in stabilizing the crisis. The two leaders reiterated their support for Interim



"While the Liberals were picking and choosing which rights of Indigenous peoples they'd uphold, Romeo Saganash was pushing them to enshrine into our laws the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People," added Singh. "It is shameful that unelected and unaccountable Conservative Senators are blocking the passage of the bill in its last legislative stages. Indigenous Peoples deserve better."

Throughout the four years, the NDP always put solutions for people front and centre in everything they did. They presented plans to give Canadians access to affordable housing, access to affordable medication with a universal and public pharmacare program, priority over the richest corporations and needed roadmaps with concrete measures to fight climate change. New Democrats are committed to continue to fight for people and are excited to bring their message to Canadians from coast to coast to coast. With an NDP MP, people have someone who is on their side, ready to put your interests first.

Via NDP.ca

President of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó, and their shared desire for a peaceful, Venezuelan-led transition through free and fair elections as soon as possible. The Prime Minister and President also discussed concerns around human rights violations in Nicaragua.

The two leaders also discussed the upcoming G20 Leaders' Summit in Osaka, Japan, and agreed to continue conversations from today's meeting at the Summit.

During the visit, Prime Minister Trudeau also met with members of the U.S. House of Representatives in a meeting hosted by Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives. Together, they discussed the ratification of the new NAFTA, relations with China, climate change, and Canada-U.S. cooperation on security and defence.

Via pm.gc.ca

Pompeo: India, US Can Address Differences in Spirit of Friendship

By Anjana Pasricha

June 26, 2019 11:50 AM

NEW DELHI - Calling for deeper cooperation with India, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo expressed optimism the two countries would address their differences on trade and other issues "in the spirit of friendship."

The top American diplomat held talks with his Indian counterpart, S. Jaishankar, and met Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday during a visit to the Indian capital, New Delhi.

The first high-level engagement between the two countries since Modi's re-election comes as they navigate a relationship where strategic ties are on the upswing but tensions over tariffs and India's plans to purchase Russian weapon systems have led to friction.

Both sides played down the differences. Calling the two nations "friends who can help each other all around the world, Pompeo told reporters "great friends are bound to have differences."

The Indian foreign minister said "if you trade with someone, it is impossible you don't have trade issues."

At the same time, Pompeo emphasized the need to address the growing disputes on economic issues.

"The United States has been clear we seek greater market access and removal of trade barriers. We've got to get the economic piece right," he said.



Washington ended India's duty-free access for some goods this month, while New Delhi has slapped higher tariffs on 28 American products. Washington is also irked by tighter regulations that have adversely impacted foreign companies, including American online retailers.

In a speech later in the evening, Pompeo held out the prospect of large American investments if India lowers trade barriers.

"There are trillions of dollars in American investments sitting on the sidelines waiting to be put to work in the Indo-Pacific region," he said.

The two sides also discussed India's ties with Russia and Iran, both coun-

tries that face U.S. sanctions.

New Delhi, which has halted oil imports from Iran under U.S. pressure, said it had conveyed to Washington the need for "stability, predictability and affordability" of its energy supplies. Heavily reliant on oil imports, India gets most of its oil from the Middle East and is concerned about escalating tensions in the region.

Suggesting that New Delhi will press ahead with a \$5.2 billion deal to buy the S-400 air missile system from Russia despite U.S. pressure, India's foreign minister said "we have relations with many countries and will do what is in our national interest."

Indian officials say that despite

growing defense ties with the U.S., New Delhi is unwilling to forego its longstanding defense partnership with Moscow.

Ties between India and the U.S. have strengthened in recent years amid mutual concerns about China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

In his speech, Pompeo outlined the possibility that the two countries could deepen their cooperation.

"We have an absolute perfect chance to go even further than many have dreamed. Right now, we have two leaders in President Trump and Prime Minister Modi who are not afraid to blaze great trails and who are not afraid to take risks where appropriate," he said. "Let's see each other with new eyes."

Earlier, Pompeo slammed China's flagship Belt and Road Initiative, which has been criticized for resulting in heavy debt for countries where Beijing has initiated infrastructure projects. For countries that have signed up, he said it came "not with strings attached, but with shackles."

Pompeo's talks with Modi set the stage for a planned meeting between the Indian prime minister and Trump on the sidelines of the G-20 meeting in Japan this week.

State Department correspondent Nike Ching contributed to this report.

Via voanews.com

Brazil President Backtracks on Looser Gun Restrictions as Lawmakers Resist

By Reuters

June 26, 2019 01:52 AM

SAO PAULO - Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro on Tuesday reversed a move to loosen gun control laws by presidential decree, in a strategic retreat after lawmakers pushed back on one of the far-right leader's key campaign promises.

In May, Bolsonaro signed decrees easing restrictions on importing and carrying guns and buying ammunition, which needed congressional approval to become permanent law. Af-

ter the Senate rejected a decree last week, Bolsonaro decided on Tuesday to revoke it and reconsider his strategy.

The former army captain vowed last year to crack down on crime and ease access to guns, rolling back decades of arms control efforts as many Brazilians clamored for a dramatic response to rising violent crime.

Bolsonaro's reversal on Tuesday, published in a late edition of the government's official gazette, contradicted comments made just hours earlier by his spokesman Otávio Rêgo Bar-

ros that the president would not revoke the guns decree.

Bolsonaro also sent a new bill to Congress on Tuesday that aims to loosen restrictions on the possession of arms in rural areas, Senate President Davi Alcolumbre wrote on his Twitter account.

Via voanews.com



Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro speaks during a handover ceremony for Government Secretary Jorge Antonio de Oliveira Francisco at the Planalto Palace in Brasilia

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Around the World

Statement by Gary Anandasangaree

House of Commons passes motion seeking UN investigations in Sri Lanka

Member of Parliament for Scarborough- Rouge Park, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism

June 20, 2019:

After months of much hard work, today, the House of Commons has passed a motion seeking the UN to investigate allegations of Genocide in Sri Lanka.

The motion was put forward by NDP MP Cheryl Hardcastle MP Windsor Tecumseh, and was given unanimous consent by all parties, and independent MPs. The motion was originally put forward by Liberal MP Shaun Chen on May 15, 2019, and again by MP Cheryl Hardcastle on June 12th, 2019 where both attempts failed to receive unani-

mous consent. It was later deferred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, where the motion was passed on June 18th.

Today is truly a historic and important step forward that the Canadian House of Commons unanimously calls on an independent investigation on allegations of genocide in Sri Lanka.

I want to personally thank all the parties, and independent MP's for their support, and acknowledge the work of the community in advancing this issue.

"Individuals must work to bridge divides"

- Canadian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka David McKinnon via Sri Lanka Canadian High commissioner, David McKinnon, June 10, 2019:



THREAD I spent last week in Puttalam (briefly), Jaffna, Kilinochchi and Vavuniya. Not my first visit north, but in my quest to understand better #SriLanka, where one might say there is both too much history and too little, it was a very rewarding week. Here are some thoughts.

2/ The visit challenged preconceptions AND reminded me how much is to be done to heal wounds of the past, to ensure a future for #SriLanka that respects and mobilizes all of its talent. The terrorism and communal violence over the past seven weeks underscore the urgency of this.

3/ There is significant economic potential even as many face enormous challenges. I met with entrepreneurs finding success in tech and palmyrah toddy, who give hope for the region's private sector. Their self-reliance is admirable, and I think crucial to success in the future.

4/ The ongoing absence of commercial air service to Jaffna remains a hindrance to business and tourism, however. More than any one thing, opening Palaly to commercial flights would improve the region's economic prospects and its integration with the rest of #SriLanka.

5/ In one way, the security situation was less troubling than I might have expected, with those I spoke with saying that the roadblocks and other security measures were coming down. Many Tamils are acutely aware their Muslim neighbours might not feel so sanguine.

6/ I came face to face with the unresolved tragedy of the families of the disappeared, for whom no exhortation to "move on" can heal the pain of the unresolved absence of their loved ones. Unresolved absences fester, sometimes for generations.

7/ A peaceful, inclusive and recon-

Statement by The Governor General of Canada Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette

"Whether you were born here or chose to come and live here, wherever you happen to be, Canada Day is your celebration"

July 1, 2019, OTTAWA

Hello everyone!

Have you ever seen the National Film Board film *Paddle to the Sea*? You know, the 1966 classic? It tells the tale of an Indigenous boy who carved a man in a wooden canoe and set it out on a journey to the sea.

We follow the canoe as it makes its way from Lake Superior to the great Atlantic Ocean. An odyssey that shows how we—the people of Canada—are connected by our stunning geography and our love of the land.

More than half a century later, the story of *Paddle to the Sea's* adventures still resonates. Because we are indeed all connected. We share values, cultures, interests. And we are fortunate to be tied together by such a diverse, beautiful, bountiful country.

There is no shortage of opportunities in Canada, in the towns and the cities, in the countryside, everywhere, opportunities to explore, to discover and to learn. Learn about ourselves and learn from each other.

I am fortunate to journey from coast to coast to coast and to be able to see how Canadians are connected.

Today we're on the Rideau. Kayaking.

How fitting for Canada Day to be paddling on a river system that connects the St-Lawrence sea way all the way to the Beaufort Sea, using a brilliant invention of the people of North America's Arctic. A kayak—a man's boat—that was originally designed for hunting, highly

maneuverable in shallow or breaking waters, perfect to creep over a prey. Now it is also used for fun and sight-seeing. The kayak is a tribute to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the Inuit people.

I do not know where you will be in Canada as we celebrate the country's 152nd birthday. I hope you will be somewhere unique and special to you—perhaps



...by a campfire in one of our great parks,

...walking the trails on the West coast or the East coast,

...watching a game, or fireworks in Toronto,

...sitting with a friend at a café in Montréal or Saskatoon,

...or enjoying one of the countless lakes and rivers that knit our country together.

I hope you are out and about, regardless of what Mother Nature sends our way.

After all, we are a land of four solid seasons and it is not a little rain or a little snow that will stop us. In fact, that is another of our connections. Nothing brings Canadians together like a good discussion about our weather—and this year, we've certainly seen it all!

Whether you were born here or chose to come and live here, wherever you happen to be, Canada Day is your celebration.

It is about coming together in our communities, with friends, neighbours and family. To celebrate this life we share. To celebrate who we are.

Rain or shine.

And so it's from a kayak on the banks of the Rideau River that I wish you all the best on this Canada Day.

ciled #SriLanka needs to understand its history and learn from it. Then it will be possible to move on. All sides would face painful truths, but maybe common understanding, too. This is a lesson from societies that have healed after conflict.

8/ The respectful and typically warm welcome provided to this curious foreigner was a reminder of the innate generosity and helpfulness of Sri Lankans. That said, I also saw signs of

divisions among communities where there should be empathy at a difficult time.

9/ Individuals must work to bridge divides but the tone is set by leaders, who must show an intolerance for efforts to divide, and who must see that even if the community being targeted today is not theirs, it could be tomorrow. The past is to be learned from but not to live in.



Syria: Ease suffering, save lives, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator tells Security Council

25 June 2019

Peace and Security

“Week after week, month after month, year after year”, the Security Council has been briefed on Syria’s humanitarian suffering, and on Tuesday, the UN’s Emergency Relief Coordinator once again described “the latest horror facing civilians”, pleading for greater humanitarian access.

“I repeat our call again today” to Syria’s warring parties, said Mark Lowcock, who is also the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs: “Ease the suffering, save lives, end the fighting [and] obey the law”.

Speaking via video link, he noted that this was the Council’s fifth humanitarian briefing on Syria in the last eight weeks. He quoted High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, in summarizing reports of hundreds of civilian casualties and destruction to infrastructure, including hospitals and schools, mainly caused by Government air strikes and to a lesser extent, ground-based armed groups attacks.

“We have repeatedly asked you to make this stop”, Mr. Lowcock pleaded. “It has not stopped, or even slowed”.

A distressing overview

Despite ceasefire efforts in the northwest, hostilities continue unabated. Fighting among Government forces and their allies, armed opposition forces and the Security Council-listed terrorist organization Hayat Tahrir al-Sham continues to impact civilians every day, he said.

Last weekend, “we received reports of airstrikes affecting more than 55 communities in Idlib, Hama and Aleppo governorates, and artillery shelling affecting more than 21 communities”, that claimed 32 civilian lives, including women and children, he added.

In northern rural Hama, seven oth-



ers, including a child, were reportedly killed by airstrikes and artillery shelling and hundreds of thousands have been displaced.

Mr. Lowcock spoke emotionally about regular attacks on Maarat Al-Numan, in southern Idlib, voicing concern over Maarat National Hospital, which at peak times treated about 20,000 people a month. It is now operating under emergency conditions but remains the main referral hospital in southern Idlib.

“While operating in a conflict zone and in an area under the control of a Security Council-listed terrorist organization”, Mr. Lowcock stressed, “they keep their life-saving services going with the support of humanitarian organizations”.

“There is serious reason to worry”, he continued saying that on 20 June an ambulance was hit, killing the patient and three medical workers and seriously injuring two paramedics. “We must see an end to such attacks on medical workers, transport and facilities. We

must see hospitals like Maarat National Hospital protected”.

Beyond Idlib, suffering continues

In Rukban, along the Syrian-Jordanian border, “some 27,000 people remain in desperate need of humanitarian assistance”, he flagged, adding that “inadequate, basic services are costing lives”.

Recalling the UN’s unapproved request for access to Rukban on 9 May, he said “We continue to call for humanitarian access...to deliver life-saving aid, and to assist those who would like to leave the camp”, saying that “another request is being prepared”.

We continue to call for humanitarian access...to deliver life-saving aid – UN Emergency Coordinator

In al-Hol Camp, in northeast Syria, humanitarian agencies continue to respond to the considerable needs of some 73,000 mainly women and children in the camp, particularly in the areas of health, water, sanitation and hygiene.

“At the same time”, Mr. Lowcock said, “we continue to be concerned

about restricted humanitarian access to the annex, where 11,000 foreign nationals are living”. Both victims of the terrorist group ISIL and families of former-fighters, are sheltering in the camp.

While some positive reports of foreign national children being repatriated, thousands more in the camp face uncertainty, prompting him to call upon Member States to repatriate their nationals “for rehabilitation and reintegration, or prosecution, as appropriate, in line with international law and standards”.

And in the south of Syria, rising tensions between government forces and local groups threatens to reignite.

“We have repeatedly pleaded for the protection of civilians. To ensure humanitarian access. To ensure that the parties fully abide by their obligation to respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law”, he said.

Via news.un.org

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Security Council approves 'historic' political Haiti mission, ending UN peacekeeping role in the country

25 June 2019

Peace and Security

The Security Council on Monday approved a resolution to create a UN "Integrated Office" in Haiti, designed to support the country's government in strengthening political stability and good governance. The Office, named BINUH, will replace the peacekeeping mission in Haiti on October 16, putting an end to 15 years of peacekeeping presence in the country.

BINUH will be run by a Special Representative, who will assist the Government of Haiti with planning elections; training the Haitian National Police on human rights; responding to gang violence; ensuring compliance with international human rights obligations; improving prison oversight; and strengthening the justice sector.

Speaking on behalf of the United States, which drafted the resolution, acting Ambassador Jonathan Cohen, described the adoption of the resolution as "a historic moment", but said that US was "clear-eyed" about the



Leonora Baumann / UN MINUJUSTH
Miragoane, 30 October 2018: female members of the Bangladeshi Formed Police Units greet Helen La Lime, the UN Special Representative in Haiti and Head of MINUJUSTH

challenges that lie ahead, and recognized that a successful transition in Haiti will depend on the Government assuming responsibility for a range of issues, including ensuring free and fair elections, a reduction in gang violence, and the protection of human rights.

Mr. Cohen added that close coordination between UN entities, international partners, and others invested in Haiti's success, will be necessary,

and that "constructive and inclusive dialogue", will "lay the foundation for a sustainable future for all Haitians".

'Disappointment' over removal of climate change references

However, some top diplomats in the Council expressed their disappointment that the resolution did not stress Haiti's vulnerability in the face of climate change.

Germany's Ambassador to the

United Nations, Christophe Heusgen, pointed out that, since 2011, the Security Council has repeatedly made clear its concern that the effects of climate change may aggravate existing threats to peace and security. Mr Heusgen added that, in Haiti, climate change is a "threat multiplier", which could further destabilize the country, and "create new conflicts over increasingly diminishing resources and derail efforts in peace-building and stabilization."

