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Google's Sundar Pichai named CEO of parent firm Alphabet



Ivanka Trump with Sundar Pichai at a recent White House event

Google chief executive Sundar Pichai will assume the CEO role at parent firm Alphabet in a shakeup at the top of the Silicon Valley titan, the company said Tuesday, December 3.

Pichai will take over from Larry Page, a co-founder of the internet firm, at the parent company, which includes Google and units focusing on "other bets" in areas including self-driving cars and life sciences.

Page and Google co-founder Sergey Brin "will continue their involvement as co-founders, shareholders

and members of Alphabet's board of directors," the company said.

In October, Pichai announced that Google is committing to a White House initiative designed to get private companies to expand job training for American workers.

The 47-year-old Pichai, born in India, takes the helm at a time when Page and Brin have been noticeably absent and the company faces a torrent of controversies relating to its dominant position in the tech

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Details on Pg 24...

world.

Born to humble beginnings in the southern city of Chennai, he studied engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Kharagpur before heading to America to further his studies and career.

After leaving India, he attended Stanford University and later studied at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

(via Voice of America
- VOA News)

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Christmas 'Kondaddam' - Receiving and Rejoicing

By: J A Rajah

Christmas today has become a festival of giving, receiving and rejoicing-enhanced by commercial interests who have exploited it to the maximum. The Tamil word 'Kondaddam' means receiving and rejoicing. It reflects the human greed when a person becomes happy when he or she gets something like Eve and Adam in the first Bible story. It is said that the day of Christmas was first assigned in the Ninth century but has accumulated several traditions around it, like the service of carols, X'mas tree, X'mas gifts, X'mas cards, Santa Claus in subsequent years. It was the University of Cambridge which started the practice of singing carols and reading lessons in the 14th century. The celebration of Christmas or birth of Christ is essentially diabolic in nature. It is a festival of human greed/vanity; it is also a festival of eternity-the quest for eternal life.

A. Festival of Vanity.

Today the world celebrates Christmas mostly as a festival of joy. The celebration is universal and people of all sorts of life join in and experience the joy of the festivity. Commercial establishments use it to the fullest to sell their goodies. Malls are decorated well ahead of the date and Christmas carols are heard broadcast all over. It is a joy for all age groups. I can remember celebrating Christmas as a child and teenager. We decorate our house portico with balloon and crayons. We make all sorts of eats like Thoddu, chippy and payatham balls and entertain friends and the needy who happened to visit us. We give alms to the poor and the tom-tom beaters gather round to beat their drums and get their share of eats as well. We fire crackers and aim at making the greatest sounds and lighting. As an undergraduate at Peradeniya, I have gone carol singing to houses of lecturers who treat us with sumptuous snacks like mutton rolls, patties and cakes. We come back physically and spiritually uplifted having taken the message of Jesus's birth through song and mirth \. However,



some of us fell victims of leech - bites which were very common in those days of cold and rain. It was a season we always look forward to usher in the New Year. Skyward rocket crackers or push 'vaanams' are lit even at the risk of causing damage to 'kidukku' roof tops. We attend Church services and Sunday school plays and prize distribution and enjoy the kondaddam (Kondu + aad-dam) in every sense of the term- receiving and rejoicing. Today it is done in a more elaborate way. People make it a point to eat, drink and be merry forgetting the very meaning of Christmas. Sometimes it leads to drunken spree and negligence all religious values attached to it. The Christmas parades are a joy to watch and it emanates a show of splendour and sheer exhibition of revelry. Toronto had its 115th Annual Santa Claus Parade with 1250 costumes and 34 floats on the 17th of November this year. Christmas is con-

sidered as the most wonderful time of the year. In England turkey is at the centerpiece of the celebrity meal with roast potatoes, veg, gravy and Yorkshire puddings. In Catholic churches, a figure of Jesus is kept in the main altar to act as the central focus of the event. In Japan, Christmas Eve is seen as a romantic day for young couples to exchange gifts and tokens, look at Christmas lights and eat a romantic meal. The Japanese pick fried chicken as their Christmas dinner.

B. Festival of Eternity.

The real meaning of Christmas is the rejuvenation of spiritual joy in our hearts when the spirit of Jesus is received in our hearts and minds. The idea is embedded in the carols we sing. When we sing - 'Christ is born in Bethlehem it means 'Christ is born in our minds and hearts'. We make it an opportunity to renew our faith and Chris-

tian commitments - to love God and our fellowmen. Christ ensures eternal life for those who repent for their sins and live a Christ-like life. Humans live in fear of death but Jesus promises everlasting life to those who follow him. He took the human form to demonstrate to us how to lead a holy life. Hence Christmas is a glorious celebration of such a blessed assurance. It is indeed a foretaste of glory that is guaranteed to us. Christmas gives the opportunity for the emergence of true knowledge in the minds of men that will lead them to everlasting life. Jesus proclaimed the panacea for humanity's most dreaded fear- death- and paved the way for everlasting life. Christianity is today the world's most followed religious philosophy due to this powerful message. "Joy to the World that the Lord is come, Let the world hearken to His Voice and Lead Victorious and Purposeful lives".

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Myths and facts that surround Christmas celebrations

Raymond Rajabalan

Christmas is an event joyfully celebrated on December 25th all around the globe not only by Christians but also by non-Christians. When one thinks of Christmas, long holiday season, decorating the Christmas tree, awaiting the arrival of Santa Claus, exchanging gifts among friends and relatives are some of the things that come to our minds. The Almighty God came into this world more than 2000 years ago in the form of a human being and his name was Jesus. Many people still believe that the date of his birth is celebrated on Dec 25th as Christmas. However this is far from true.



The event of the birth of Jesus is clearly stated in the four books of bible – namely the Gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke and John. However there is no statement in any of these books that indicates that Jesus was born on Dec. 25th. One should note that there are so many details about the life of Jesus, his teachings, the miracles he performed, his death and resurrection recorded in these gospels. However there is not even a hint about the date of birth of Jesus in any of these books.

Apart from the controversy regarding the date of birth of Jesus, many researchers and scholars claim that Christmas is not an event that is in anyway associated with Christians. It is no doubt this statement will offend some Christians while many others may be taken by surprise. Yet it is a fact as proved by the plethora of information provided in this article. There are many Christian scholars who authoritatively claim that Christmas is not a celebration of Christians and there are still some others who state that this festival should not be celebrated by Christians at all.

There are 10 books of bible including Acts of Apostles which mentions about the resurgence and growth of Christianity as well as the various Christian doctrines however none of them gives any indication about the date of birth of Jesus. Infact based on all the information provided in Bible there is absolutely no evidence to prove that Jesus was born in December. It

is common knowledge that in Israel it is bitterly cold during December and during this month the temperature very often plunges to -7 Celsius and sometimes there is also snow fall. As a result of this unfavourable weather that prevails during the latter part of the year, most of the shepherds used to take their herds to the desert areas far away from the border of Israel and keep them there safe during the period from late October till early March. The wealthy cattle owners used to keep their herds in mountain caves or in protective sheds. Thus no cattle owner risked allowing their cattle to be exposed to the bitterly cold in the open grass land during these months.

At the same time Luke, the evangelist who has a medical background states in Chapter 2 verse 8 that shepherds were keeping watch over their flock on the night of the date of birth of Jesus. Based on this statement several bible scholars have strongly stated that there is no possibility of Jesus being born during December.