Haitian Chargé d'Affaires Patrick Saint-Hilaire, said that the creation of BINUH was "a step in the right direction", and pressed the UN to ensure that all Haitians enjoy stability, human rights, democracy and the rule of law, adding that he wanted the new Office to be ready to tackle the many difficulties faced by the country. Mr. Saint-Hilaire also raised the subject of climate change, citing the crisis as one of the many risks facing Haiti, alongside cholera, national disasters and "even hunger riots."

Via news.un.org

Government internet ban leaves parts of Myanmar 'in a blackout', UN expert calls for immediate lifting

24 June 2019

Human Rights

With "no media access" in parts of the country and "serious restrictions" on humanitarian organizations, the United Nations expert on the situation of human rights in Myanmar urged the Government on Monday to "reverse its decision" and lift the mobile internet ban.

The Government shutdown mobile data networks in nine conflict areas townships of Rakhine and Chin States, risking serious implications for human rights and humanitarian monitoring, warned UN Special Rapporteur Yang-hee Lee.

"The entire region is in a blackout," she said. "I fear for all civilians there, cut off and without the necessary means to communicate with people inside and outside the area."

According to recent reports, over the last six months, both parties to the conflict have committed violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

On Thursday, the Ministry of Transport and Communications said that internet services were being used to coordinate illegal activities and ordered all mobile network providers



Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar Yang-hee Lee. UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré, by UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

under the Telecommunications Law of 2013, to temporarily cut mobile internet services.

Citing credible reports from a few days earlier, the Special Rapporteur asserted that the Tatmadaw, or national army, had conducted helicopter attacks in Minbya Township in central Rakhine, and that the following day, the Arakan Army - a rebel insurgent group in the state - fired on a navy ship in Sittwe, killing and injuring several soldiers.

"I am told that the Tatmadaw is now conducting a 'clearance operation', which we all know by now, can be a cov-

er for committing gross human rights violations against the civilian population", the UN expert said.

The conflict between the Arakan Army and the Tatmadaw has been ongoing since late 2018, with civilians bearing the brunt of the violence.

Throughout this time, over 35,000 civilians have been displaced and dozens of civilians, including children, have been killed and injured by both indiscriminate and targeted attacks. Others, mainly ethnic Rakhine men, have died while in the military's custody.

"We must not forget that these are

the same security forces that have so far avoided accountability for the atrocities committed against the Rohingya in Rakhine State less than two years ago", reminded the UN envoy.

I fear for all civilians there, cut off and without the necessary means to communicate with people inside and outside the area - UN Special Rapporteur. Ms. Lee called on the Government to reverse its decision and remove the mobile internet ban, saying: "The restrictions on the media and humanitarian organizations must be lifted immediately."

"Both parties to the conflict must ensure that civilians and civilian objects are protected at all times and uphold international humanitarian law", she concluded.

The UN Deputy Spokesperson, Farhan Haq, told journalists in New York on Monday that the Organization continues to hope "that there will be conditions set that would allow for the peaceful return of the Rohingya to that state", adding in relation to the internet blackout that "we want to make sure that freedom of opinion and freedom of expression is upheld".

Via news.un.org

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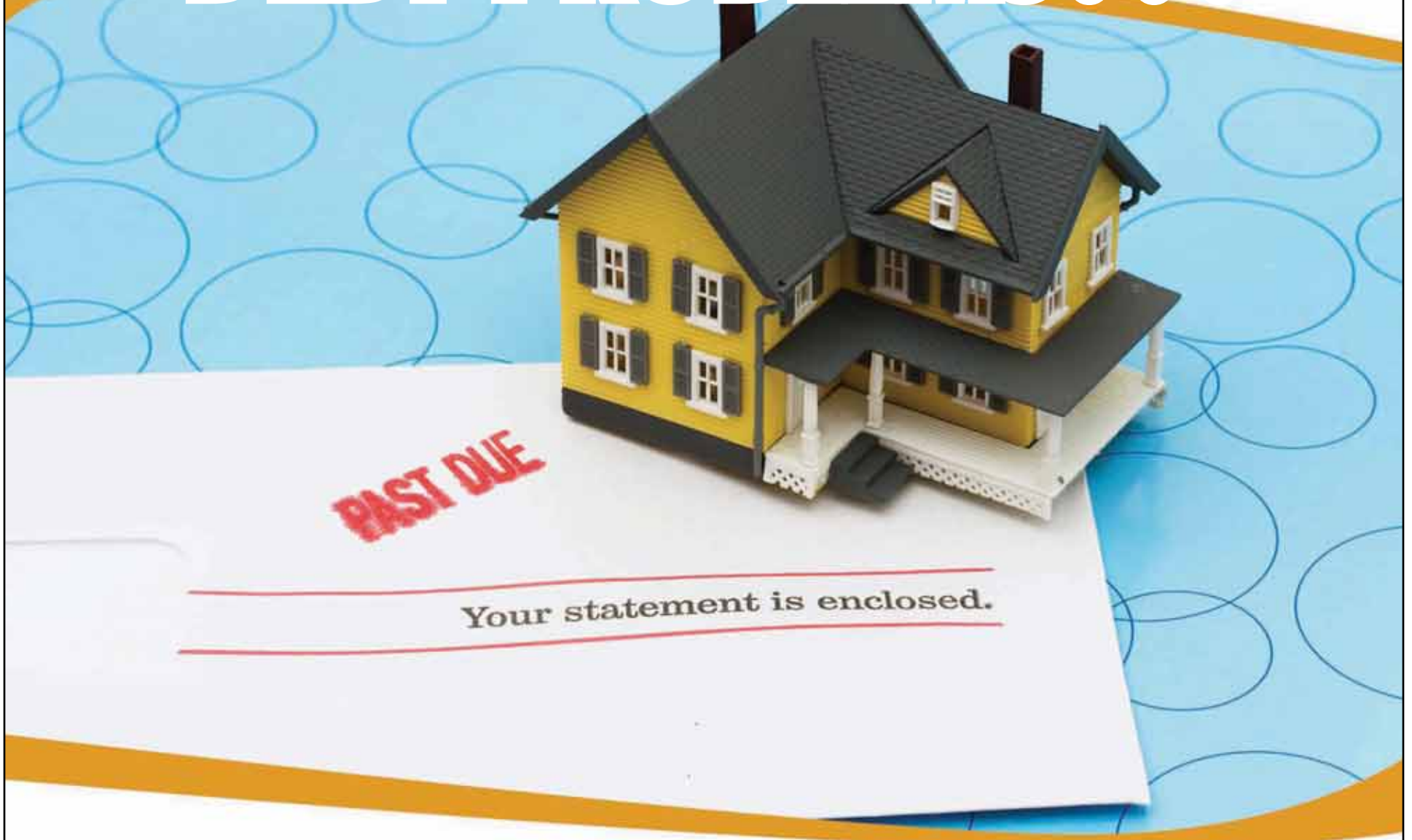
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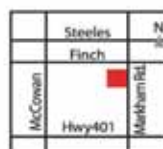


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MR. TAMIL CANADA TEAM CELEBRATES SUCCESS OF THE FIRST EVENT WITH AN APPRECIATION NIGHT WITH SPONSORS, VOLUNTEERS & MEDIA

\$20,000 donated to combat mental health issues among Tamil Community



By Siva Sivapragasam

The Mr. Tamil Canada team headed by Ajith Sabaratnam and his team members Ravi Kanagasabey, Vilosan Sivatharman and Shankar Bala were obviously in a joyful and celebrating mood recently when they hosted an appreciation night with the sponsors, volunteers, winners and the Media to celebrate the success of their first event held recently and proudly donating a sum of \$20,000 to the Canadian Medical & Dental Association to tackle a worthy cause of mental health issues among the Tamil community. The event was held at the Six Social Lounge and Grill, a newly opened restaurant which is conveniently located at the Old Kingston Road and Morrish Avenue in Scarborough.

A team of Canadian Tamils headed by Ajith Sabaratnam and consisting of Ravi Kanagasabey, Vilosan Sivatharman and

Shankar Balachandran decided sometime ago to form a committee that would spearhead projects to create awareness and also to educate members of the Tamil community on mental health issues and help to eradicate suicide deaths specially among the

younger aged males in the community. As a first step in this journey, the team launched the first event and handed over a donation to a well-recognized medical organization CMDA to utilize the funds for this purpose.

As a follow-up event, Mr. Tamil Canada team organized an appreciation event recently to thank the sponsors, volunteers and the Media who provided the support and co-operation for the first event which turned out to be a great success and well-attended. The team spelt out their future programmes one of which will be to lay emphasis on the health and mental issues facing the elders among the Tamil community.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the Appreciation Night – Picture Courtesy: Charles Deva)



WALK WITH HEART STEPS UP ITS SUPPORT FOR CARDIAC CARE



On Saturday, May 4, 2019, nearly 450 community members showed off their heart and passion for cardiac care in Scarborough by taking part in the annual Walk with Heart hosted by the Regional Cardiovascular Rehab program with the support of SHN Foundation. Through the generosity from our community, current and former patients, family members, friends and staff, this year's Walk with Heart raised more than \$65,000 for cardiac care.

Among the supporters was Dr. Kibar Yared, Director of Cardiac Imaging at SHN, who himself raised more than \$3,000 for the cause.

"This was my first Cardiac Walk, and it was incredible to see all of the people turning out in support of health care in this community – particularly my own patients, who showed up in droves to not only support the hospitals but to show their support for my fundraising specifically," shared Dr. Yared. "As a part of the cardiac program for more than ten years now, I felt this event was an important opportunity to demonstrate to my colleagues and patients, and the Scarborough community, that exceptional cardiac care is valued at SHN, and a vital part of our future."

Funds raised through this year's Walk with Heart will help to enhance cardiac care services, including the Regional Cardiovascular Rehab program which is

the largest regional, community-based cardiovascular rehab service in North America. The program helps to improve quality of life for cardiovascular patients through supervised exercise, education and guided lifestyle change. The regional service is available throughout Scarborough, Durham and beyond, at hospital and community sites, providing service closer to where patients live and work.

Though supporting just one of several areas of excellence at SHN, Dr. Yared sees the Walk with Heart as a step in the right direction to ensure SHN has what it needs to shape the future of care for Scarborough: "To move our hospitals forward, we need a unified voice, so we can demonstrate to the community that we support them, but we also need their support back. We need to showcase what makes us great – our staff and physicians, our expertise, our patient experience – and encourage the community to continue giving back so we can access resources and infrastructure that allows us to push the envelope even further. And as a physician, we can help lead the way."

The staff and volunteers of the Regional Cardiovascular Rehab program would like to thank Dr. Kibar Yared, Dr. Joseph Ricci, Dr. Ted Davies, Dr. Ashok Mukherjee and June Thomas, RN for the critical part they played in the success of this year's Walk with Heart.





TRANSFORMING EYE CARE AT SHN WITH A \$500,000 GIFT



Patrick Hung's journey as a donor at Scarborough Health Network (SHN) began in 2015 with Dr. Ying Lu, head of ophthalmology, although their patient-physician relationship stems back almost 20 years. In order to truly show his appreciation and support for Dr. Lu, Mr. Hung made what would be the first of many incredibly generous donations to the SHN Birchmount Eye Centre.

"Patrick is one of the most brilliant, humble and gracious individuals I've met in my life," said Dr. Lu. "He came to me for his eye care 20 years ago and I've been his primary eye specialist ever since. Coming from a prominent Confucius family, Patrick exemplifies hard work, kindness and contribution to society."

Patrick and his wife Angela made their first major donation to SHN toward the purchase of a laser cataract machine for the Eye Centre, which is recognized as the regional centre of excellence, performing 6,000 eye surgeries annually. Dr. Lu used this new equipment to perform the first-ever laser cataract surgery in an Ontario

public hospital on August 24, 2016.

But it didn't end there, the Hungs' philanthropy continued over the years, inspiring other Eye Centre surgeons to make donations for further equipment purchases. Most recently in 2018, with major contribution from Patrick and Angela Hung, the ophthalmology department was able to purchase two brand new surgical ophthalmic microscopes. As Dr. Lu points out, this collaboration is a perfect demonstration of the impact that can be made when a hospital and its patients and physicians come together to build strong, cooperative relationships.

In honour of the Hungs' generous donation of \$500,000 to SHN over the past four years, the Birchmount Eye Centre reception was redesigned and renamed the Patrick and Angela Hung Eye Centre Reception. Designer Ferruccio Sardella created a space that would be warm and welcoming to its patients and visitors.

"The space is very representative of the Scarborough community," said Sardella. "With vibrant colours and

imagery of Scarborough landscapes throughout, patients will truly feel right at home."

On Wednesday, May 15, many were in attendance for the reopening of the Eye Centre held by the SHN Foundation in celebration of the new name and redesigned space, as well as the arrival of the two new microscopes. During the event, the Hungs were very pleased with the newly redesigned reception area, and hope it will help patients to feel the same level of comfort and warmth that they did upon Patrick's very first visit.

Although Patrick and Angela live in Hong Kong year-round, the couple looks forward to the same day every year, when they return to Scarborough for Mr. Hung's regular appointment with Dr. Lu, with the knowledge and trust that the excellent care Patrick receives at SHN is always worth the trip and their peace of mind.

"Patrick is able to receive his care anywhere in the world, but continues to choose the Scarborough

Health Network because of the excellence of our physicians and staff," said Dr. Lu. "He continues to donate to SHN because he truly appreciates the great care he receives and strongly believes in our mission to transform health care in Scarborough."



FAIRCHILD LISTENERS SUPPORT SHN TO THE TUNE OF \$136,000



It was a fun-filled day in Scarborough as the team from Fairchild Radio descended upon Scarborough Health Network's General location on June 6 to host the Fairchild Radiothon in support of SHN Foundation – but more than that, it was also an opportunity to be inspired by the immense level of support demonstrated by the Chinese-speaking community. Donors came from far-and-wide with their own unique stories – one donor is a 38-year employee at SHN, one made a gift in honour of her husband who had worked at the hospital, and one gentleman even travelled four hours by public bus from Etobicoke to make a \$500 gift in person.

Thanks to the generosity of donors like these, and the many others who gave during the event, more than \$136,000 was raised in just over 12 hours. The Radiothon was broadcast live in both Cantonese and Mandarin as gifts were made by phone, in person or online to help fund the purchase of much-needed med-

ical equipment across the Birchmount, General and Centenary hospitals.

“Every donation collected today is going towards medical equipment and other priorities that our staff and physicians need to deliver exceptional health care to Scarborough’s patients,” shared Michael Mazza, president and CEO of SHN Foundation, on-air during the event. “The Fairchild Radiothon is just one of many ways we hope to better engage with the Chinese community here in Scarborough while raising the funds needed to shape the future of care for all patients within our community.”

Over the course of the day, Fairchild Radio conducted interviews with patients, staff, physicians, volunteers and donors to gather their stories about the excellent work currently underway at SHN. This included Dr. Jason Fung, kidney specialist and renowned author of *The Complete Guide to Fasting* and *The Obesity Code*; Dr. Ying Lu, chief ophthalmologist

out of the Eye Centre at SHN's Birchmount hospital; and Gary Kwok, president of M&S Quality Produce and champion Canadian race car driver who recently donated more than \$36,000 for the purchase of a Sonosite Point of Care Ultrasound Machine.

“With the help of SHN Foundation and events such as the Fairchild Radiothon, we are building upon our hospitals’ existing excellence to create more capacity for SHN to serve the people of Scarborough with exceptional health care,” said Elizabeth Buller, SHN president and CEO. “Our vision is to become Canada’s leading community teaching health network, and our community pledging their support behind us, I am confident that we can achieve this. Together, we will build the modern and efficient health care infrastructure that Scarborough patients need and deserve over the next 10, 20, 30 years and beyond.”

Learn more about supporting Scarborough Health Network Foundation at Support SHN.ca



“Sri Lanka terrorist attack 2019: The importance of trauma informed care”

Average population aged 18 to 50, men and women in Sri Lanka had experienced at least one traumatic event or many events in their lives. Trauma-informed Care is based on the understanding that many clients have suffered traumatic experiences, and the provider is responsible for being sensitive to this fact, regardless of whether a person is being treated specially for the trauma (Huckshorn & Lebel, 2013).

Trauma-informed Care process helps civil society to recognize the scope of collective trauma, and to recognize that every citizen may have experienced severe trauma and traumatic events with Post Traumatic

Stress experiences. Trained professional or community leaders such as social workers, preachers or civil services support workers no need to question people about their experiences after the trauma expose event such as Easter suicide bomb attack; instead, they should assume that they may have this history and act accordingly. The most critical steps of this process is helping civil society over social media, public media, and community mental health services to understands the common impact of trauma and understand potential paths for recover; identifies the picture of trauma in community, children(0-18) individual, families, and

others involved with the system; and responds by fully participating information about trauma into community support, policies, procedures, and day to day life practices; and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.

Trauma-informed Care educate people symptoms of traumatic stress such as anxiety, panic attack, and their physiological mechanisms and help them to understand relations between those symptoms and drugs addictions, alcoholism, and substance use disorders, gambling and other addictions such as sex, internet,..etc..

Trauma-informed Care helps people to normalize trauma experience and

signs that profoundly impact on their perception that help realized their experience of symptoms are not a sign of weakness, a character flaw, being damaged, or going out from the healthy mental state.

One of the essential principles of the trauma-informed program is creating an opportunity for choice, partnership and connection. Long term community-based Trauma-informed services generate safe settings that substitute a client’s sense of effectiveness, self-determination, self-esteem and personal control.



Dr. Fonseka delivering trauma support session

Cleanse Thirst

Father! Father! I am black;
Black with evil of every sort.
Cleanse me with your hands perfect
To be as white as white can be.

Father! Father! I am full of dust;
Dust with all the evil deeds.
Dust me with thy wings so wide
And cleanse me so that I be pure.

Father! Father! I am proud 'n haughty;
haughty with all loathe 'n slander.
Take away this slanderous evil
And make me meek and humble be.

Father! Father! I am fury with anger;
Angry with my brothers dear.
Wipe away this hatred anger
So that I may love my kind.

Father! Father! I am greedy;
Greedy for all the earthly pleasure.
Do away with all my greed
That haunts my heart day and night.

Father! Father! I am jealous;
Jealous with all above me.
Shun me away from all my grouse
To make my soul be free of grief.

Father! Father! I am far;
Far from all the good you want.
Father! Father! Let me draw
Closer to thy kingdom pure.

~ by Kingsley



BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

HUMANS OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA

“Humans of Northern Sri Lanka” is a Facebook Community page by Thulasi Muttulingam, a journalist based in the North of Sri Lanka. To follow the updates, “Like” the page at: www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION



Religion is supposedly a force for good, but as any student of history will know, it has repeatedly been utilised as a tool for mindless mayhem. Religions – all religions across the world including the most peaceful ones, ergo Buddhism and Jainism founded upon the principle of ahimsa, have been utilised to whip up warfare against one another throughout our history. No need to mention most of the other religions – they all have blood on their hands too.

What I find troubling as an atheist is the undue respect given to religions in most cultures. Respect should be earned. Religious practices running roughshod over others' fundamental rights should not be placed above reproach.

I get that there are annoying atheists too, who needlessly bully religious people quietly practising their faith without harming others. They are not the ones whom I seek to defend here. It goes without saying however, that they ought not to get death threats for that. Annoying people exist everywhere; learn to put up with them. Just like there are annoying atheists, there are annoying religionists too foisting their religion upon others.

Worldwide, we have all come to accept that there should be freedom of religion for people of all faiths; we didn't forget to put in a crucial clause that takes into account those with no faith however – the right to freedom from religion, just as there should be freedom from religion. That too is a basic right.

Although it has not always been so in our collective history, we are currently at a point in time where most atheists do enjoy such freedom, and take it for granted. With a few notable exceptions.

The exceptions

Certain strains of religions still persecute those who leave the faith – Jehovah's Witnesses for example or Scientology in the modern day world. One of those remaining as the last bastions, carrying out active death sentences on atheists in their midst is fundamentalist Islam.

Let's be very clear, the majority of Muslims are peaceful, both worldwide as well as right here in Sri Lanka. The miniscule minority of extremists are the problem. But while those in the majority communities outside the faith act like they are the prime targets of such extremists, they often conveniently forget, or choose to ignore, that it is actually those within the Muslim communi-

ty themselves who suffer disproportionately more due to such extremists.

They suffer doubly – first, they are targeted by the extremists for not being Muslim enough, then they are targeted by the communities outside the faith for sharing a faith – however tenuously – with the extremists.

Many in Sri Lanka including successive government regimes (not just the current useless one) knew that peaceful Sufi Muslims were being persecuted by extremist Muslims here for decades, yet chose to look the other way; so long as the conflict remained intra-communal – most of us treated it as an intra-communal matter best left addressed from within the community.

There are several reasons for this, both well-meaning as well as subversive, but the plain fact is we looked the other way when minorities within the minority were getting persecuted – actually, when the majority within the minority were getting persecuted. Sufis were once the majority in this land. And women are certainly not a minority either.

The ex-Muslims

Many atheists of Muslim origin go by a special moniker worldwide – ex-Muslims. That is, they no longer identify as Muslim, which is especially hard in countries like Sri Lanka because Muslims here don't just belong to a religion, they belong to particular ethnic groups.

What happens if you are a Moor, Malay, or Memon and no longer identify as Muslim in Sri Lanka? The rest of the world, including the Government and outside communities, foist that identity of Muslimness upon such people, with scant regard to whether they want to be identified as such or not.

More sinister still is the fact that few are able to be open about their lack of faith. Even though the extremists are few, they pose active death threats to the ex-Muslims for daring to leave the faith – what they call apostasy, which they deem punishable by death.

It's a moot point whether Islam advocates the death penalty for apostasy or not – scholars differ as do their religious rulings on the matter. Yet, fundamentalist Muslims across the world, including in Sri Lanka, frequently take matters into their own hands to deliver the death blow to such apostates if their governments will not.

I've not yet heard of any killings of apostates in Sri Lanka, but it was chilling to

realise that Zahran and his team had been actively seeking to kill some open apostates, including personal friends of mine. The ex-Muslims had been aware of the threats and made active complaints to the Police, CID, and TID to no avail over the last few years. Their complaints had been ignored until the Easter attacks, after which they had been called in for questioning where the cops admitted that yes, Zahran and his team had been stalking them, trying to kill them.

Yet even so, there is precious little done to protect them still. Their lives are still in active danger, which no-one seems to be addressing as yet. Not community activists or human rights activists at large, and certainly not the Government.

The ex-Muslims are an uncomfortable minority within a minority few people want to acknowledge or give their due. And by due, I don't mean extra-special rights; rather, the same basic human rights we all take for granted – to exist without threats to life or limb. Why is this not their due, and why do we look the other way, both intra-communally as well as inter-communally, when their lives are placed at risk? To racists, these people will always be “Muslim” no matter their faith or lack thereof. For quite a few non-racists at the other end of the spectrum, the importance of not being seen as racists trumps others' basic human rights – this is the spurious kind from outside the community who will yell “Islamophobia” for highlighting very real issues such as these.

Ironically, they even attack ex-Muslims who critique their religion or harmful religious practices like female genital mutilation as Islamophobes too. Navigating this minefield of racists on one side and holier-than-thou non-racists on the other can be quite tricky.

I should know, I've been called an Islamophobe quite often. But at least the worst I've had to put up with is slurs. So far, no-one has sought to kill me over my highlighting of such issues.

Ex-Muslims the world over are an extremely brave lot – they brave not just ostracisation or slurs upon their characters, they face death at the hands of fundamentalist crazies in their midst too.

Many have paid the price in neighbouring India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Maldives. Yet, what do their respective governments across these countries, whether Muslim or secular, do to protect them? Absolutely nothing.

In neighbouring India, supposedly having a better handle on controlling terrorists as compared to Sri Lanka, some arrests have just been made in Tamil Nadu due to their affiliation with the Easter attackers here. One of those arrested only now, Akram Jintha, is the prime accused in the brutal 2017 killing of an ex-Muslim there – H. Farook in 2017. What was he doing out of jail all this while?

In Muslim majority countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Maldives meanwhile, ex-Muslims can be actively imprisoned on charges of blasphemy and even dealt the death penalty.

In countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran, the crackdown is much, much harsher, with atheists being denigrated “terrorists”, with attendant capital punishment to suit. The world is not an easy place to be an atheist from the Muslim community, whether in Muslim majority countries or not. Secular rules do not seem to apply to them, even in secular countries.

Freedom of religion is well understood. It's the concept of freedom from religion which remains a problem. Thousands of atheists and secularists have died down the ages for freedom from the oppressive yoke of religion. This too is a fundamental human right.

It is to be noted however, while atheists were being persecuted in Europe in the middle ages, they thrived in the Middle East during the Golden Age of Islam.

Geopolitical forces from so-called “developed countries” developed virulent strains of Islam for their own nefarious purposes – and the Muslim community worldwide is suffering for it first, before the spillover into other communities next. Women, children, atheists, agnostics, and moderates are suffering alike from within the community – this article is not about targeting the Muslim community by implication.

It's a call to our Government to do right by the persecuted peoples within the faith instead of utilising communal conflict as a tool for further disharmony. It will most likely fall on deaf ears, but the rest of us need to wake up.

Not in our name. Not in their name either. It's on Zahran and co.'s names. Also, definitely in the CIA's name. And likely the CID's too.





Take it or Leave it

The Happiness Perspective

What is the point of being prosperous if you're terribly sad?

To a lot of people, prosperity means wealth. Well, actually that's not true. It means three things: wealth, health and happiness. So that means, if prosperity means three things, "wealth, health and happiness," you need to have something happening for all three of these things for you to become prosperous.

Since I am not a doctor, I cannot help you too much with the health bit. And since I am not an economist, I cannot help you with the wealth bit. But happiness, I can help you with that. That's what I do. That's what I've been doing for fifty years.

So if you truly want to be prosperous, you're going to need three things in your life. So let's begin with happiness. What is the point of being prosperous if you're terribly sad, depressed? So where does happiness begin? Do you know where happiness begins? You always looked at happiness circumstantially.

"If my wife behaved herself, if my dog behaved herself, if my cat behaved itself, if my buffalos behave themselves, if my cows behave themselves, if my neighbors behaved—if my neighbors got rid of the chickens that, you know, sit there in the morning at four o'clock and, 'Gyack-ack-ack-ack-ack,' then I'll be happy. If my son brought better grades in school, then I will be happy."

So, your happiness is based upon your external circumstances. You want the world to be a certain way and then you will be happy. In your workplace you say, "If my coworkers understood me, if they were better with me, they treated me with more respect, I would be happy." And what's going to happen when you retire? You won't have your coworkers. Then what are you going to do?

Life does not begin when you get married, and life does not end when you get a divorce. Life begins when you took your first breath; life will end when you take your last.

Your life is not about things you do in it. Your life is about your existence. This breath comes into you; you are alive. If you're rich, this breath comes into you; you are alive. If you are poor, this breath comes into you; you're still alive.

And the day this breath doesn't come into you, you are neither rich nor poor. You don't have any relatives. You're automatically divorced—automatically! You don't have any debts! You're automatically debt-free. You don't have to pay any bills anymore. You don't have to pay any taxes. You have automatically also vacated your house; you're now no longer a house-owner.

No—I know this sounds funny, and I'm putting it in a way which is funny—but this



is dead serious. You are a father, you are a mother, you are an uncle, you are a cousin, you are whatever you are, only till this breath is happening. And the day this breath stops, you're nothing.

But do we understand that in our lives?—in our busy little, "rdrdrdrdrdrdr," life, of where it's...everything is da-da-da-da, da-da-da-da, da-da-da-da, da-da-da-da, dah, who has the time, who has the time to think about prosperity as, "My goodness, that involves three things. It needs happiness and wealth and health"? Who has the time to stop and say, "What is the value of this breath for me?"

You see, you have to understand that as a human being you have some needs. You have your dreams—I know you have your dreams—but you have some needs. And this is the way the needs go. Three minutes without breath and you're dead. Is breathing a luxury or a need? Is breathing a want or a need?

Let's get this clear, what is a need; what is a want. Three minutes without breath, you're dead. That's not a want; that's a need. It mandatorily must be there. Three minutes—it's a rule of thumb, okay? Some people can go more; some people can go less. But about three minutes and you are dead. Without this you cannot survive.

Now, what is your want? A television with a remote control that shows high definition pictures. That's not a need. Do you understand? That's not a need. There's no medical term, "This person died because he didn't have a TV."

"This person died because of asphyxiation because he couldn't breathe," yes, that's a

term. "He died of starvation," that's a term. "Died of dehydration," that's a term. But, "He died because he didn't have a TV"—there is no term for it.

And what do you pursue every day? Every day that you get up, in your imagination, using your mind, what are you pursuing? Your need or your wants?

So, need, you don't pay attention to—wants, you pay attention to. Because you will never come across a billboard that says, "Breathe." You will come across a billboard that says, "Buy this soft drink; buy this television; buy this suit; buy this, buy this, and buy this!" And you will look at it and go, "Yes, I would love to have that; I would love to have that; I would love to have that."

Am I here to tell you you should not have wants? That's what's different about me. I am not here to tell you you should not have wants. You should have as many wants as you want—and more! But you should understand your need.

It's called "a perspective." It's called "a perspective." Should you look at your speedometer in your car when you're driving? Yes? And only the speedometer? So, you're driving, you should be like this? You will crash. You should look out the window; you should see the road; you should see behind you; you should look, and look, and look, and look, and look, and look.

This is life! Understand the preciousness of life, and you will understand your need! Fulfill your needs, and you will have happiness.

– Prem Rawat

www.timelesstoday.com



Simplii Financial becomes first digital banking brand in Canada to offer international money transfers and foreign currency delivery

TORONTO, June 13, 2019 – Simplii Financial™ today became the only digital banking brand in Canada to offer international money transfers and foreign cash delivery, ensuring that Canadians with a digital-first mindset who transact globally can easily meet their banking needs when, where and how they want.

For Canadians who need to send money overseas, Simplii Financial™ Global Money Transfer is a no-fee international remittance service that allows clients to send money to more than 75 countries, including the United States, China, India and the Philippines. Clients can easily transfer money at competitive, real-time foreign exchange rates through online or mobile banking and most recipients receive transfers in as little as one business day.

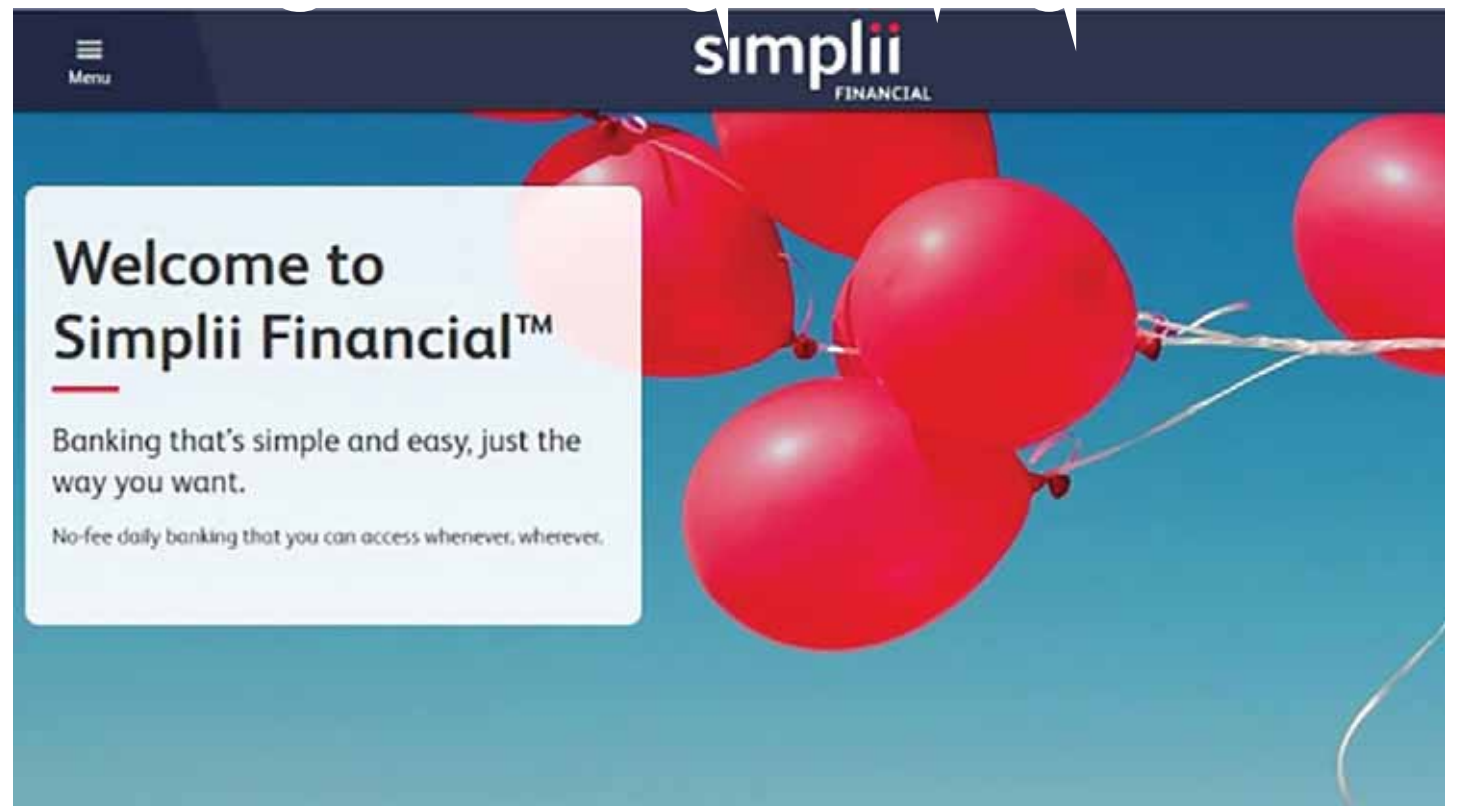
“Whether you’re supporting loved ones far away or need to manage affairs like paying for tuition abroad, Simplii Financial Global Money Transfer is a fast and reliable way to send money overseas with no fees and competitive rates,” says Aayaz Pira, Head of Simplii Financial. “Our digitally-minded clients expect simplicity and the ability to fulfill their banking needs from anywhere, and being the only digital banking brand in Canada to offer international remittances is one of the many ways that Simplii is delivering on those expectations.”