Further at the time of the birth of Jesus there was a nation-wide census in Israel and as such every citizen had to return to their place of birth. It was common knowledge that as a rule census taking was not done during cold periods or rainy season. As such the bible researchers authoritatively state that the birth of Jesus would not have happened during December. Further, there is no record in the bible that states that any of the Apostles of Jesus or His followers or those who lived during the time of Jesus ever celebrated the birth of Jesus.

So this raises a question when or how the custom of celebrating Christmas began

The answer to this question may surprise many Christians.

About 3000 years ago, many centuries prior to the birth of Jesus Romans used to have a lavish celebration on December 25th to mark the birth of Mithra or Sun God. All of us are aware that each year the sun sets very early on December 23rd. On that day in Europe it becomes very dark by around 4.00 pm. The Romans of those days believed that darkness kills Sun

God on that day and he is born again on Dec. 25th...

Meanwhile one should note that none of the various encyclopaedia including the Catholic Encyclopaedia states Jesus was born on December 25th. Yet it is strange how the Catholic Church approved the celebration of Christmas on this date.

During the first century it was not possible for anyone to follow or openly practice the teachings of Jesus. Those who were found practicing Christianity were subjected to severe punishment. Meanwhile during those days Romans used to continue the celebrations of Mithra and used to exchange gifts during the festive period. As a result, early Christians of that period faced a dilemma as to how to handle this situation. If they did not join in participating in these celebrations they would have been easily identified as Christians and risked being killed by the Roman rulers. So in order to protect themselves these Christians also used to decorate their houses during the festive season. However what they celebrated was not the birth of Mithra God but that of Jesus.

Over a period of time, due to various factors, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire and subsequently Christmas began to be celebrated openly all over the world.

When did the custom of celebrating Christmas on December 25th begin?

Until 350 years after the birth of Jesus no one was certain of the date of birth of Jesus. Historical records state that it was celebrated in various parts of the world on different dates between November and March. Meanwhile it was difficult to put an end to the custom of Romans celebrating the festival of Mithra. So around 350 A.D the Catholic Church headed by Pope Julius 1 declared December 25 as the official date of the birth of Jesus, around the very same time as the festival of Mithra or Saturnalia, the Roman festival used to be held to honour God Saturn. It was the intention of the Pope to make Romans gradually switch towards celebrating the birth of Christ on the same day as the festival of Mithra or Sun God. During those days Pope was considered to be a representative of God and whatever orders he made could not be challenged.

This was how Christmas began to be celebrated on Dec 25th throughout the world.

Meanwhile when the statutes of Jesus was made in African countries many centuries ago, they depicted Jesus as a black man. In India when the statutes of Mary were first constructed, they were made to depict her as a sari-clad woman. Similarly the Catholic Church was compelled to adjust itself

to the changing environment and incorporate the culture and traditions of Romans.



Availability of Kings James Version of Bible

Those days the ordinary citizens were not permitted to possess a copy of the bible. They were available only in the churches and only the priests were permitted to possess the bibles. It was only in 1611 the King James Version of bible was made freely available in London to the ordinary civilian's. Once the Christians started reading the bibles and understood the statements in the various books of the bible, several controversies started to crop up. Many Christians objected celebrating Christmas on December 25th and began revolting against the teachings of the Catholic Church. Until that time it was easy for the Catholic Church to convince the ordinary people to believe that Jesus was born on Dec. 25th. Once the Catholics started questioning the authority of the Church, the Pope and his advisors decided to come to a compromise and announced that it will benefit all to accept that Jesus was born on December 25th.

Acceptance of Christmas festival in USA

United States of America which was believed to be the pillar of Christianity hesitated for a long time in accepting that Jesus was born on December 25th. It was only in 1836 that the state of Alabama accepted December 25th as the date of birth of Jesus. Many years later the Government of USA declared Christmas day as a public holiday in 1870 on June 26. Then in 1907 the state of Oklahoma declared December 25th as the date of birth of Jesus.

Emergence of Puritans

Meanwhile a group of English Protestants described as Puritans became active during 16th and 17th centuries. They wanted to purify the Church of England of Roman Catholic practices. They claimed that the church has not been fully reformed and needed to become more protestant. They banned the celebration of Christmas from 1659 till 1681, claiming that celebrating Christmas was a form of idol worship. According to historical records, those who celebrated Christmas during those years were punished by being subjected to whipping. **Contd. page 10...**



Government Taking Action to Protect Ontario's Air Quality

New Integrated Emissions and Safety Testing Program to Target Biggest Polluters on Ontario's Roads, Reduce Burden for Drivers and Businesses

December 3, 2019 9:20 A.M.

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

TORONTO — Ontario's government is taking action to protect Ontario's air quality and reduce smog-causing pollutants with a new enhanced emissions testing program that will save taxpayers' money and modernize services to make life more convenient for drivers and businesses, while ensuring the safety of our roads and the protection of our environment.

The new enhanced emissions testing program is for the biggest polluters on our roads such as commercial trucks and buses. To improve convenience for businesses and help reduce costs, the new program will be integrated with the existing annual safety Motor Vehicle Inspection Station program in 2021 to create a one-stop shop.

Jeff Yurek, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, Kinga Surma, Associate Minister of Transportation, and Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction, were at Carmen Transportation in North York today to announce the proposed program changes.



"Today, we are following through on our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan commitment to hold the biggest polluters on our roads accountable with an enhanced emissions testing program for commercial trucks and buses," said Minister Yurek. "Reducing emissions from heavy diesel commercial motor vehicles is one more step in our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan to hold polluters accountable while ensuring Ontario busi-

nesses remain competitive."

We are proposing changes that will:

- Strengthen emission testing standards for heavy diesel commercial motor vehicles
- Clarify existing laws against tampering with vehicle emission systems
- Make it illegal to sell devices that interfere with or disable emissions control systems
- Enable stronger on-road enforcement of emission standards for both light and heavy vehicles

Integrating the new enhanced emissions program for heavy diesel commercial vehicles with the annual safety inspection program means owners of these types of vehicles would be able to get both an emissions and safety inspection at the same time and location — one test, with one digital result.

"By combining the emissions and safety inspection into one digital-based test, we are making life easier and more convenient for owners of heavy-duty diesel commercial trucks and buses," said Associate Minister Surma. "The Ontario government is working to keep our roads safe and environment clean while saving taxpayers time and money as we make

government services more effective and convenient as part of our plan to grow Ontario's economy."

"Our professional truck drivers are hard at work taking made-in-Ontario goods to markets across Canada and beyond," said Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister responsible for Small Business and Red Tape Reduction. "Combining safety and emissions inspections into a one-test, one-result process will save our professional truckers time and money, while keeping them on the road so they can continue to keep Ontario moving."

"The government of Ontario is introducing the most impactful enforcement measures in Canada with regards to reducing and targeting harmful emissions from non-compliant vehicles," said Stephen Laskowski, President of the Ontario Trucking Association. "By introducing an on-road enforcement regime focused on tampering, along with the development of an integrated annual safety and environmental inspection program for heavy trucks, the province of Ontario is leading on the reduction of smog-causing pollution and reducing unnecessary red tape for all trucking companies in Ontario."