Highlights of Simplii Financial Global Money Transfer:

- No transfer fees or deductions
 - Competitive foreign exchange rates
 - Real-time Simplii foreign exchange rates
 - Capability to send money to 75+ countries
 - Most transfers will be received by the recipient within one business day
 - Daily transfer limit up to \$30,000
- Simplii also launches no-fee online foreign cash delivery service

Simplii has also launched a no-fee foreign cash delivery service. Clients can now use Simplii Financial™ Foreign Cash to order 65 foreign currencies at competitive exchange rates through online or mobile banking, and have the cash delivered securely to their home or preferred Canada Post location.

“When you are planning a trip overseas your to-do list can feel endless, from organizing transportation to the airport to making sure your suitcase meets the weight restrictions, and remembering to order and pick up your



foreign currency can be time consuming,” says Pira. “By using Simplii Financial Foreign Cash to have your foreign currency delivered straight to your door at no extra cost, you can eliminate the hassle and save time to focus on other details – like remembering your passport.”

Highlights of Simplii Financial

Foreign Cash

- No transaction fees or delivery fees anytime
- Competitive foreign exchange rates
- Real-time Simplii foreign exchange rates
- Ability to order up to 65 currencies, delivered to your home or pre-

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- Cash delivered within two-three days for urban locations

To create Simplii Financial Foreign Cash and the Simplii Financial Global Money Transfer, Simplii leveraged innovative platforms developed by CIBC Capital Markets, which offers the same services to CIBC personal and business banking clients.

About Simplii Financial™

Simplii Financial is committed to delivering simple, straightforward banking. With a fully mobile experience, nearly 1.8 million clients enjoy no-fee daily banking with no minimum balance and high interest savings rates. Independently named by Forbes as one of the World’s Best Banks in Canada, Simplii delivers a simple and easy way to bank with 24/7 access to online, mobile and telephone banking as well as access to a national network of over 3,400 CIBC ABMs. For more information about Simplii Financial please visit www.simplii.com or by following on Twitter @SimpliiFin or on Facebook.

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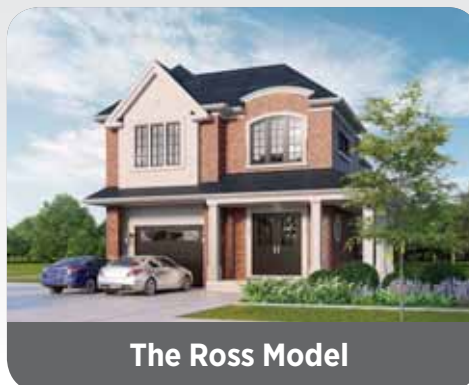
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 Special Feature

IBC Thamizha Toronto 2019 Event draws large crowds at the Scotia Bank Arena

By: Archanaa Sivanathan

The IBC (International Broadcasting Corporation for Tamil) Thamizha Toronto 2019 debut North American show with the participation of Tamil Canadian artistes drew mammoth crowds at the popular Scotia Bank arena on Saturday, June 29, 2019. The colorful and decorated large stage illuminated with colorful lights was a showpiece to the Canadian Tamil audience. The Scotia Bank arena is a notable venue where many reputed events including concerts to sports

games are staged, and has a capacity of around 20,000 seats. The IBC Thamizha event was a proud occasion for the Tamil community because it offered the Canadian Tamil artistes an opportunity to showcase their talents at such a large venue. The large and colorfully illuminated stage itself was a showpiece exhibiting the success of the mega event.

IBC Tamil is a multimedia company offering subscription-free Tamil radio, television, magazine and online services across the globe. The organization exhibited various artistic talents

on stage such as actors, comedians, classical and contemporary music acts in vocal and dance forms. Over 1,000 artistes participated in this event to create a memorable experience for fellow Tamilians who attended the event. Many of the individuals who attended the event had a positive experience mentioning how the performances were beautiful, well staged and enjoyable at every moment. One of the highlights from the event was inside the venue; with its impressive digital screens and lighting that allow individuals who are seated close or far to view the perfor-

mances clearly and enjoy the show. IBC Tamil's goal is to unite all Tamilians across the world to share and connect special and unique stories.

Baskaran Kandiah (Karan), the vibrant entrepreneur successful in many startup ventures across the globe convened the mega IBC Thmizha event. Attendees along with the artistes praised the extra ordinary effort and the commitment shown by Baskaran Kandiah to promote local artistes and talents.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the event)



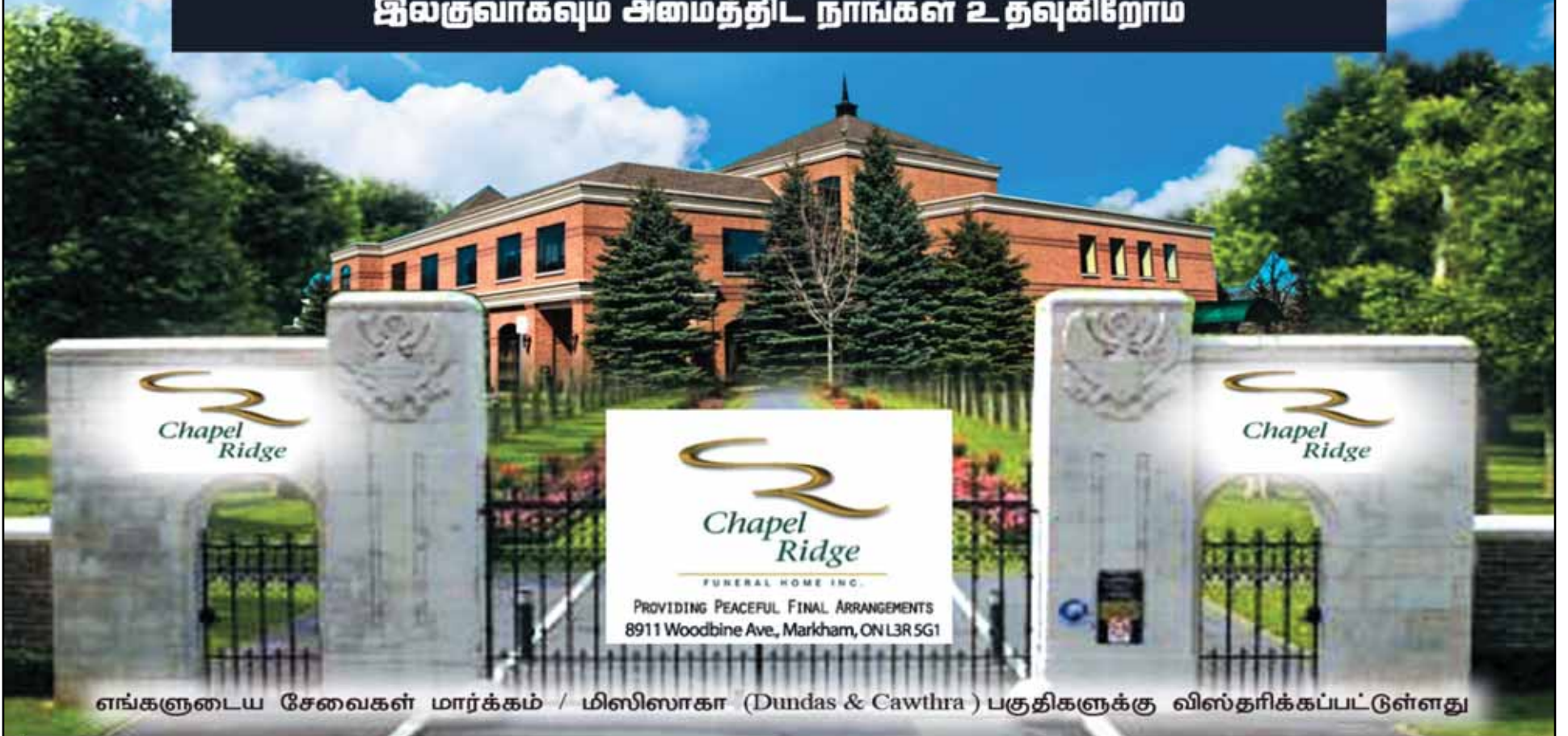


Special Feature



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Special Feature

CHRISTINA



By Kumar Punithavel

Sundaram was lying on the bed staring at the ceiling from the time he woke up in the morning. It was seven, an hour when the households are busiest in Toronto. With or without breakfast, with a cup of coffee everyone will be rushing either to the school or for work. It is the busiest hour without fail in every household.

Sundaram is long past the age of going to school or work. He came to Canada from Ceylon to spend his retirement with his daughter and grandchildren. Now he has not only retired, but also reached the stage of fading.

Sundaram was lying on the bed in the front room of his daughter's house, crippled by arthritis. There was a time when he was holding a high position in Liquor control board in Ceylon. Those days he was a terror for those who brewed illicit liquor in towns like Kaluthura and Kandana. He had served far and wide all over Ceylon and was known as a very strict officer and now retired.

When he lost his wife after a brief illness his daughter Priya invited him to come and stay with her. The temptation was very great to be with the grand kids, and he decided to join them.

Initially he liked the pleasant retirement life in Canada very much. He was able to meet and socialize with his school day friends, friends from his home town and his retired colleagues from the liquor control board. He was able to get over the grief of missing his demised wife to some extent by the busy social life he enjoyed.

As time went by his arthritis started to slowly cripple him. His going out and meeting up with friends started to wane slowly. As time went by, some friends did call in and caught up with him. But this too withered off as time passed by. How long a relationship can be maintained with a person whom they have stop meeting and who had nothing in common in the present. Slowly they moved on leaving him to his own life.

"Thatha, see you in the evening". It was the voice of his grandson leaving to school. "Take care son", he replied and his thoughts started to dwell on the past again.

He never carried big back pack like these days with tons of books when he went to school, he thought. When he walked out of the house with a cloth bag with a couple of books, other friends too will step out of their houses to the lane. They will cluster in small groups and walk to school teasing one another and joking. It will be a very happy charade of young boys and girls. They will return home in the dusk when it is dark after playing in the school sports ground.

Sundaram was re-living the past in his memory. The TV on the wall in front of the bed was showing CP24. Due to his disability Sundaram was given a remote control which he kept on his bed side. His only connection to the outside world is through that television. Suddenly he heard the voice of his daughter, who had peeped through the door curtain and said, "Dad, I am leaving for work. If you need anything please call me on my call. Christina will be here around ten". She left without waiting for an answer. He too replied instinctively from the bed, "Sure Priya, take care of your-self". If he is to get up, Christina has to come.

He felt sorry for his daughter Priya. In the past it was the man's job to be the wage earner of the house. It was a very rare occurrence for a woman to go for work. Times have changed since the Second

World War. When men went to the war front the women had to keep the factories going. Today as a result of that wage earning has become all human beings duty. However, the sad part of it is, the women on top of earning a wage must also take care of the house. His daughter on top of going to work in the bank has to take care of the house hold work and the studies of Rishi too were her responsibility. While he was browsing over these, he heard like a voice from heaven someone calling.

"Bye uncle, if you want anything please call my cell". Saying so Ramesh his Son-in-law moved on to go to his car. Sundaram responded, "Take care thamby". Sundaram switched off the TV with the remote and once again started thinking about the past.

The wall clock showed the time has moved on to 8.05. There is one hour and fifty-five minutes for the arrival of Christina. Day starts rise of the sun, but for Sundaram, the day starts with the arrival of Christina and ends when she returns at one in the afternoon. After that till she come back the following day morning at ten, nothing changes in his life. On her part Christina will go to start the day for someone else who is bedridden. Beyond her arrival there is no expectation in Sundaram's life.

His mind wandered about the rising of sun, and was reminded of an incident happened long ago in Ratnapura where he worked as an excise inspector and had got information that illicit arrack is being brewed. He had gone to Mahanana a village near Ratnapura, early morning, with his officers in the department jeep. He parked the jeep at the foot of the mountain and started climbing, when it was still dark with his team of officers. When he finally reached the summit of the mountain, the sun just coming out. Looking from the summit at the dawn sky, it was indeed a beautiful panoramic colour of different shades of red. Sun was rising like a bright revolving red disc. Even to this day that scene was lingering in his mind vividly like an indelible art. He was waiting for Christina to come with a bright smiling face like that dawn sun.

While reflecting on the past, he thought, had his wife lived, he would not have this loneliness. He felt anger rising towards her. Just two months after his retirement she just left him alone to mind his life and departed, as if her job is finished. Her demise was by a sudden heart attack without any previous symptoms. Had she been there this loneliness and humiliation of depending on others would not have been there. At the same time, he felt guilty and sad, thinking that he had never thanked her for ceaseless care and devotion she showed on him. Her death was a great loss from which he never fully recovered.

There is a common saying in Tamil, 'the value of salt is felt when it is not there, likewise the value of father will be realized when he is no more'. For Sundaram, the value of his wife he realized after she was no more.

Sundaram felt that each and every husband and wife must learn to express gratitude to one another.

His daughter wakes up very

early, feeds breakfast and dress-up her son to go to school. Next, she dresses and rushes to work, sometimes with a cup of coffee only in the morning. In the evenings on her return from work she does the cooking, followed by doing the school assignments with Rishi. She revolves like a top the whole evening. If it is a holiday, she has to do the washing, marketing, house cleaning. All this she does without a word of gratitude or appreciation from her loving husband.

Sundaram started the TV again, and checked the time on the wall clock. Another forty-five minutes remained for the arrival of Christina. He may be lying on the bed motionless, but he could not stop his mind from wandering all over the world. His thoughts kept roaming.

When he was in deep sorrow a few days after his wife's death, his friend Somu came with a supposedly a great saint, as he mentioned. Whether he was a great saint or not he did have a great mustache and a great beard too. He understood it is quite possible an ascetic living in the jungle away from the folks might have a beard for want of a shaver. But modern-day saints grow a beard to proclaim they are ascetic. The chain of thoughts brought a smile on Sundaram's face.

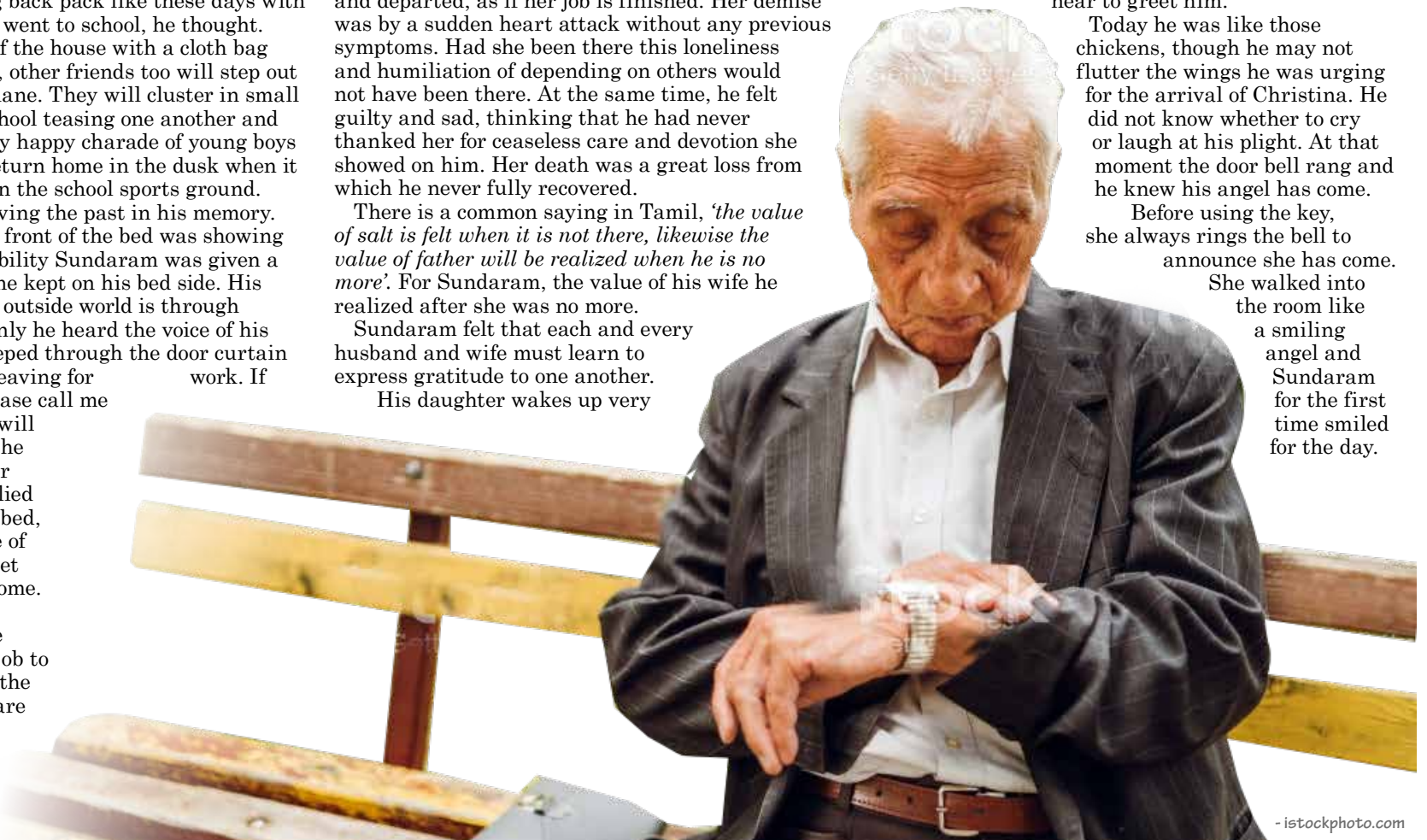
The so-called great saint said, as if he was seated next to the good Lord when he did the creation told him, "Son, when God created, he also decrees when the person should die". What struck in Sundaram's mind was if the good God is putting an expiry date while creating, then why did he not ask the good Lord why create? Honest truth is no one knows. Apart from use the time available usefully, there is nothing else to do. He remembered of another great saint Yogar swami, who lived in Jaffna his home town mentioning 'we do not know'.

It was time for Christina to come, and she had been given a front door key as he cannot go and open the door. When he realized that it is time for her to come, his heart beat started racing. He felt as if he lives the whole day for Christina's arrival. Suddenly a thought came to his mind. Well these days for Sundaram it is about recounting the thoughts of the past. When he worked in Chillaw the coastal town he had a chicken pen. Whenever he went to feed them, all the birds will flutter the wings and rush near to greet him.

Today he was like those chickens, though he may not flutter the wings he was urging for the arrival of Christina. He did not know whether to cry or laugh at his plight. At that moment the door bell rang and he knew his angel has come.

Before using the key, she always rings the bell to announce she has come.

She walked into the room like a smiling angel and Sundaram for the first time smiled for the day.



- istockphoto.com



Gracious Compassion



- inkedmag.com

By: *Jesudason John Aputharajah*

***“Kannukku anikalam
kannoddam, ahuthu inrel,
Pun enru unarappadum”.***

Gracious compassion is uniquely a great quality; it helps the world to move smoothly. The world exists and functions because of the gracious compassion of its benevolent leaders. Where this quality is absent the government becomes a burden to good earth.

Shakespeare utters the same idea when he narrates in the ‘Merchant of Venice: ‘The quality of mercy is not strained; it droppeth like gentle rain from heaven’.

Where the tune, the expression and

words of a song do not accord, there is no sense in it; so too, it is meaningless to have eyes that do not possess compassionate graciousness. Eyes that do not exercise gracious compassion, albeit within expected bounds, only appears like eyes but not serve any purpose. The eyes that do not possess and exercise the quality of gracious compassion, are like a couple of sores on the face. Men who have eyes, that do not possess and exhibit gracious compassion, are like trees fixed to the earth. People who do not possess gracious compassion really have no eyes; Those who have eyes will surely have compassionate graciousness. The man who can exercise

gracious compassion without interference with duty, will certainly inherit the earth.

Valluvar underlines the essence of practicing compassion without prejudice to purposeful performance of one’s prescribed duties. Even towards a person who deserves severe punishment for his offence, forbearance and correction are better methods to adopt. He is said to possess the very quality of courtesy and graciousness, can drink poison even after seeing it poured in his presence. It simply means that the gracious persons will accept even things which are not quite to their taste instead of refusing it outright and offend the person who gave it to him.

***“Kannodam illavar kannilar, kaanudayar,
Kannoddam inmaiyum ill”***

(Kural: 271-280)



Valluvar’s Views

How to avoid Summer Learning Loss



By: R. Shu

Administrative Coordinator at RG Education Centers. Students all look forward to the summer holiday. It is a much needed break from school, and they can enjoy two months of sunny, warm weather without having to worry about homework. However, the summer holiday isn't all sunshine and rainbows.

In fact, the summer holiday poses as a period of potential learning loss for students who had just been actively involved and engaged in school for ten months. Numerous academic journals have published several research studies on the effects of the summer holiday on students, and found that students who do not continue participating in educational programs in the summer do not retain as much of their progress from the school year as their classmates who have. Those who are exposed to more educational opportunities in the summer are observed to require less revision at the beginning of the next school year compared to their classmates, who require up to one month of revision before feeling ready to start a new curriculum.

Regression appears to be more prominent in students' mathematics skills than in language, particularly because language development tends to occur much more naturally and is more readily enforced at home. Mom or dad are more likely to ask their kids to read a book than to practise math questions. However, that is not to say that math should be the only focus for student learning in the summer.

So how can you avoid summer learning loss? Keep


your children engaged on the following year's studies. Registering your kids in summer school is a great way to keep your children focused and to ensure they continue putting their learning to use. There should be plenty of summer camps available for students to participate in, and even your local library should have various programs running in the summer to help keep kids engaged.

For the parents who worry about summer learning loss, but still want to give their kids a break from school, registering them at a tutoring center is a great option. Tutoring centers provide regularly scheduled learning opportunities for your kids throughout the summer and provides an adequate amount of homework to keep them busy at home, while still giving them lots of free time to enjoy the summer and family time.

RG Education Centers provides tutoring classes throughout the summer to help students transition to the next school year. The summer is an excellent opportunity for your kids to keep practising their language and math skills and to stay ahead of their classmates in September. Music and art programs are also available for students who want to participate in more extracurricular activities. High school students are also welcome to inquire about supplementary classes for their summer courses.

For inquiries about registration, please visit www.rgeducation.net or call (416) 609-9508 to book an appointment for a free evaluation.






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Giving the Gift of Education



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At RG Education Centers, we believe that all individuals have the potential to excel when given the proper materials and attention. RG Education Centers empowers students to reach their full potential by helping them master the skills and knowledge they need for success at a higher level.

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5G THE DATA COULD REACH US WITHIN A MILLISECOND, 50 TIMES FASTER THAN 4G

By: Uthayan Thurairajah

Wireless has made astonishing improvements over the last four decades. We are now on the edge of 5G (the fifth generation) wireless communications. The first generation (1G) of wireless technology was introduced in the early 1980s to wireless telephones (mobile). These phones were only for talking and had almost no capacity to transmit data. They existed alongside other wireless technologies, but these technologies were not able to connect or “talk” to each other.

2G was launched in the early 1990s, marked as better quality in sound, security, and more data capacity for our mobile phones. Email and text messaging services came on stream. Customers started swapping their pagers for mobile phones and send text messages directly to another person.

3G brought high-speed transmissions, multimedia access, and global roaming. Also, wireless cell phones could be connected in more places and greater distances 24/7.

4G introduced new apps and connection to the Internet. It has become faster and cheaper and allowed surf the Internet, send data, watch, send and post videos, listen to live streaming music, social media, and many applications on cellphones.

5G is a game changer in wireless telecommunications. It is a network for the future which can connect more devices and provide higher speeds and faster communication.

In Raptors rally, a lot of people in downtown, and they want to send pictures, videos, or FaceTime with friends and family requires a lot of data. Everyone is trying to connect to the network at the same time. We can not get a signal because there is not enough capacity in the system. 5G will address that through advances in three primary areas: connectivity, response time, and bandwidth.

CONNECTIVITY: The number of devices that can communicate with each other successfully. More than five billion devices are already connected than ever. The number of devices connected expected to reach 50 to 100 billion devices worldwide by 2020. Smartphones are extensively used to communicate with other people. The equipment and machines will increasingly talk directly to each other with 5G. The Internet of Things (IoT) is to connect objects to the Internet to control and communicate with each other. A good example is a thermostat for our house can be connected to WiFi so that we can adjust the air conditioning or heat remotely.

RESPONSE TIME: It refers to time takes between sending and receiving a package of information from one device to another across the network. The time takes with 4G is about 50 milliseconds. It is faster than the blink of an eye. 5G will reduce to about one millisecond or one-thousandth of a second. It is very crucial for driverless cars where a fast response time essential to make split-second decisions. For example, when we are cruising along the highway in our driverless car, just up ahead an accident occurs. The 5G sensors along the road would instantly transmit that information to our car alerting each car to the danger ahead. It will potentially avoid another or a multiple-vehicle accident.

BANDWIDTH: 5G will allow very high downloading speeds for new applications such as 3D (360-degree-view) video



streaming. The classroom experience will be transformed into more realistic, immersive, and interactive. The headsets will be mobile, not plugged into a computer. History can be studied by virtually walking on the streets of an ancient civilization.

WHAT IS THE FREQUENCY?

5G runs in below and above 6GHz airwaves. Low-frequency 5G networks use existing cellular and Wi-Fi bands, take advantage of more flexible encoding and bigger channel sizes to achieve speeds, according to T-Mobile executive, Karri Kuoppamaki.

Rural networks will stick with low-band 5G, low-frequency bands have a broad range of coverage from towers. The carriers have to turn into newer, much higher frequencies, as millimeter wave to get super-high, multi-gigabit speeds. The existing cellular bands have relatively narrow channels which spectrum is so busy and heavily used.

The millimeter wave signals drop off faster with distance than the lower-frequency one. The massive amount of data transfer will require more connections to landline internet. The cellular providers will have to use many smaller, lower-power base stations (generally outputting 2-10 watts). The fewer more powerful macrocells (which output 20-40 watts) to offer the multi-gigabit speeds millimeter wave networks.

The carriers have already installed “small cells” in many major cities to increase capacity for 4G. In those cities, they can add new radio onto the existing site to make it 5G. The third set of airwaves are used overseas is a mid-band frequency, ranging from 3.5GHz to 7GHz. It is slightly above current cellular bands but has quantities of the spectrum like millimeter wave.

The United States (USA) is falling behind other countries in the mid-band spectrum. It is currently used by a mixture of groups including satellite companies and the Navy. Mid-band networks

will not require quite as many cell sites as millimeter wave, although they still need pretty dense about 500m spacing.

5G IN CANADA

5G will change various features of life in Canada, including automotive technology, rural connectivity, and the development of smarter homes and cities. As Bernard Bureau, vice-president of the 5G spectrum and wireless networks at Telus said: “5G is a lot more than just another G.” It establishes the stage for the next big wireless evolution, and it does so with more forethought than any previous wireless generation. It was designed from the beginning and not just build on the past wireless generations, but to provide a flexible cover for groundbreaking applica-



tions that have yet to be invented. There’s no clear indication of what innovations will rule the 5G era. The analysts and experts have some educated opinions.

The technologies required to make the most of 5G broadly fall into three categories: 1. Evolution of mobile broadband, 2. Technologies that build on current use but demand higher speeds, 3. lower response time. Next generation of Internet of Things (IoT): Experts predict the number of connected things from home appliances to city infrastructure.

5G networks will provide low cost and long battery life. It is perfect for Mission-critical applications such as self-driving cars and remotely-connected drones. For

these applications, faster response time and error-free communication are essential.

5G networks will be expected to reach up to 20Gbps download speeds. It will also lower the time to begin accessing content from the network. When first launched 5G networks recently, peak speeds came around 6Gbps, while latency was a single digit.

A key band of spectrum for 5G is millimeter wave spectrum. Millimeter wave is a very high-frequency band that offers high data speeds but has a short range. To achieve it, we need to install many mmWave antennas across any given coverage area, everywhere from inside buildings to street lighting poles.

Naturally, the urban areas will get a taste of the 5G first. We will see the first deployments in densely-populated meeting places. Rogers is staging a 5G field experiment in the Rogers Centre in downtown Toronto. Huawei and Telus have also centered many of their 5G Living Lab efforts around British Columbia (BC) Place in downtown Vancouver. The next-generation networks can be piloted real-time in a crowded setting with heavy data demands. It is noteworthy to understand even in areas with mmWave; we are not going to notice or see those peak speeds in real life.

“Widespread business rollout of 5G in Canada will greatly depend on the availability of proper spectrum,” according to Bureau. “The 3.5 GHz band being selected globally for 5G will be crucial for 5G as it offers the best coverage and speed. However, no timelines have been set for any 5G spectrum auctions in Canada.” International standards body (3GPP) published the first 5G specification in December 2017. The first customers are likely to see hit the market are 5G wireless hubs that act as fixed broadband substitutes. Telus and Huawei have revealed in their joint venture Vancouver trials. Experts can talk all day about 5G’s potential, but all that matters to consumers are the practical ways that will enrich their lives. “We

need for more capacity,” notes Sherif Hanna, director of product marketing at Qualcomm. In a broader sense,

5G is expected to usher in an era that shifts its focus from connecting people to connecting things. “The Internet of Things will do for 5G what the smartphone did for 4G,” says Rob Backhouse, vice-president of wireless technical sales and solutions at telecom infrastructure giant Huawei.

5G will be an entirely new, flexible network that will interface with all current and evolving generations of wireless technology. It will be faster, more flexible, and will allow billions of new devices to be connected. Everything will be in communication from household items to cars to the city and industrial infrastructure. It will change our lives, and the broader society, forever.



Uthayan Thurairajah, Ph.D., RSE, LC, P.Eng., FEC, is a Project Manager at WSP with over twenty years of experience in Electrical Engineering and Lighting field, and he also holds a Lecturer position at Ryerson University & professor at Centennial. Uthayan is a member of several Canadian and international professional association including Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) and Association for Prevention Teaching and Research (APTR). He has worked on multi-disciplinary lighting and electrical projects for various clients. He researches the subject of light and lighting and taken part in several projects. He also has extensive research experience in the value of lighting design in the mental, emotional, and social well-being of a person. He is a frequent presenter and author of lighting design & health. He is passionate about integrating science and health into the lighting design.



MANAGING YOUR MONEY

5 reasons to discuss your estate plan now

David Joseph, M.A.(Economics), CFP®, CLU, RRC.