Via news.ontario.ca

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 Editorial & Marketing Consultant: Siva Sivapragasam - tsivapragasam31@gmail.com
 Executive Editorial Board: Tashvir Narine - tashvir.narine@gmail.com
 Krishni Narine - krishni31@gmail.com
 K. Thirukumaran
 Graphics & Layout Design: Santosh Kumar - kasantosh@gmail.com
 Graphic Support: Suren Rasadurai
 Photo Journalists: Gnane B. Gnanendran - digitalgnane@yahoo.ca, Rudy Ruthran - rudy@ruthran.com
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Happy New Year 2020: Lend your Support to International Year of Plant Health 2020 and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030

By Harrish Thirukumaran

Season's Greetings and Happy Holidays to all. This holiday season will be bringing about a unique sense of joy to everyone given that this upcoming new year will officially mark the start of the new 2020 decade for the world. This new decade will bring about things and resolutions for this year of 2020 that everyone should work to accomplish. There are two ways that the United Nations is developing its own resolutions with this new year as well as the decade that we will be entering toward the end of December 2019.

First, in December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/73/252 declaring 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH). This initiative is considered a once in a lifetime opportunity to raise global awareness on how protecting plant health can help end hunger, reduce poverty, protect the environment, and boost economic development.

This proposal was first initiated at the 10th Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-10) when Finland urged its creation. The proposal received strong support from the CPM-10, which decided to pursue the proclamation of the IYPH in 2020 under the leadership of Finland.

Plants are the source of the air we breathe and most of the food we eat, yet we often don't think about keeping them healthy. This can have devastating results. FAO estimates that up to 40% of food crops are lost due to plant pests and diseases annually. This leaves millions of people without enough food to eat and seriously damages agriculture - the primary source of income for rural poor communities.

Plant health is increasingly under threat. Climate change, and human activities, have

altered ecosystems, reducing biodiversity and creating new niches where pests can thrive. At the same time, international travel and trade has tripled in volume in the last decade and can quickly spread pests and diseases around the world causing great damage to native plants and the environment.

One way that you can make your mark through this international year is to spread the word about #PlantHealth on social media and in your community throughout 2020 and beyond. Another identifiable way is to take daily actions to reduce your environmental footprint and actively engage in initiatives to protect and manage natural resources.

Next, the United Nations has declared 2021-2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Declared on March 1, 2019, the General Assembly is aiming to massively scale up the restoration of degraded and destroyed ecosystems as a proven measure to fight the climate crisis and enhance food security, water supply and biodiversity.

In a sense, ecosystem restoration is fundamental to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, mainly those on climate change, poverty eradication, food security, water and biodiversity conservation. The Decade will accelerate existing global restoration goals through initiatives like

the Bonn Challenge, which aims to restore 350 million hectares of degraded ecosystems by 2030, an area almost the size of India.

With the new year now fast approaching, consider lending your support to the International Year of Plant Health and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. That would be a step in the right direction in making this year and decade productive in achieving action on climate change and environmental conservation.

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

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HAPPY HANUKKAH

MERRY CHRISTMAS

& HAPPY NEW YEAR 2020

Canada Historical Milestones: December 16, 1985

Henri Menier, a wealthy French chocolatier, buys Anticosti Island in Quebec for \$125,000. He wants to establish a private sports preserve on this island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Menier will import Virginia white-tailed deer and other species to the island for his hunting paradise. He will also build a villa, Château Menier. With much money and effort, he will develop the island, building Port-Menier and other villages.

Menier will die suddenly in 1913, but the village of Port-Menier will continue to exist. The Government of Quebec will buy the island in 1974 to promote tourism in this beautiful, natural location.



"I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year" - Charles Dickens - (February 1812 – 9 June 1870) English Writer

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

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New Toronto East Ontario Health Team to Provide Better Connected Care for Patients Ontario Health Teams Part of Province's Plan to End Hallway Health Care

December 3, 2019 9:28 A.M.

Ministry of Health

TORONTO — Ontario is delivering on its commitment to end hallway health care and build a connected and sustainable health care system centred around the needs of patients. The province is introducing Ontario Health Teams, a new model of care that brings together health care providers to work as one team.

Today, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, was at Thorncliffe Park Community Hub to announce the Toronto East Ontario Health Team as one of the first 24 teams in the province to implement a new model of organizing and delivering health care that better connects patients and providers in their communities to improve patient outcomes. Through an Ontario Health Team, patients will experience easier transitions from one provider to another, including, for example, between hospitals and home care providers, with one patient story, one patient record and one care plan.

"This is an exciting time for health care in Ontario as we finally break down the long-standing barriers that have prevented care providers from working directly with each other to support patients throughout their health care journey," said Elliott. "Together with our health care partners, the Toronto East Ontario Health Team will play an essential role in delivering on our commitment to end hallway health care and building a connected and sustainable public health care system centred around the needs of patients."

The Toronto East Ontario Health Team, known as East Toronto Health Partners, will create a local health care system that provides coordinated care for patients, reduces wait times and leads to better health outcomes for the population. The team will provide a comprehensive basket of health and social services tailored to meet changing local needs, including primary to acute care, birth to end-of-life care, food security, supportive housing, home-based health care, community support services, settlement and employment.

"With our new Toronto East Ontario Health Team, patients will benefit from better integrated health care, with a



seamless experience when moving between different health care services, providers and settings," said Elliott. "I would like to thank all the health care providers and organizations that helped plan the Toronto East Ontario Health Team; there is lots of work to be done, but with their dedication and hard work, we will continue to improve health care in our communities and ensure Ontarians get the care they deserve."

As it continues its work to integrate care, the East Toronto Health Partners will put in place 24/7 navigation and care coordination services for patients and families. Patients will receive these services through their integrated primary care teams and the broader Ontario Health Team partners. This work will be implemented in phases and over time will provide care for everyone within the East Toronto Health Partners population, with an initial focus on helping seniors and caregivers, particularly those dealing with chronic disease, people with mental health and substance use challenges, and priority neighbourhoods, to meet the local needs of diverse communities.

"We are incredibly proud of our partners and grateful for the collaborative work we are doing together to build a better, more integrated health care system

Promoting Ontario's World-Class Infrastructure Market in Washington Infrastructure Minister joins Ontario Premier on Trade Mission to Explore Partnerships

December 3, 2019 10:00 A.M.

Ministry of Infrastructure

WASHINGTON — The Ontario government is making the province a top destination for infrastructure investments while highlighting its world-class public-private partnership (P3) expertise by engaging with partners in the United States during a two-day trade mission.

Laurie Scott, Minister of Infrastructure, is in Washington, D.C. to promote Ontario and its proven track record of using the P3 model to deliver large and complex projects.

Minister Scott will also join Premier Doug Ford in meetings to highlight Ontario as a leader in infrastructure procurement and consulting while opening new opportunities in global markets.

"Ontario has a successful track record of using the P3 model to deliver some of the province's largest and most complex projects on time and on budget," said Minister Scott.

"By reaching out to our neighbours in the United States, we are showcasing our infrastructure expertise, encouraging in-

novation and spreading the message that Ontario is one of the best places to build and invest," Minister Scott continued.

While in Washington, Minister Scott will join Australian Ambassador to the United States Joe Hockey in a panel discussion at the P3 Government Conference. They will discuss their respective approaches to P3 development, and how their approaches to partnership, procurement and project delivery have led to internationally renowned infrastructure programs.

Along with Premier Ford, Minister Scott is also scheduled to meet with Maryland Governor Larry Hogan and Secretary of Commerce Kelly Schulz to discuss infrastructure opportunities. Governor Hogan, who is chair of the National Governors Association, is slated to lead an infrastructure study tour to Toronto in April 2020.

"With our global partners, we are open and ready to collaborate on delivering innovative infrastructure that improves people's everyday lives, Scott said.

Via news.ontario.ca

for patients, clients and families," said Anne Babcock, CEO, WoodGreen Community Services, on behalf of East Toronto Health Partners (ETHP). "It takes the creativity, flexibility and commitment of everyone involved to transform the delivery of local care to our communities. Today marks an important milestone in our journey to provide more seamless and accessible care experiences to our patients and to end hallway medicine."

The Toronto East Ontario Health Team has already begun putting integrated care into action through their community-based approach to 'winter surge,' a heightened demand for health and community care services that occurs during the cold winter months. There are 25 initiatives being provided from November 2019 to March 2020 by a number of health and community care partners together with the East Toronto Family Practice Network, a network of self-organized physicians and an anchor partner of ETHP, to help people in East Toronto

stay well.

Ontario has a comprehensive plan to end hallway health care, which includes making investments and advancing new initiatives across four pillars:

1. Prevention and health promotion: keeping patients as healthy as possible in their communities and out of hospitals.
2. Providing the right care in the right place: when patients need care, ensure that they receive it in the most appropriate setting, not always the hospital.
3. Integration and improved patient flow: better integrate care providers to ensure patients spend less time waiting in hospitals when they are ready to be discharged. Ontario Health Teams will play a critical role in connecting care providers and, in doing so, helping to end hallway health care.
4. Building capacity: build new hospital and long-term care beds while increasing community-based services across Ontario.

Via news.ontario.ca

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Around the World

India offers Sri Lanka \$400mn to boost Economy and \$50mn to deal with security

Prime Minister Modi expects Sri Lanka to implement provisions of the 13th Amendment to fulfill the aspirations of the Tamils



By Siva Sivapragasam

India has offered Sri Lanka \$ 400 million to develop Sri Lanka's economy and \$ 50 million to deal with security

The Indian offer follows the bilateral talks that took place between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sri Lanka's newly elected President Gotabaya Rajapakse. President Rajapakse's visit to India was his first overseas official visit since he assumed office as President.

Mr. Modi also stated at a Media conference that he was confident that the Government of Sri Lanka will carry forward the process of reconciliation, to fulfil the aspirations of the Tamils for "equality, justice, peace and respect." It also includes the implementation of the 13th amendment," Premier Modi said.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa thanked Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for offering USD 50 million to enhance capabilities of the intelligence agencies in Sri Lanka.

Indian PM Modi also announced

a line of credit of USD 400 million to boost Sri Lanka's development.

Addressing a joint press briefing in New Delhi, India, President Rajapaksa said since the recent experience of Sri Lanka in April this year, the country has to rethink national security strategies.

"Assistance from India in this regard is most appreciated and Prime Minister Modi's assurances are most encouraging," he said.

The President also invited Indian Premier to visit Sri Lanka as the first-ever state leader to visit the country after the new President was elected.

Prime Minister Modi said India gives priority to its relations with Sri Lanka under its 'Neighbourhood First' policy.

Describing the meeting with Mr. Rajapaksa as fruitful, Mr. Modi stated that a strong and prosperous Sri Lanka is not only in the interest of India but in the interest of the entire Indian Ocean region. He assured India's help in the overall development of the country.

UN human rights expert alarmed at rise in Cambodia arrests



UN PHOTO/ELMA OKIC

The Human Rights Council, Geneva (file photo, May 2018)

8 November 2019

Human Rights

A UN human rights expert is calling on the Cambodian Government to respect its citizens' rights of freedom of opinion, expression and assembly, amid concerns over escalating tensions and a political crackdown across the country.

More than 200 cases of harassment and judicial action against members or supporters of the outlawed Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) have been reported since January, Rhona Smith informed in a statement on Friday.

She said credible information shows nearly 89 people were charged with 'plotting against the State' and more than 50 have been arrested.

Meanwhile, the CNRP former leader Sam Rainsy, who has been in self-imposed exile, has vowed to return to Cambodia on Saturday. However, Prime Minister Hun Sen said he will be arrested on arrival, having been convicted in absentia and sentenced to jail.

"The rapid increase in numbers of arrests and serious charges filed against CNRP members is alarming," said Ms. Smith, who is the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Cambodia, appointed by the Human Rights Council.

"Arrests based on exercising the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, through political discourse

and commenting on public affairs are not permitted. Cambodia must respect its international obligations."

Ms. Smith is also concerned that some CNRP members in nearby countries have been detained after attempting to travel to Cambodia.

'Diverging political voices' should be heard

"I call on the Government and all parties to reduce escalations in tensions and seek dialogue in a peaceful environment that allows for diverging political voices to be expressed, and to avoid any further restrictions on fundamental freedoms that are necessary for the enjoyment of human rights by all," she said.

Besides the arrests, civil society groups in Cambodia also have reported increased surveillance and monitoring by local authorities. There has also been a significant increase in the deployment of armed forces at border checkpoints and various villages.

Ms. Smith pointed out that Cambodia will celebrate two public holidays this weekend, starting with Independence Day on Saturday, which is also the eve of Bon Om Touk, the Water Festival marking the end of the rainy season.

While acknowledging that there may be heightened security around this time, she stated that "everyone has the right to safely enjoy these peaceful cultural celebrations free from fear".

Via <https://news.un.org/>

Trump Says World 'Has to Be Watching' Violence in Iran

By Associated Press

December 03, 2019 02:36 PM

LONDON - President Donald Trump said Tuesday that he supports the demonstrations in Iran and urged the world to watch the Iranian government's violent effort to quash protests that he says have killed "thousands of people."

Speaking in London, where he is attending the NATO leaders summit, Trump said, "Iran is killing thousands and thousands of people right now as we speak."

He added they were killed "for the mere fact that they're protesting," and he called it a "terrible thing."

Trump was mum on what, if anything, the U.S. could do in response to the violence, but he said, "I think the world has to be watching."

Later, during a meeting, Trump



misheard a question when he said he did not support the protesters. The president also sent out a tweet that said: "The United States of America supports the brave people of Iran who are protesting for their FREEDOM. We have under the Trump Administration

U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at Winfield House in London, Dec. 3, 2019.

and always will!"

Amnesty International said on Monday it believes at least 208 people were killed in the protests and the crackdown that followed. Iranian state television on Tuesday acknowledged for the first time that security forces shot and killed what it described as "rioters" in multiple cities amid recent

protests over the spike in government-set gasoline prices.

The protests are viewed as a reflection of widespread economic discontent gripping the country since Trump re-imposed nuclear sanctions on Iran last year.

Trump encouraged reporters "to get in there and see what's going on," noting that the Iranian government has curtailed internet access to limit the spread of information about the violence.

Via voanews.com



Bangladesh Shuts Recruitment Agencies After Saudi Abuse Claims



Women in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh checking on their mobile phones, November 27, 2019.