Some things are difficult to talk about with family – and death leads that list. The reluctance is understandable but now is the time to have a conversation about death and money with your loved ones – it's the best way to iron out estate planning issues, reduce potential inheritance hostilities and share your wishes with beneficiaries. Here are the top five reasons to discuss your estate plan with your loved ones now:

1. Eliminate surprises If your estate isn't left in the manner your beneficiaries expect, the results can be resentment and even litigation. So, if you're planning to do anything out of the ordinary, now is the time to provide your reasons.

2. Ask about special requests You might assume you know which assets are important to each child but your guesses could be wrong. For example, the child you assumed wants the cottage may not be interested all. Now is the time to ask your beneficiaries about their special requests.

may have decided that one child should receive less of your estate because they have already received money from you (perhaps for a house or car or to start a business) or to give specific assets to specific children that are of unequal value, which can lead to resentment. That's why now is the time to discuss any unequal divisions, the reasons for them, and potential solutions such as one child purchasing sufficient insurance on your life to "buy out" a large asset from their sibling(s) with the insurance proceeds.

When it comes to our finances, we often complicate matters more than they need to be. This is usually inadvertent – we have an intention to make something easy and clear-cut, but end up making it more complicated because we didn't seek the right advice, or thought we knew more than we really did.

Wills are no different – they can be as straightforward or complicated as we want them to be. But in situations where there are multiple beneficiaries

who are in higher tax brackets.

It is not absolutely necessary to have a lawyer prepare your Will, but it is highly recommended. You should also create a Living Will and a Power of Attorney that designates person(s) of your choice to make financial and health related decisions on your behalf should you become too ill to do so on your own. Generally speaking the purchase of Will kits and Power of Attorney kits at various retail stores or on line is NOT recommended, as it is easy to to make mistakes. A holograph Will is one prepared by you in your own handwriting and signed by you without

ability and receives social assistance – receiving a lump-sum of money could cut them off from that assistance, so depending upon which province they live in, structuring the will so the inheritance is received in a trust (specifically a Henson trust) can ensure the money is protected while still receiving government benefits.

A lot of people make their wills more complicated than they need to be, but in general, a lack of proper planning ahead of time can make things more difficult.

Things can get tricky when you designate certain assets to specific beneficiaries. Asset values can differ from one another, they can change over time, and their after-tax value may be less than what's expected – all which complicates matters when it becomes clear that one beneficiary will receive more than the other, even if that wasn't the original intention (for example, when dividing an estate between children). Updating your will and clearly defining equal distribution can help mitigate these situations.

The correct way to create a will is to start from scratch. Avoid pre-prepared will kits. It's not that the wording in those kits is incorrect, but rather they don't fully prepare people for what they may or may not need. This can result in a situation that becomes more complicated. Therefore, the assistance of a well-qualified lawyer – specifically one who has their Trust & Estate Practitioner (TEP) designation – in drafting your will can help to ensure your situation is being handled properly.

It's also important to plan your finances outside of your will. Work with your professional advisor to understand what the value of your estate actually is – in particular its after-income-tax value – to help you determine how to divide the estate equitably in your will.

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3. Manage expectations For example, you have appointed only one of your two children as Executor. The child you have not appointed may feel that the appointed sibling somehow influenced you to give them more power over the estate. You may have a good reason for doing so – perhaps because the non-appointed child is a non-resident of Canada. Now is the time to provide your reasons.

4. Introduce your advisors Your family may not know the professionals who know the history behind your estate plan, the location of your will and assets, and other important information. Now is the time to introduce your beneficiaries to your lawyer, accountant and/or financial advisor.

5. Explain unequal divisions You

or unique circumstances, getting the right advice at the beginning is key to reducing headaches down the road.

A Will is the foundation of any estate plan. It designates how your estate should be distributed according to your documented wishes. If you die without a will (i.e. intestate), provincial legislation will determine how your estate is distributed amongst your heirs, which may not be consistent with your intentions. Suitable arrangements for minor children and other dependents could be made in a Will and in particular guardians could be named for them. Having a properly drafted will minimizes delays, costs and the complexities of passing on your estate. It reduces taxes to the extent possible, in some cases by creating Testamentary trusts for beneficia-

witnesses. Such a Will can raise many problems and should be avoided except in an emergency. The bottom line: When it comes to Wills, professional advice is well worth the cost.

The complicated nature of a will often arises due to the structure of the person's family, as opposed to the makeup of their assets. For example, in a situation where there is a second marriage or a blended family, an individual may want to leave a portion of their estate to children from their first marriage, and another portion to their new spouse.

Other examples include certain beneficiaries residing in a different jurisdiction that contain different tax regulations. Or a beneficiary has a dis-



LET'S TALK MONEY:

- A homemakers' guide to Financial Planning

By Rajini Nathan



If this is the first time you're reading this article, let me give you a brief update. I've been sitting with Mirna Yogeswaran from Inforce Life Financial Services Inc. in an effort to understand how to best secure myself financially. This journey into exploring finance options is being documented here in segments in the hope that others' in a similar situation may be able to benefit from this too.

We are currently working through a document titled 'Bringing clarity to your financial plan' to enable Mirna to understand where I stand financially and what my risks are. This type of information gathering process happens at the onset of all finance related meetings and in the previous article we looked briefly at the need for a net amount of reserve income, the importance of a line of credit and a few investment options. Now this is where it gets serious; as Mirna takes me through the emergencies that none of us want to think about and we start with critical illness.

One of the first and a repeated question throughout the document that we are working through is how that particular scenario will affect our long term saving plan. I questioned what the purpose of this particular question was as in my opinion anything that takes money away from my bank account does affect my savings. It was explained that this particular question was there to enable the client to focus clearly on the reality of what they may be faced with and the first scenario we look into is critical illness.

What would you need capital, which is just a nicer way of saying money, for? Is the first question. They break it down for us further. Medical treatment, Income replacement, debts, on-going

medical treatment- wait! Isn't that the same as the first one? Apparently not. Just seeing all these terms on the page was enough to set me into thinking mode. How much would my family be affected if one or more members were in a situation of critical illness; would we be able to face the costs? Do we have insurance cover? What would be our financial situation if the main breadwinner in our family was unable to work, either temporarily or permanently? See, I told you it was scary. It isn't comfortable to think about. But life isn't always a bed of roses either, and I'd rather be faced with these questions now, than be caught off guard at some point. Again, that's the other side of these things. They may not happen. Not everyone faces a situation where they are critically ill. Also, why would you want to think of something so negative, isn't that like tempting fate? As you can see, I'm much better at asking questions than answering them; but Mirna had one response for me.

In Canada, there is an option to take out critical illness policies, where if the policy is not cashed the premiums (that's the money that we pay each month) are returned in full. This is only for policies that are require quite a hefty monthly payment. Secondly, even though we have OHIP in Canada, certain treatments and even certain medications are not covered by OHIP and may not be covered by your company Insurance either. As someone with ongoing medical issues, I know that this is a very real situation as month on month I am sometimes caught up in battles with my own insurance providers.

Mirna has definitely got me thinking. How much coverage would my household need to cover a critical illness? Our work policies cover that for us, I reply smugly. Then she swerves at me; for how many years would that coverage protect you, and in terms of

medication how many months would that cover? Does your current plan meet inflation? No point in taking an insurance policy out that will not be able to meet the rising costs of medical treatments. Also does it give tax benefits for business owners who have corporate policies? I was beginning to see that Mirna is as versed in asking questions as I am. It was now time for me to take a closer look at my current coverage.

Critical illness policies can be taken out for 10, 20 years and also till a particular age, although the premiums are extortionate, they could act as a good retirement policy, a kind of backhanded way of saving as well as insuring yourself and your family against a case of unexpected critical illness. Now, do you have an advisor that would do an annual review for you and explain the latest products available? Mirna asked. I do now I thought looking at her.

The Canadian cancer society says that Cancer, at 30%, is now the leading cause for death in Canada. Based on estimates from 2010, they found that 1 in 2 Canadians is expected to develop cancer in their lifetime and 1 out of 4 is expected to die from cancer (Source Canadian Cancer Society)

She's made a very valid point. I should now definitely check my policy a little more closely as I know for sure that some cancer treatments can be agonisingly expensive.

It doesn't get any better as we discuss the prospect of disability and long term care. Group disability cover that is available from most work places is, for obvious reasons, not tailor made for individuals and in most cases completely void should the individual leave the company that has provided the policy. The limitations of the policy, that is, do they cover certain types of accident only and is soft tissue damage covered are also aspects Mirna encouraged me to check. In addition to this I

also need to see if this policy is indexed to inflation (I'm getting better at this lingo) and if it is for an individuals' own occupation, or any occupation. This means that even if you are unable to do your current job, a policy which is for any occupation would then not be paid if there was some kind of other job that you could do. Ouch! That is not the kind of situation I'd like to find myself in.

The final point of conversation was long term care. With both our parents living overseas, our family situation is slightly different to that of the average Canadian family. Costs for a personal service worker could be between \$20-\$30 per hour. Registered nurses cost between \$40-\$69 per hour with full time assisted living costing between \$1,500- \$5000 each month. This excludes costs such as hospital beds, scooters, walkers, bath lifts and ramps which can all cost in excess of \$10,000. (Source business.financialpost.com) In the event that we needed to consider caring for someone in our family long term, we would seriously have to consider what our options would be and if we would be able to afford this in our current situation.

Like most immigrant families, mine would always think of bringing someone from a developing country to help in situations like this. However, the reality of immigration and employment laws now mean that such an arrangement could still be eye wateringly expensive, if not illegal. So, with a lot of reviewing to do to see how much I am currently covered. I'll leave you with all these thoughts to filter through and until next time,

Ciao for now!

If you would like to contact Mirna Yogeswaran you can do so at kalaimirna@gmail.com



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LET'S CREATE A GROWTH STRATEGY TOGETHER.



Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada's 16th Annual General Meeting

Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada had its 16th Annual General Meeting on Sunday, June 23th, 2019 at Edward Village Hotel, Toronto. There were about 40 members present to witness the meeting which was chaired by President Shobana Rajah. In her speech, Shobana expressed her gratitude to the committee members who have supported her in making this year, a historically best one.

Association Treasurer Janani Sivasuthan was

very pleased to present the financial statements to the audience and Secretary Ari Ariaran read his report about the association activities.

The new committee was elected on that day. Ratna Muralitharan elected as president along with 17 other office bearers.

As a highlight of the event, the association granted "Honorary memberships" for Kubes Navaratnam of Nava Wilson LLB for his invaluable support to the

association in the past several years. Kubes expressed his excitement and pleasure to receive the Honorary Membership in the association and thanked the committee for choosing him for this prestigious membership.

Annual General Meeting was followed by a networking dinner. Please see some of the pictures taken at the meeting.





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GENIE SISTERS

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Welcome to our recipe corner! We sisters will entice you with recipes that we have fallen in love with and teach you a little Tamil along the way, as all the ingredients will have their Tamil names. Both of us love to cook and we have developed very different styles. Niranjini has a very refined palate and cooks more contemporary world cuisine with an Asian touch. Rajini is the founder of Tamilfood and teaches individual and group cooking classes in Toronto and abroad. Follow us on Instagram: @ninjaeatsfood and @tamil_food Facebook: /tamilfoodclasses Eat more, learn more!

Sisters Niranjini Thirunesan and Rajini Nathan are both food enthusiasts from England. Niranjini, who lives in London, has a degree in Human Biology and is a trained chef. She makes it her business to know everything about what she eats, from nutritional value to source producers. Follow her food obsession on Instagram @ninjaeatsfood.

Rajini, lives in Toronto and has a background in psychology. Her speciality is in Tamil food from around the world, catch up on her meal ideas on Instagram @tamil_food.

GONGURA (PULITCHAKEERAI) CURRY

Gongura leaves are in season. Available at local Tamil grocery stores, these leaves are also called red sorrel or puli/ puitchakeerai in Tamil. They have a distinct sour taste and are an excellent combination for earthy lentils or meaty dishes. This recipe is all the way from Malaysia will definitely tantalise your taste buds.

Ingredients:

- ✓ 1 bunch of gongura leaves (pulitchakeerai)
- ✓ 1-2 green chillies (patchaimilagai)
- ✓ 5 small shallots- whole, peeled (chinnavengaayam)
- ✓ 1 tbs sesame oil (nallennai)
- ✓ 1 tsp mustard seeds (kadugu)
- ✓ ½ diced Bombay/ Ceylon onion (vengaayam)
- ✓ ½ inch ginger (inji)
- ✓ 2-3 dry red chillies (varamilagai)
- ✓ ½ tsp manjal (turmeric)
- ✓ 3 garlic cloves, skin on (poondu/ulli)
- ✓ 5 garlic cloves, peeled and diced
- ½ cup cooked toor dhal/ lentils (tuvaram paruppu)



Method:

Boil the toor dhal until cooked and set aside. In a pan add the washed gongura leaves and the diced garlic, shallots and green chilli(es) along with a cup of water and boil till the leaves are cooked. Add less garlic if the cloves are quite big and also choose between 1 or two green chillies depending on your spice levels. Cooking this should take 2-5 minutes according to the size of your vessel and heat. Once done, set aside to cool and then pulse in a mixie or mash to a pulp by hand. Next, in a pan add the oil and once heated the mustard seeds. Wait for them to pop and add the red chillies. Pound the 3 cloves of garlic with the skin on and add to the mixture with the skin. Add the diced onions and ginger next and cook till the onions are golden brown in colour. Once cooked add to this the mashed gongura leaves and the lentils with turmeric and salt and cook for a further 5-10 minutes on a low flame. Instead of the lentils, you could add eggplant or netthili (dry fish) as well-

for those recipes contact Tamilfood on Facebook or Instagram. Try making this recipe this month and

Hashtag #monsoonjournal on Instagram and send us your pics, comments and feedback. Spread the love (and recipe!) :)



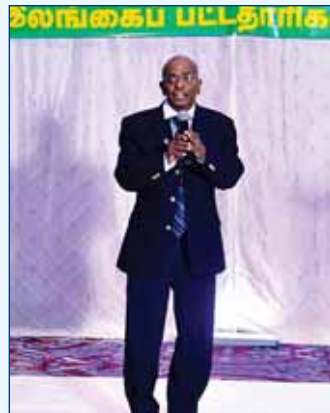
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SRILANKAN GRADUATES OF CANADA'S (ASGC) 30th ANNIVERSARY DINNER & DANCE EVENT

On Saturday June 22nd 2019, ASGC celebrated its 30th annual get-together and dinner at Kennedy Convention Center, Scarborough. The event was emceed by one of ASGC'S young energetic executive member Krishni Ganesan. The President, Dr.V.Mannivannan in his welcome address thanked the members, their families and well-wishers of ASGC for their support and the strong faith they have on ASGC for the community service. He also highlighted the success of the three workshops conducted by ASGC in this academic year in collaboration with the school boards in the GTA. Mayooran Somanathan, an executive member presented a synopsis on ASGC's history and its significant contributions over the years with a slide show.

ASGC was proud to honour the partnership of York Region District School Board and Peel District School Board by presenting appreciation awards to them. These awards were received by Initha Subramaniam of YRDSB and Nalayini Moorthy of PDSB on behalf of their school boards. ASGC also recognized the partnership of Canadian Tamil Professional Association (CTPA) in the organization of workshops. The Toronto District School Board trustees, Mr. Parthi Kandavel and Dr.Anu Sriskantharajah attended the event and congratulated ASGC'S achievement. The audience was entertained with dance performances and musical interludes arranged by some of our executives, Thiva Kulasingam, Suresh Tharmalingam, Suhumar Nadarajah and Nel Ketharanathan.

A great thank you to all the executive members of ASGC for their great volunteer service to the community.

(By: Dr.K.Theivendirarajah, ASGC executive member. Photos courtesy: Lucky Exclusive Studios)





BATU CAVES - MALAYSIA'S BIGGEST TOURIST ATTRACTION SITE

Enshrines the most venerated Murugan Temple



C. Kamalaharan

I have seen photos of Lord Murugan's magnificent statue at Batu Caves close to the base of the staircase that leads devotees up to the temple cave. But I haven't come across photos displaying the interior setup of the temple cave. During my recent visit to the site I was keen to climb the 272 step steps and explore the interior. But I was in two minds whether to climb or not considering the declining years of my life. Yet unable to resist my craving I finally decided to climb. Forewarned about snatching of food parcels and other items by prowling monkeys along the extreme left of the row of steps I set off along the extreme right and went up cautiously step by step holding the supportive railings firmly. Climbing the steps was real physical exertion for the elderly. Due to this whenever I felt exhausted I rested for a while and resumed my climbing. When I finally reached the top my joy was boundless, a great achievement for my age. Looking back from the entrance of the temple cave the panoramic view below was breathtaking.