By AFP

December 03, 2019 11:15 AM

DHAKA, BANGLADESH - Bangladesh said Tuesday that it has shut down 166 recruiting agencies hiring people to work in Saudi Arabia after a spate of sexual abuse and torture allegations at the hands of employers in the Gulf kingdom.

Since 1991, some 300,000 Bangladeshi women have traveled to Saudi Arabia, according to the Dhaka government, mostly to work as household staff.

But a string of them have returned to Bangladesh in recent months leveling allegations of sexual abuse and torture and even that recruiters had sold them as sex slaves.

Last month videos secretly shot by Bangladeshi female workers were shared hundreds of thousands of times on social media and sparked protests across Bangladesh.

Government spokesman Munir Saleheen said that the agencies that were shut down had failed to provide

safeguards to the migrant workers and in some cases sent them back to their employers.

"Our campaign will continue," Saleheen told AFP.

Their closure followed talks between Bangladeshi and Saudi officials in Riyadh.

Both countries also decided to update an online database of the female workers to ensure their safety, a statement issued by the Bangladeshi expatriate welfare ministry said.

Saudi police have also agreed not to hand back any Bangladeshi woman who escaped from a Saudi employer to her workplace, it said.

The ministry also said that the Saudi Department of Protection and Support "will take prompt action if a female worker falls in danger".

Dhaka last week said it was also trying to repatriate another 32 women who filmed a joint distress call from a Saudi detention centre after they ran away from their employers.

Via voanews.com

High Commissioner of Canada in Sri Lanka meets the new President of Sri Lanka

On Monday December 2, High Commissioner David McKinnon met with Sri Lanka's newly elected President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

After the meeting the High Commissioner tweeted:

"It was a pleasure to meet with the Canadian High Commissioner David McKinnon who paid a courtesy visit and exchanged views on strengthening our bilateral relations"

Via: @GotabayaR



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau meets with President of the United States of America, Donald Trump

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau met with United States of America President Donald Trump on Dec 3, 2019 in London, United Kingdom.

The Prime Minister and the President reaffirmed their support for the new North American Free Trade Agreement which supports millions of jobs in

Canada, the U.S., and Mexico. The two leaders welcomed the work towards its ratification in all three countries.

The Prime Minister and President discussed the importance of the NATO Alliance for international peace and security as well as the indispensable Canada-U.S. partnership for the de-

Over \$39 million earmarked by UN-backed fund to combat effects of climate change in Nepal



UN WOMEN/NARENDRA SHRESTHA

Rural woman farmer Chandra Kala Thapa works in the fields near Chatiune Village, Nepal. (File)

13 November 2019

Climate Change

More than \$39 million in funding was approved on Wednesday for a project that will build resilience and mitigate the effects of climate change, benefitting nearly one million Nepalis, according to the Board of the UN-backed Green Climate Fund (GCF).

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has been working with the Government in developing this first-ever national bid to go before the Fund.

Co-funding the initiative, Nepal's Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE) is adding another \$8 million for a total of more than \$47 million, which will see the project to fruition over the course of seven years.

Communities in the Churia hills region – the southernmost range of the Himalayan foothills, running east-west through Nepal – will be targeted as it provides vital ecosystem functions to the heavily-populated plains downstream where the most fertile agricultural land is located.

Building rural resilience

"This major GCF contribution to FAO's work in partnership with the Government of Nepal at all levels of federalization, namely, central, provincial and municipal, will benefit more than 200,000 households in the Churia hills", said Somsak Pipoppinyo, FAO Representative to Nepal, noting that it would help rural families to "become more resilient to the changing environment in which they find themselves".

Decades of unsustainable use of natural resources have resulted in forest degradation, floods and soil erosion.

And the negative effects on downstream communities have been exacerbated by increased droughts and extreme weather events precipitated by the climate crisis.

It is predicted those impacts will intensify in coming years, further threatening food security and livelihoods.

"It will also help them adapt to, and mitigate the effects of, climate and extreme weather events in the years to come," added Mr. Pipoppinyo.

Kailash Pokharel of Nepal's Ministry of Finance underscored the region as "a national priority critical to Nepal's food security and climate change policy" and pledged to ensure that the project "brings transformational change to grassroots communities" and enhances climate resilience.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions Designed to directly contribute to Nepal's nationally determined contribution towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), much of the project's work will focus on developing infrastructure to move away from unsound and environmentally damaging natural resource management practices.

And its long-term sustainability will rely on building both individual and institutional capacity at all levels.

"The project will work with both government and communities to coordinate actions," said Ben Vickers, FAO's lead technical officer. "We anticipate these actions will deliver average annual emission reductions of nearly half-a-million tonnes of CO2 each year."

Via news.un.org



Around the World

One-third of Afghans need urgent humanitarian aid, millions suffer 'acute food insecurity'

18 November 2019

Humanitarian Aid

Over the last three months (August to October 2019), around one-third of the Afghan population required urgent humanitarian action, according to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Alert, released on Monday, which declares that some 10.23 million people are living in a state of "severe acute food insecurity".

The IPC, a coalition of UN agencies and other partners, classifies food insecurity in five distinct phases, from phase 1 (Minimal/ None), to phase 5 (Catastrophic/Famine): around 2.44 million Afghan are believed to be in an Emergency situation (phase 4), and 7.79 million in a Crisis situation (phase 3).

Conflict, high prices and unemployment to blame

The IPC, which is monitoring a number of key food security indicators in Afghanistan, estimates that the situation is likely to get worse heading into next year, with the numbers

of those experiencing severe acute food insecurity set to rise to 11.29 million (with 2.7 million in an Emergency situation, and 8.6 million in a Crisis situation), between November 2019 and March 2020.

A lack of opportunity in the labour market could, says the report, impact the livelihoods of vulnerable groups; as could the uncertain political climate and security situation, with upcoming elections affecting the outlook; food prices, which could rise in the Winter months; and extreme weather events, such as droughts and floods.

Focus on cash or 'in kind' assistance, and climate adaptation

The November Alert from the IPC includes several recommendations to alleviate the food insecurity problems faced by the population. Providing humanitarian food assistance, in cash or kind, is one such proposal, as well as helping farmers to obtain quality seeds for the forthcoming season (most farmers do not have the capability to obtain seeds from any source).



UNAMA/Eric Kanalstein: In Afghanistan, despite favourable growing conditions for crops, many people are not getting enough to eat.

The IPC urges partners to bear in mind the complex context of Afghanistan's ethnic make-up, rugged terrain and "unrelenting civil unrest", which should be considered when developing strategies for improving food security and livelihoods.

The report also calls for the impact of the changing climate to be addressed, with attention focused on programs that build resilience to disasters, and the reduction of disaster risks. Water

irrigation systems should, in addition, be improved and strengthened.

The IPC brings together the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), as well as several NGOs and inter-governmental organizations, to produce internationally-recognized scientific assessments of food insecurity and malnutrition levels in countries.

Via news.un.org

Myths and facts that surround Christmas celebrations

Contd. from page 4...

Furthermore from 1649 till 1660 celebrating Christmas was banned in England. However since then Christmas has gradually become commercialised throughout the world. In fact so many things that have become part of Christmas celebrations has nothing to do with the birth and life of Jesus.

Whether Jesus is considered as part of Christmas or not, Santa Claus has become essential part of Christmas. Many scholars have blamed the Christian church for having accepted Santa Claus and various other things associated with it such as gift giving. Yet it appears the Catholic Church had to adjust with changing situations and adapt itself accordingly.

It is recorded in the bible that three wise men from the East who came to visit the new born Jesus had brought gifts with them, probably this information as well as the tradition of exchanging gifts during the Mithra celebrations of the Romans influenced the church officials to accept it as part of Christmas.

Origin of Santa Claus

Meanwhile some historians claim that Santa Claus originated from the practice of worshipping Odin, the Scandinavian God of wisdom, poetry, death and divination. Odin God was considered to be a god with a flowing white beard, pot belly and a long pole travel-



ling in the sky riding on a horse and provided the needs of those who pray to him. However many believe that the character of Santa Claus originated from Saint Nicholas who served as the Bishop of the Greek maritime city of Myra in Asia Minor during the time of Roman Empire. He is said to have helped the poor children in the area and also provided many with financial help and prevented them facing death due to poverty.

Whatever the origin of Santa it was the Coca-Cola company helped shape the image of Santa and made it become

popular from 1931 onwards.

Christmas Trees

Meanwhile decorating Christmas trees began in Germany. It started with the tradition of decorating the trees in their homes with green coloured decorative ornaments during the period of worshipping Yule God in December. Meanwhile around 1500 when Martin Luther King, the founder of Protestant religion, was returning home one night he was fascinated by the sight of hundreds of stars dazzling in the sky just behind a tree. When he returned home he wanted to describe it to his

children what he had seen and set up a tree at home and lit some candles to decorate that tree. This was how the idea of Christmas trees originated and later the trees set up in the homes and churches were decorated with variety of colourful ornaments. This idea then began to spread to England where the Royal family made it become a popular practice.

Thus a number of practices and traditions influenced by pagan ideas and images were gradually adopted by the Catholic Church and have become inseparably intertwined with our lives.



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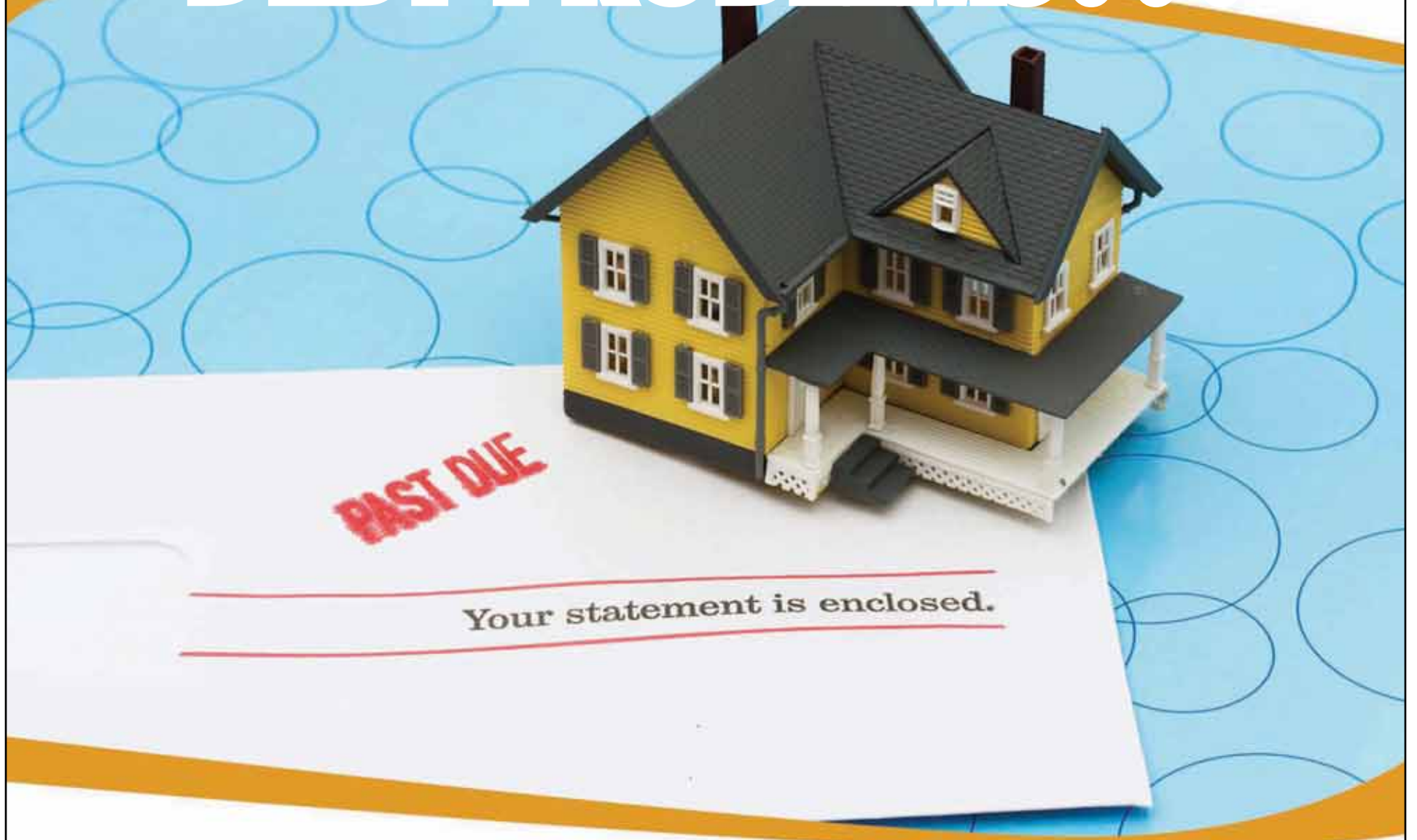
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Celebrating the largest single gift at Scarborough Health Network

A transformative multi-million dollar donation from Deepa & Narinder Lal

SCARBOROUGH (December 05, 2019) – Scarborough Health Network Foundation is thrilled to announce and celebrate the largest single gift in its history—a transformative multi-million dollar donation from the Lal family. The contribution will improve emergency and cardiac care in each of our hospitals. In recognition of the family, the Emergency Department at SHN's General hospital has been re-named the Deepa & Narinder Lal Emergency. SHN celebrated the new naming and extraordinary gift at the General hospital on December 4 with the Lal family, SHN staff, physicians and guests.

The Lals wanted to give back to the Scarborough community because it had been a part of their lives for over 30 years. They migrated to Canada in the early 1970s with \$48 in their pockets and started a business in their family basement. Their company, Metro Label became one of the largest label manufacturers in North America and it all started in Scarborough.

"Our business Metro Label was located in Scarborough for 33 years. We wanted to support care in Scarborough, where we grew our business and where many of our employees lived. We know our investment in SHN will help care for them and their families," says Deepa and Narinder Lal.

Thanks to the Lals, patients at SHN's Emergency will benefit from less waiting, improved patient care, and the advanced technology all patients expect and deserve. This transformative gift will allow SHN to purchase new equipment and technology and will enable our community to benefit from the most advanced diagnostic and treatment tools. The gift will also support the Arrhythmia Program at the Centenary hospital known for its



expertise in implanting pacemaker devices, electrophysiology and complex ablations to treat people with heart conditions. About Scarborough Health Network Foundation Situated in one of the most diverse communities in Canada, Scarborough Health Network

Foundation (formerly Scarborough and Rouge Hospital Foundation) inspires the support necessary to improve patients' lives through exceptional care at Scarborough Health Network across three hospitals and eight satellite sites. Since its inception, the Foundation has

worked with generous donors, volunteers and community members to raise funds needed to build state-of-the-art infrastructure and purchase the latest medical technology, supporting the SHN's vision to be Canada's leading community teaching health network.