As I stepped into the temple cave an expansive area with roof extremely high the first thing I saw on the left was a temple which remained closed and a row of about fifty steps at the far end on the right. While moving around the statues of Lord Vinayaka, Lord Shiva, Goddess Parvathi and Lord Murugan resting on limestone sedimentary rocks gave me a feeling of being in celestial kingdom. Separately placed the statue of Lord Murugan beside his peacock vehicle was really captivating. Four sets of stairways each having about 50 steps at the far end took us to the upper cave a small space with an open ceiling that lets light in. In this cave is the Valli Theivanai temple.

Batu Caves is a limestone hill. In 1920 wooden steps were constructed which were later replaced

by concrete steps. Last year the steps were given an attractive colourful makeover. At the entrance close to the staircase is the 140 feet tall glittering statue of Lord Murugan. It is the tallest Murugan statue in the world. To paint such a massive statue 300 litres of gold paint was brought from Thailand.

Batu Caves temple has become a pilgrimage site for Hindus worldwide. It has become the focal point of the annual Hindu festival Thaipusam which falls in the month of 'Thai' (Jan/Feb) according to the Tamil calendar. That day coincides with 'Pourami' (Full moon) when the moon transits through the



zodiac sign 'Katakam' (Cancer). This particular day is considered auspicious as any activity undertaken on this day will be successful. This day also bears another significance. It was on this day Goddess Parvathi handed the Divine 'Vel' (Spear) to Lord Murugan to fight the demon Soorapadman according to Hindu mythology.

Thaipusam festival is celebrated for three days at Batu Caves temple. It commences with a grand procession from Sri Mahamariamman temple during the wee hours and reaches Batu Caves temple

by noon. The main attraction in the procession is the bullock drawn silver 'Mancham' (chariot) in which Lord Subramaiam and his consorts Valli and Theivanai are seated on the pedestal in the centre. The 'Mancham' moves along the 15 km stretch of road for almost 8 hours to reach Batu Caves.

While the procession moves at a snail's pace the main entertainment for the onlookers along the wayside is the spectacular display of 'Kavady' (kavady attam). To fulfill their vows the men carry on their shoulders 'kavady' (wooden arches decorated with peacock feathers) attached to their body by metal hooks and pins. Their tongues and cheeks are also pierced by long pins. Shouldering 'kavady' is an act of penance for purification. Devotees who shoulder 'kavady' with full faith in Lord Murugan do not feel the pain as they are in a state of trance being lulled by the loud chanting of 'arohara', singing of devotional songs, clanging of cymbals and the rhythmic beatings of drums and other percussion instruments. In addition devotees both men and women carry bowls of milk (Pal kudam) to fulfill their vows.

Devotees who accompany the procession barefoot in the scorching heat on arrival at Batu Caves temple climb the 272 steps and reach the sanctum of Lord Subramaniam and pray in earnest. Some of them will be in a state of trance. Later the hooks and pins attached to the body are removed and wounds treated. After 2 days the procession recommences and returns to Sri Muthumariamman temple.

Thaipusam the most impressive annual festival held once a year in Malaysia attracts more than a million devotees and fascinated onlookers. They make a beeline for the festival at Batu Caves within the country and from abroad. They observe the day as a day of thanksgiving and paying penance to Lord Murugan. It is a public holiday in Malaysia. A visit to the temple during ones lifetime is a worthwhile pilgrimage for Murugan devotees.



Scarborough-Guildwood fundraiser dubbed an unparalleled success

by Raymond Rajabalan

Effectively coordinated planning coupled with great ground work provided by a dedicated team of volunteers resulted in the fundraiser event for Quintus Thuraisingham, the Conservative candidate for Scarborough-Guildwood riding to be a great success, said Dr. Tham Vasanthakumar, the Fundraising Chair for the event.

The event held on the evening of June 6th at the JC's Banquet Hall in Scarborough had every indication of success right from the very beginning with dozens of ardent supporters arriving well ahead of the scheduled time.

Soon after the introductory comments made by the joint masters of ceremonies Brian Vethanayagam and Mariam Yusufi, the evening's program began with the Canadian national anthem recited by Rachel Remissiar.

The first speaker of the evening was Garnett Genuis, the youthful Federal Member of parliament for the riding of Sherwood Park-Fort Saskatchewan (Alberta). He made a very passionate appeal to the audience to provide their maximum support to make sure Quintus to become part of the new Government expected to be elected to power in October.

The next speaker was Pauline Browes, former Minister of State for the Environment, former Minister of State for Employment and Immigration and also the former Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Pauline emphasized that we all have a new vision for the future of this great country and we also have unlimited potential to develop this nation. Her appeal for all to join hands to elect

a new Federal government in Ottawa was met with continuous applause.

Peter Van Loan, Former Member of Parliament for the electoral district of York-Simcoe from 2004 to 2018 was the Keynote Speaker and was outlining the Canadian history and providing chronological history of the contribution made by Conservative party for the progress of Canada.

The final speaker was Quintus Thuraisingham himself and when he got on to the stage the thunderous applause that erupted from the audience reflected the unbridled enthusiasm of his supporters. The candidate buoyed by the increasing support for the Conservative party was a picture of confidence and his passionate speech was punctuated by repeated rounds of applause. He highlighted the failures of the Liberal government and repeatedly stressed the need for a change in Ottawa, pointing out the fact the Canadians have openly begin to express their disappointment with the performance of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Jude Aloysius, the Elections Readiness officer for the event spoke next stressing the need for continuous effective campaign to ensure that Quintus will be the next Federal Member of Parliament to represent Scarborough-Guildwood riding.

The musical program commenced while a sumptuous dinner was being served. Rachel Remissiar began singing a few popular songs soon to be followed by 2 times award winner Sonia Collymore who kept the audience spell bound for several minutes.

The evening's program came to a successful closing with jubilant supporters dancing around with joy.





Durham Tamil Association (DTA) News Update

DTA was well represented at the 2nd Annual Seneca Trail PS Multicultural Night on Thursday, June 6th, 2019.

DTA participated Ajax Home week Peace and Community Harmony Concert.

Durham Tamil Association represented the Tamil community in Durham Region for The City of Oshawa's

15th annual Peony Festival.

DTA participated Ajax waterfront festival.

Durham Tamil Association's Tamil Classes

First Annual School Year End Celebration and DTA congratulated all the Teachers and students.

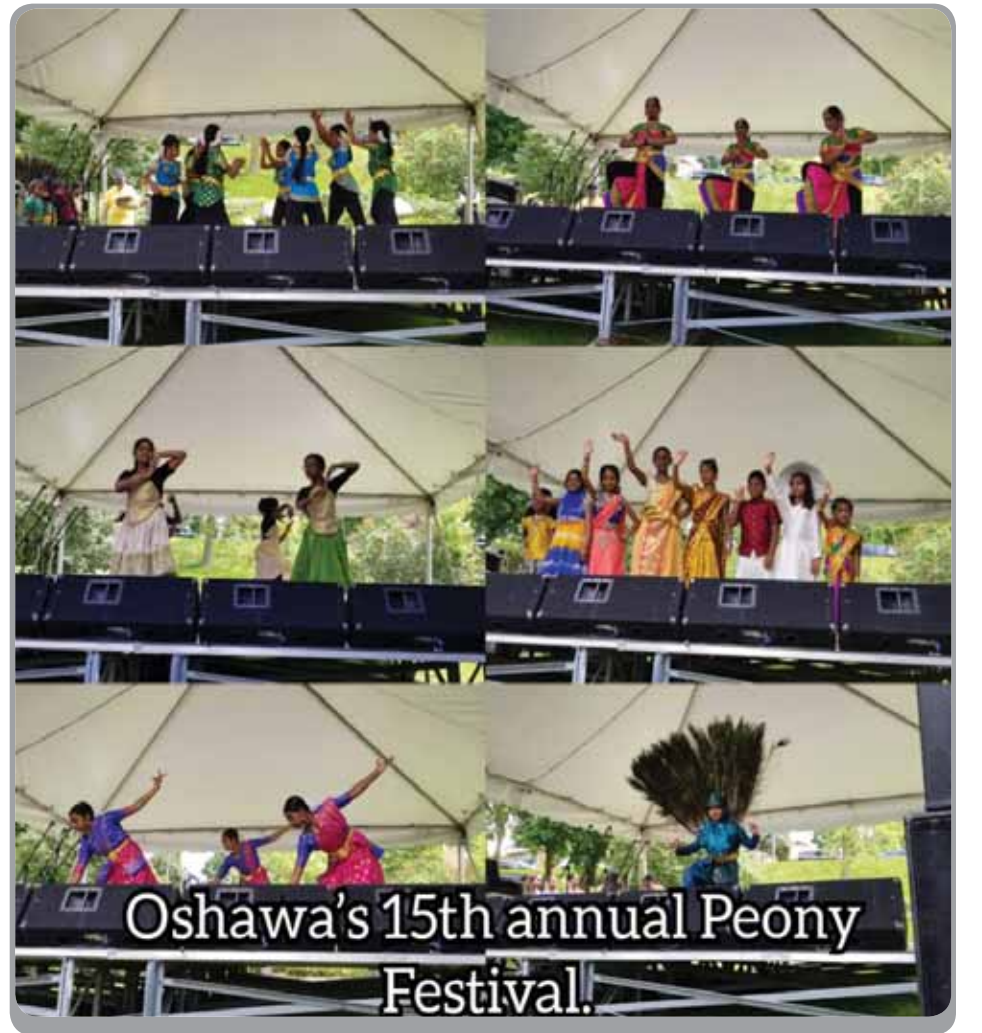
DTA'S first annual kids' speech competition 2019. DTA offered a huge

thank you to all who attended DTA'S first ever annual kids' speech competition!

June Seniors month end general meeting and Pickering-Uxbridge MP Jennifer O'Connell was present to deliver her best wishes to DTA seniors. DTA thanked MP Jennifer O'Connell for her continuous help and support. On the same day Dr. N. Nagi (Natural

Medicine) gave a Presentation about how to cut down diabetic, hypertension and cholesterol. After the general meeting DTA had a Father's day celebration.

(Seen here are some pictures of the DTA Events)





by Kidambi Raj

NAMMAZHWAR

Maran, later known as Nammazhwar and by other names like Satagopa, Parankusa etc. was born on Vaikasi Visakam day. He was born as the avatara of Senai Mudaliar (God's Chief of Hosts). According to scriptures, Nammazhwar was born in 3059 BCE in Thirukurur, modern day Azhwarthirunagiri.

Nammazhwar was one of twelve azhwars. The word Azhwar means the one who dives deep into the ocean of the countless attributes of Lord Vishnu. The Azhwars are considered the twelve supreme devotees of Lord Vishnu who were instrumental in popularizing Vaishnavism. The religious works of these Vaishnavite saints in Tamil, songs of love and devotion, are compiled as *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*, containing 4,000 and the 108 temples revered in their songs are classified as *Divya Desam*.

Tradition says that he must have been born fully enlightened because as a baby he never cried or suckled and never opened his eyes.

According to legend, as a child he responded to no external stimuli and so, the parents left him at the feet of the deity of Sri Adhinathar in Azhwarthirunagiri. The child then got up and climbed into a hole in a tamarind tree, sat in the lotus position, and began to meditate. It appears he was in this state for as long as sixteen years when a Tamil poet and scholar, Madhurakavi Azhwar, who was born in Thirukkoilur and had travelled to North India on a pilgrimage trip. One day as he was performing his *Nitya Anushtanam* (Daily religious ritual), he saw a bright light shining to the south. So, he followed the light until he reached the tree where the boy was residing. Unable to elicit any reaction from the child, he asked him a riddle: "If the small is born in a dead's body (or stomach), what will it eat and where will it stay?" meaning, if the subtle soul is embodied in the gross body, what are its actions and thoughts? Nammazhwar broke his lifelong silence and responded, "That it will eat, it will rest!", meaning that if the

soul identifies with the body, it will be the body, but if it serves the divine, it will stay in Vaikunta and eat (think) of God. Right away, Madhurakavi Azhwar realized the divinity of the child.

Madhurakavi Azhwar immediately became the disciple of Nammazhwar. Nammazhwar permitted his disciple to live with him and it was Madhura Kavi who wrote down all the Pasurams (verses) of Nammazhwar. Nammazhwar's works are four in number and they are: Thiruviruttham (Thiru Vuruttham) – 100 verses, Thiruvasiriyam (Thiru Asiriyam) 7 verses, Periya Thiruvanthathi (Periya Thiru Anthathi) 87 verses and Thiruvaymozhi (Thiru Vaymozhi) 1102 verses, for a total of 1,296 of the total 4,000 verses. Count him an incarnation of Vishnu Himself, while others are only the Mace, Discus, Conch etc., of the Deity.

Nammazhwar died in his thirty fifth year, but he had achieved so great a reputation that the Vaishnavas.



Nammazhwar

— VAIKASI VISAKAM —

Importance of Vaikasi Visakam:

In the month of Vaikasi in the Hindu Calendar (mid May to mid June), when the star Visakam coincides with the Full Moon, is considered an opportune time to connect with Lord Muruga and access His grace and blessings to nullify the hindrances and limitations in one's life. It is the day of celebration of Lord Muruga's energy. Muruga is the archetype who gives one the strength, self-confidence and bestows winner's consciousness. Vaikasi Viskam is celebrated as the Birthday of Lord Muruga. The star Visakam is considered very auspicious, since it is associated with the birth of many saints, great and holy men like Buddha.

One of the Vaishnavite saints, Nammazhwar was also born on a Vaikasi Visakam day in the 9th century. Nammazhwar is one of twelve Azhwars who immersed themselves in the prayers of Lord Vishnu and compiled songs which are collectively called *Naalaayara Divyaprabandham*.

Power of Lord Muruga:

In says in scriptures that, Lord Muruga was brought to earth by Lord Siva to annihilate the powerful dark forces that threatened to enslave the world forever. It is said that he was born out of the third eye of Siva and embodies the energies of both Lord Siva and Goddess Parvathi (Shakti). He is considered the very manifestation of robust youthfulness, unmatched valour, and highest knowledge. It is said that He has been endowed with supernatural intelligence to help mankind fight negativity, and that is why we all need Him in our lives. Vaikasi Visakam is a special time to connect with Him. He grants freedom from debts and limitations due to karma to bring positivity, success and vitality in all aspects of our



Murugan and His Consortsbnw

lives. It is also said that He is overlord of Mars and has the ability to ease difficulties arising due to Mars affliction in one's natal chart. He is also considered an authority on wisdom, and hence meditating on Him, specifically on His Vel (the divine spear or lance), will help one to overcome ignorance and access divine intelligence.

Worship on Vaikasi Visakam Day:

Simple way of worshipping that one can do at home on Vaikasi Visakam day is to light a lamp in front of a picture or an idol of Lord Muruga, make offerings of fruits, nuts, water, flowers and incense. It is always good to have specific goals in mind that one would like to achieve or need His help with. Most important is for one to surrender to His divine energy and chant His special mantra, "Om Saravanabhava" (a combination

of six syllables). Saint Agastya, who has mastered this mantra revealed what those six syllables mean. SA- attracts all people to your door, RA – brings wealth, VA – kills competition, diseases and debts, NA – dissuades enemies, suppresses problems before they arise, BHA – attraction through charming and VA – stops negativity and influences from bad planets.

Family of Lord Muruga:

Lord Siva is the father of Muruga and he is a complex god, unique and Supreme. Goddess Parvathi is the representation of the furious power of the male gods and personification of the divine energy of Lord Siva. She is the destroyer of evil and protector of the righteous.

Brother of Lord Muruga is Lord Ganesha, an elephant headed God. He prevails over success, destroys evil and is a remover of obstacles.

According to the legends, Lord Muruga had two wives, Valli and Devasena. Valli stands for the power of will and Devasena, for the power of actions. Muruga represents the power of wisdom.

Symbolism:

Lord Muruga rides a Peacock, which is the national bird of India. It symbolizes the destruction of harmful habits and control over sexual desires. The Peacock is often shown gripping its feet around a serpent, the symbol of ego and desire.