DID YOU KNOW?

100% of all medical equipment and 10% of capital renovations are funded through SHN, SHN Foundation and the community.

Help us give our physicians and staff the tools they need to **shape the future of health care** for Scarborough's patients.



DONATE NOW @
SupportSHN.ca



To learn more,
contact **Krishni Narine**
at knarine@shn.ca.



CARING FOR KIDS IN SCARBOROUGH

We are offering more services for families to get the right care for their children.

Scarborough Health Network is transforming care. Here are some of the new and improved services we will have for getting kids the care they need when they need it.

Kids After Hours Clinic at General hospital

We will have a new walk-in clinic for children who have common medical issues to be seen by a paediatrician. No referrals are necessary.

Kids Short Stay Clinic at Birchmount hospital

Children in our Birchmount Emergency Department (ED) who need further care may be seen in our new Kids Short Stay Clinic.

Kids Pass Clinic at Centenary and General hospitals

Children brought to the EDs at our Centenary and General hospitals will be fast-tracked to our Kids Pass Clinics as appropriate.

Learn more at [SHN.ca/paediatrics](https://shn.ca/paediatrics)     @SHNcares



ALICIA VANDERMEER APPOINTED AS PRESIDENT AND CEO FOR SHN FOUNDATION

Scarborough Health Network Foundation's Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Alicia Vandermeer to President and Chief Executive Officer effective January 6, 2020.

Alicia joins the Foundation at an exciting time as SHN Foundation looks to raise \$100 million to support the It's Our Time Campaign to revolutionize health care for the Scarborough community. Alicia will lead the Foundation in highlighting the important needs for space, equipment and technology to provide the best possible care to the more than 800,000 people who make Scarborough home.

The Foundation has ambitious goals and Alicia brings with her

years of experience in fundraising to support its mission to support an outstanding care experience for every patient. She joins SHN Foundation from the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), where she was the Deputy Director and Chief Advancement Officer. Prior to AGO, Alicia held various positions at a national fundraising consulting firm, the Canadian Hearing Society Foundation, and the York-Finch Hospital Foundation.

"SHN serves a population of close to 1 million people, putting the need for donor support into sharp focus," says Paul Torrie, Co-Chair, Board of Directors, SHN Foundation.

"Alicia is passionate about bringing her skills in fundraising, branding,



marketing and data analytics to lead our Foundation in supporting a healthier Scarborough community."

Alicia has an Honours Bachelor of Arts with a major in Urban Studies from the University of Toronto, a

Master of Business Administration with a Major in Marketing & Entrepreneurial Studies from York University, and is a graduate from Claremont Graduate University's Museum Executive Development Program.

SCARBOROUGH HEALTH NETWORK ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CLINICAL PROGRAMS



Rebecca Harvey

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is pleased to announce that following a national search for our new Executive Vice President, Clinical Programs, SHN will be appointing Rebecca Harvey to this role, effective Monday, November 18, 2019.

Rebecca is a dynamic and effective senior management leader with more than 20 years executive experience in health care. She is currently the Vice President, Ontario Renal Network at CCO.

Her work spans clinical program delivery, health care system design, provincial tertiary services, hospital and community operations, strategic planning and policy development across the health care continuum.

Before joining the Ontario Renal Network, Rebecca was Executive Director for Mental Health and Surgery at Island Health. She led operations and regional planning for highly specialized medical care, community hospitals and the community sector.

In addition, she was Executive Director for the Health Authorities Division at the British Columbia Ministry of Health, focusing on provincial programs and acute services.

Rebecca holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts from Western University; a nursing diploma from Mount Royal University; a Master of Science from the University of Saskatchewan; and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Toronto.

Rebecca is a systems thinker with a track record of developing and implementing organization-wide initiatives designed to advance quality of care. She combines advanced strategic relationship building at all levels with a motivational leadership style that engages physicians and project teams to create high-performing working cultures.

A community partnership is putting cardiovascular rehabilitation patients on the right track



A partnership between the Central East Regional Cardiovascular Rehabilitation Program and the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre (TPASC) is celebrating one year of improving access to life-changing cardiac rehabilitation services for residents and patients in Scarborough.

To celebrate this partnership, patients, community members and staff were invited to celebrate at TPASC. The event allowed guests an opportunity to observe patients and exercise therapists going through their exercises to see the regional cardiovascular rehabilitation program in action, followed by a ceremonial ribbon breaking, marking the first year of many of this great partnership.

"Through this collaboration, we are improving access to life-changing regional cardiovascular rehabilitation services for residents and patients in Scarborough," notes Dr. Bert Lauwers, Executive Vice President, Clinical Programs. "This initiative couldn't have been brought to life without the support of our partners, staff, volunteers and patients, who helped to bring this partnership to life."

The regional cardiovascular rehabilitation program helps patients and residents with cardiovascular disease, as well as a preventative program for anyone who is at high risk

of developing a cardiovascular disease, get on track to better heart health. The six-month program helps improve quality of life through supervised exercise, education and guided lifestyle change.

"Our regional program ensures that our patients are getting on the right track with their cardiovascular health," Dr. Ricci, Medical Manager of the Regional Cardiac Rehab Program highlights. "This partnership enables greater access to rehab services within Scarborough, resulting in a more efficient care experience for our patients."

In addition to improving access to care for patients with cardiovascular disease, this partnership helps to expand the regional cardiovascular rehabilitation program's community based approach to care.

"Being able to use our facility to help increase access to cardiac rehab for the patients and residents of Scarborough is something we are extremely proud to be a part of," notes Robert Singleton, Managing Director, Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre. "This partnership allows us to use the facility to give back to the community in a positive way."

The regional program brings together specialists on-site in patient communities to deliver care, while partnering with family doctors to ensure equitable access to all patients with cardiovascular disease.

SHN OPENS KIDS CARE AFTER-HOURS CLINIC AT GENERAL HOSPITAL

Kids at all hours of the day. And often clinics and doctors offices close at 5 pm and on weekends.

So what can parents and caregivers do when kids need medical care in the evening or on weekends?

A new SHN Kids Care After-Hours walk-in clinic is here to help.

The clinic, located at the General hospital in the Kids Care space on the first floor of the Crockford Pavillion, is

Scarborough's first after-hours walk-in clinic specifically for children.

The clinic is open from 5 - 9 p.m. on weekdays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. on weekends and holidays, and will treat babies, children and teens who need urgent, but not emergency, care.

The clinic will be staffed by a paediatrician and specialized pediatric nurse, who will provide accessible, high-quality care for all families in Scarborough.



How you've grown! Scarborough's preemies and their families gather to celebrate milestones and healthy futures

Celebrating their early arrival into the world, and the care they received in their first weeks and months, "preemies" and their families gathered at Scarborough Health Network (SHN) for a special event to celebrate World Prematurity Day. Families were treated to refreshments, games and activities, as well as prizes and giveaways.