The divine spear (Vel) represents Muruga's far reaching protection of the people. Often Muruga is depicted with various other weapons, and each is a pointer towards a better way of life.

His six heads correspond to the six attainments Yogis aspire along their spiritual path to enlightenment.



TAMIL LITERARY GARDEN IYAL VIRUTHU AWARD 2018

PRESENTED TO STORY- WRITER AND NOVELIST IMAYAM

**AWARD
CARRIES A
CASH PRIZE
OF \$2,500 AND
PLAQUE**

By Siva Sivapragasam

Well-known story writer and novelist Imayam was the recipient of Toronto's Tamil Literary Garden's Iyal Viruthu Award 2018 presented at the Annual Awards Gala held recently. The Award carries a cash prize of \$2,500 along with a plaque.

The Tamil Literary Garden (TLG) is a Toronto based charitable organization founded in 2001 and committed to promoting the development of literature and studies in Tamil internationally. In its promotion it also recognizes and celebrates the authors internationally who have made major contributions to Tamil. The TLG has so far recognized nineteen such personalities for their lifetime achievements and Imayam is the 20th Iyal award recipient. Writers like Sunthara Ramasamy, Venkat Swaminathan, George Hart, Irvatham Mahadeven, Kovai Gnani, Ambai, S. Ponnudurai, S. Ramakrishnan, Jeyamohan, Theodore Baskaran and Nanjil Nadan were some of the previous winners of the Lifetime Achievement Award, also known as Iyal Virudhu. The Award carries a plaque and a cash prize of C\$2500.00. The Iyal award for the year 2018 was presented by Tamil Literary Garden to Imayam on 9th June 2019 at the annual event held in Toronto. Lawyer Manuel Jesudasan is the President and well-known Tamil short story writer A. Muttulingam is the Secretary of Tamil Literary Garden.

Imayam has so far written five novels, five short story collections, and a novella. His novel Koveru Kaluthaikal (The Mules) written in 1994 and Arumugam in the year 1999 have won acclaim worldwide and have also been translated into English and French respectively. The novella Pethavan written in 2013 was hugely appreciated by the critics. It is based on a story of a father who is asked by the panchayat, the village court, to kill his own daughter for eloping to marry a Dalit boy. The much loved and appreciated work was translated into Malayalam and Telugu.

The other award winners for the year 2018 were as follows:

- ✓ Fiction to Deebachelvan for the novel Nadukal.
- ✓ Non-fiction to Umajee for his book Kaakaa Kothiya Kaayam
- ✓ Poetry to Bogan Sankar for Siriya Enkal Thungum Arai

- ✓ Translation – Malayalam to Tamil to Era.
- ✓ Murugan for Peerangi Paadalkal.
- ✓ Translation – Tamil to English to Dr. R. Karthigesu for Beyond the Sea.
- ✓ Information Technology in Tamil Award to Ramasamy Duraipandi.
- ✓ Scholarship award to Student Kalyani Rathakrishnan for Outstanding Essay
- ✓ Special Recognition Award to Mr. Thiru S. Thiruchelvam
- ✓ Special Recognition Award to Mr. Navin Monogaram.
- ✓ Best Sponsor award was given to Mr. Yogi Thambiraja.

he awards night celebration was well attended and concluded with a dinner to those who attended the event.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the event)





CANADA: Raptors playoff success highlights a shift in Canadian identity

Canadians are expressing national pride, identity through basketball with the Raptors advancing in the NBA championship

This article, written by Ryan Snelgrove, University of Waterloo and Vinu Selvaratnam, University of Waterloo, originally appeared on *The Conversation* and is republished here with permission:

If you're not a basketball fan right now, you're missing out. For the first time since they were founded in 1995, the Toronto Raptors have advanced to the National Basketball Association final and excitement for the game in Canada has never been higher.

This outcome was very much the vision of John Bitove, one of the founders of the Toronto Raptors, who said the ultimate goal of the organization would be to win an NBA championship. But more than that, it would be to recognize basketball as a major national sport in Canada.

Hockey has traditionally been seen by most people — both inside and outside of the country — as the sport that most defines Canada. Fans have often been sold the idea that hockey players are what a Canadian is or ought to be. For many fans, national pride is attached to this descriptor.

The historical and cultural significance of hockey means it will always be a Canadian sport. But because of the changing demographics of the Canadian population, anecdotal evidence suggests some fans are starting to seek national identity through basketball. A few reasons underpin this new identification.

Changing demographics

First, Canada is becoming more diverse. According to the latest census data, 21.9 per cent of Canadians reported being or having been an immigrant or permanent resident. Statistics Canada predicts this number to reach 30 per cent by 2036. The Indigenous population is growing at more than four times the rate of the non-Indigenous population.

Also, 7.7 million Canadians check "visible minority" on their census forms, representing 22.3 percent of the population. These numbers are higher in Toronto, which is one of the top sports cities in Canada. The census data showed more than half of Torontonians identify as a "visible minority."

The changing demographics are impacting Canada's identity as a nation.



Kawhi Leonard (#2) celebrates with the Toronto Raptors after sinking a last second shot against Philadelphia in Game Seven that sent his team into the 2019 Eastern Conference Finals (via The Canadian Press)

From the 1950s to the 1980s, it could be argued that the three major pillars of Canadian identity were the country's role as UN peacekeepers, its universal health-care system and the threat of Québec separation. Although health care remains a pillar, multiculturalism now ranks as a core Canadian identity.

Kawhi Leonard has spoken about being inspired by the legacy of Earl Lloyd, the first African-American to play in the NBA, and coaches and teachers have spoken about the rise of basketball for youth in the Greater Toronto Area.

The global expansion of basketball

Basketball is a more global game than hockey and therefore more familiar to many new Canadians.

The NBA televises its games in 215 countries and territories and in 50 languages. About 300 million people play basketball in China, and the NBA says 30 per cent of its paid live-streaming subscription service comes from Asia.

Another global expansion of the NBA is in India. There are about seven million Facebook fans in the country who follow the sport. The NBA has a

partnership with Sony SIX, an Indian sports channel that airs 350 live games on its platform. Roughly six million kids and 5,000 coaches are given the opportunity to learn the sport of basketball through the league's developmental program.

And the NBA's recent expansion into United Kingdom has drawn a lot of attention. The league has signed a new partnership with Sky Sports to show games. "We're also partners in terms of their digital platforms and hugely excited about that ... we see an opportunity through the entire Sky system to continue promoting the NBA throughout Europe," said NBA commissioner Adam Silver.

Fans want to watch winners

The idea that some Canadian fans are starting to seek national identity through basketball is not only limited to the changing demographics and the global expansion of the sport. Fans simply want to watch winners — research shows that winning is a predominate predictor of fan desire for sport.

The Toronto Raptors have certainly proved to be exciting to watch. They made it to the NBA playoffs in the last

six years, and are now finally taking centre stage as they face the defending champions, the Golden State Warriors.

Fans revel in a team's success despite having done nothing tangible to bring the team success, a phenomenon known as basking in reflected glory. Social psychologists posit that fans use a sport team's success to enhance their self esteem.

Whether or not the Raptors win the NBA championship, expect expressions of fandom and national pride to continue during the next few months with Canadians wearing a Raptors jersey while on vacation or hosting celebration parties with other fans. These displays of unity and Canadian culture are gratifying to see.

Let's go Raptors!

- Ryan Snelgrove, Professor of Sport Business, University of Waterloo and Vinu Selvaratnam, Master of Arts Candidate, Recreation and Leisure Studies, University of Waterloo

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KW Multicultural festival adds Sri Lankan & Indian flavour

KITCHENER — The annual Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Festival, which took place during the weekend of June 22, boasts dozens of vendors, informative booths and lively entertainment on the main stage.

But it's the food that's consistently one of the biggest draws.

And there's just so much to choose from. Your tastebuds could tour the world, with stops for pork dumplings in China, souvlaki in Greece, curried goat in the Caribbean and Kothu Rotti in Sri Lanka.

"I like the fact you can have Turkish dessert with an Indian main and a Vietnamese appetizer," said Filiz Tamer, visiting the festival for the first time with her boyfriend, Kamil Tuszni, and his mother, Jadwiga Kramczynski.

With 30 countries represented on the main stage for this, the 52nd instalment of the popular festival, it reflects the changing face of the community.

Yoga Arumugam representing the Sri Lankan community said Multicultural festival provides a platform for smaller cultural groups to show case their Food, Arts and culture.

Sri Lankan street food "Kothu Rotti" was a sell out at the Indian and Sri Lankan tent. "A lot of work goes behind the scenes. A team of friends and members of the local Tamil community organise this food tent annually" said Sammy Pasupathipillai, the volunteer at the station. In addition to Kothu Rotti, Vaddai was introduced for the first time. By evening, all got sold out.

Kitchener MP Hon. Raj Saini visited the Sri Lankan and Indian Food tent. He witnessed the preparation of Kothu Rotti and appreciated the dedication by local Tamil community members and Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region.

Festival co-ordinator Vanessa Harrison said the event typically attracts between 30,000 and 50,000 visitors over the course of the weekend.



RAPTORS ARE CROWNED

NBA CHAMPIONS

By Danesh Thirukumar

Mission accomplished. Despite the Raptors inability to display multiple superstars at the forefront similar to many championship teams in the past, they were able to overcome much adversity and were crowned 2018-2019 NBA Champions.

They were able to defeat the star laden Golden State Warriors, although injuries did play a part in the Warriors' demise. These injuries showcase the difficult, uphill battle that many teams must endure throughout a long and grueling season in order to become NBA champions. The intensity in which practices, workouts, and games are executed with takes a toll on one's body, and the Raptors ended up surviving all of this to be the last team standing.

The entire playoffs epitomized the Raptors culture and playstyle, as different players stepped up in different situations, all with full embrace from their teammates, coaching staff, and the fans. In the eastern conference finals against the Milwaukee Bucks, when the team desperately searched for a spark off the bench especially due to Kawhi's heavy workload, Norman Powell stepped up and provided this much needed scoring and effort. Throughout the finals against the Warriors, Pascal Siakam came up huge in game 1 and game 6, as he provided some of the best performances we have seen from him. The entire starting lineup in game 3 played astounding on the road as each player scored over 17 points. Kyle Lowry's ability to bounce back game 6 after missing the potential game winner in game 5 proved his resiliency, embodying the true heart of a champion. Fred



- Raptors FB

VanVleet's capability to face tough situations was upheld in the fourth quarter in game 6, as he was able to hit timely shots and end up with 22 points

to help secure the Raptors victory. The numerous contributions made by Toronto's supporting cast are a testament to their depth.

While the supporting cast fulfilled each of their roles in their fullest capacity, Kawhi Leonard proved again why he should be in contention for best player in the league. He was able to perform at an elite level on the offensive and defensive end of the floor, leading his team to victory and earning finals most valuable player (MVP) honors as well.

The team composed through risks made by the General Manager Masai Ujiri had an unmatched grit, chemistry, and understanding of basketball which led them to secure Toronto's first NBA championship. This is an amazing feat due to the fact that none of the players that are on this championship team were NBA lottery draft picks, meaning that none of these players were selected in the top 14 during any NBA draft, proving that they were an underestimated group of individuals who came together to achieve such an immense accomplishment.

Having an entire country's support helped will the Raptors, and the team's pursuit for excellence helped unify almost every individual in the country.

This was seen as immediately after their win, the fans celebrated together in the streets for hours.

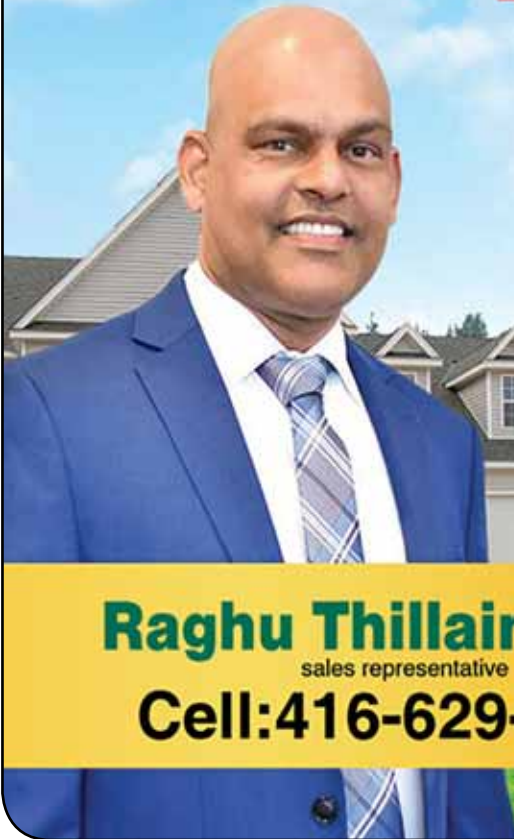
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Bishop of Jaffna Very Rev. Dr. Justin Bernard Gnanapiragasam appointed Vice President of The Catholic Bishops Conference of Sri Lanka

By Raymond Rajabalan

Very Rev. Dr. Justin Bernard Gnanapiragasam, the Bishop of Jaffna Archdiocese was recently appointed Vice President of the Catholic Conference of Sri Lanka. The announcement made by the office of the Archbishop also stated that Very Rev. Dr. Winston Julian Fernando, the Bishop of Badulla Archdiocese has been re-elected President for another three year term.

The newly elected Vice President Bishop of Jaffna Rev. Gnanapiragasam has also been entrusted with several other responsibilities listed below

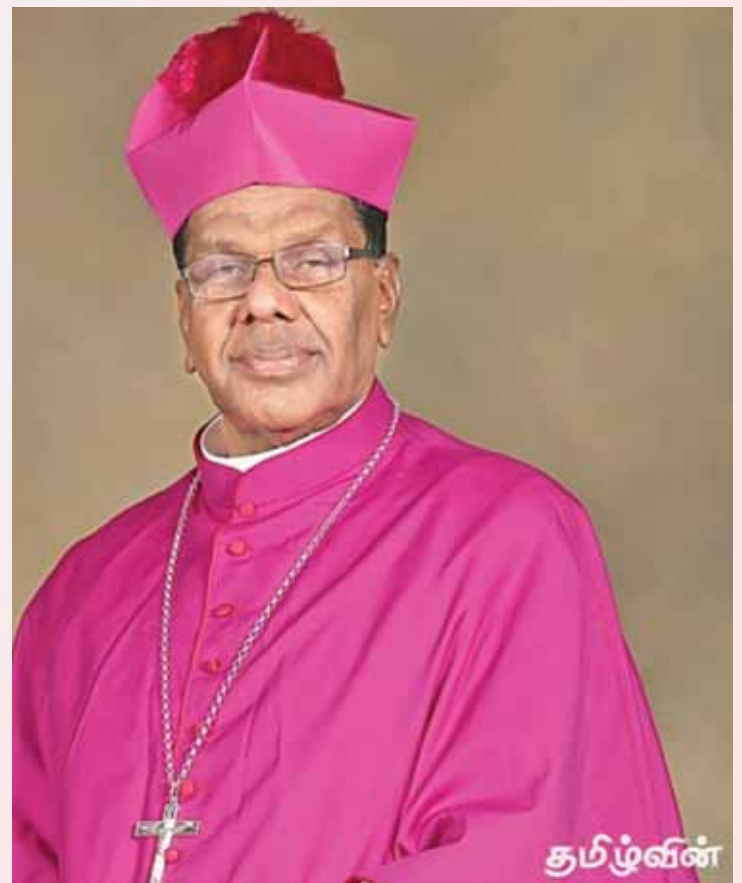
President - National Commission for justice, Peace and Humanitarian Advancement

Vice President - Financial Services
Vice President - Global Federation of Catholic priests and seminarians

Vice President - Lions B. Emmanuel Trust Fund

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Sri Lanka (CBCSL) has been constituted as the Common Pastoral Organ of the Catholic Bishops in Sri Lanka. They coordinate pastoral activities and act in unity in all matters including public affairs and relations with national public authority and with every other national institution that needs their attention. What is officially affirmed together by them surpass any other individual view on any specific matter. The SLCBC also entrusts particular offices and duties to any priest in Sri Lanka to attend to particular tasks for the sake of all the dioceses in the country.

The Secretary General of the SLCBC is Most Rev. Dr. Valence Mendis, the Bishop of Chilaw. The SLCBC is governed by its own constitution which has been approved by the Holy See of Rome.



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