Premature newborns – or preemies

– and their families receive specialized care from SHN's expert team in neonatal intensive care units (NICUs), for up to months at a time. SHN has the fourth largest maternal newborn program in Ontario with approximately 6,500 babies born in the health network's birthing units and nearly 2,000 babies cared for in the NICUs each year.

World Prematurity Day is a globally-

renowned educational event that raises awareness about premature births, while also recognizing and celebrating the lives of preemies and their families. Worldwide, approximately one in 10 babies is born preterm each year.

SHN is so proud of all our preemies and their families – we're happy to see you grow and thrive!





TD Bank Group Invests \$1 Million to Support MS Research Focusing on Artificial Intelligence Technology

Donation supports the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada's Acts of Greatness campaign

TORONTO, Nov. 27, 2019 -- The Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society of Canada announced today a \$1 million donation from TD Bank Group to support research that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to develop clinical tools to enable more informed healthcare decisions in relation to disease-modifying therapies (DMTs) for people with MS. The funds will be directed towards the MS Society's Acts of Greatness campaign.

Currently there are 14 DMTs available in Canada to treat relapsing-remitting MS (RRMS). When effective, DMTs can modify the course of the disease by reducing inflammation that injures nerve cells and help reduce relapses and ease MS symptoms. For this reason, people who are newly diagnosed with RRMS are advised to start treatment early to control inflammation and prevent further damage.

Each person with MS experiences the disease uniquely and responds differently to various DMTs. Given the number of treatment options and the lack of predictability about disease trajectory, it can be challenging for newly-diagnosed individuals and healthcare practitioners to decide on the best course of treatment. The AI & MS Discovery Grant supported by TD, will seek transformative ideas that lever-

age existing clinical and patient data and the power and potential of AI to optimize treatment and prognosis for people living with MS.

"Through The Ready Commitment, our global corporate citizenship platform, TD is proud to be part of this innovative opportunity, which has the potential to improve health outcomes and quality of life for thousands of Canadians living with MS," says Andrea Barrack, Global Head, Sustainability and Corporate Citizenship, TD Bank Group. "AI has opened up a new world for potential in research and we hope to see some of those possibilities come to fruition through this donation."

There is an untapped opportunity to derive meaningful insights from existing data to inform clinical practice. AI has the potential to identify patterns and learn from large data sets in a way not currently possible, and then predict the best treatment options.

"Over the past decade, we've seen exponential growth in DMTs, which are so important to maintaining quality of life for people living with MS," says Dr. Pamela Valentine, president and CEO, MS Society of Canada. "We are increasingly aware of the importance of early intervention to avoid unnecessary irreversible disability, but the number of options can be daunting for newly-diag-

nosed individuals as they try to determine which DMT treatment they should take. With AI, there is an opportunity to help both people living with MS and health professionals better predict the right treatment course."

The MS Society is now accepting applications. To view the full request for applications, visit: <https://bit.ly/35HBCcV>.

About multiple sclerosis and the MS Society of Canada

Canada has one of the highest rates of multiple sclerosis in the world. On average, 11 Canadians are diagnosed every day. MS is a chronic autoimmune disease of the central nervous system (brain, spinal cord). Most people are diagnosed with MS between the ages of 20 and 49 and the unpredictable effects of the disease will last for the rest of their lives. The MS Society provides information, support and advocacy to people affected by MS, and funds research to find the cause and cure for the disease, bringing us closer to a world free of MS. Please visit mssociety.ca or call 1-800-268-7582 for more



information, to get involved, or to support Canadians affected by MS by making a donation.

Join the conversation and

connect with the MS community online. Find the MS Society on Twitter, Instagram or like our page on Facebook.

About TD Global Corporate Citizenship

TD has a long-standing commitment to enriching the lives of its customers, colleagues and communities. As part of its corporate citizenship platform, The Ready Commitment, TD is targeting CDN \$1 billion (US \$775 million) in total by 2030 towards community giving in four areas critical to opening doors for a more inclusive and sustainable tomorrow – Financial Security, Vibrant Planet, Connected Communities and Better Health. Through The Ready Commitment, TD aspires to link its business, philanthropy and human capital to help people feel more confident - not just about their finances, but also in their ability to achieve their personal goals in a changing world. For further information, visit www.td.com/thereadycommitment.

Canadian Nutrition Society Task Force Announces Partnership to Standardize Practices for Malnutrition Care in Canadian Hospitals

OTTAWA, Nov. 26, 2019 -- The Canadian Malnutrition Task Force (CMTF) and the Health Standards Organization (HSO) are pleased to announce a partnership to develop a national Malnutrition Safety Intervention Standard for detection, treatment and prevention of malnutrition in Canadian hospitals.

CMTF, a standing committee of the Canadian Nutrition Society (CNS), strives to reduce malnutrition by promoting nutrition care knowledge and optimal practice through research and education activities focused on preventing, detecting and treating malnutrition in Canadians.

HSO leads the development of standards, assessment programs, and other methodologies to enable health and social service providers to provide high quality care that aims to save and improve lives. HSO offers more than 100 customizable health standards, to improve health care and social services globally.

The Malnutrition Safety Intervention Standard development process is currently underway. A Technical Committee and a Working Group consisting of physicians, researchers, dietitians, nurses and a patient advisor are in place. This Standard is being developed on rigorous evidence and best practices that involves comprehensive consultation with healthcare professions, decision makers, patients and families. A public review of the draft Standard will be conducted in early 2020 at which time members of the public will be invited to offer comments and feedback.

The final Malnutrition Safety Intervention Standard will be approved and published in the summer of 2020. It will be developed for use for both Canadian and global stakeholders.

References:

- Public Notice of Intent: <https://healthstandards.org/standards/notices-of-intent/malnutrition-safety-intervention/>
- Canadian Malnutrition Task

Force: <https://nutritioncareincanada.ca>

- Health Standards Organization: <https://healthstandards.org>

- Canadian Nutrition Society: <https://cns-scn.ca>

About Canadian Nutrition Society (CNS):

The Canadian Nutrition Society (CNS) is the leading Canadian society that integrates disciplines and professions interested in nutrition – scientists, healthcare/clinical practitioners, policy makers, industry, and trainees. CNS promotes and enhances excellence in nutrition science and practice, provides quality education and professional development initiatives, and advocates for the importance of nutrition research funding, best practice and policies for the promotion of health and the prevention and treatment of dis-



ease. www.cns-scn.ca

About Canadian Malnutrition Task Force (CMTF):

The Canadian Malnutrition Task Force (CMTF) is a standing committee of CNS that works to improve clinical nutrition care and reduce malnutrition in Canada by promoting nutrition care knowledge and optimal practice through research and education activities focused on preventing, detecting and treating malnutrition in Canadians. www.nutritioncareincanada.ca



Durham Ontario Health Team (OHT) announces new Primary Care Partner

Durham OHT continues to collaborate to support integrated care



Durham –The Durham Ontario Health Team (OHT) is excited to announce that the 41 physicians from the Clarington Family Health Organization (FHO) formally joined the Durham OHT.

The Clarington FHO is an important partner in supporting the vision of the Durham OHT and to ensure people in east Durham have access to seamless, team based care.

OHTs are a new model for coordinating and delivering people-centred health care and are part of the provincial government's health system plan and People's Healthcare Act, 2019.

The Durham OHT included representation from primary care physicians in the development of the full application, especially in helping co-design the integrated care model for key populations and Year 1 change initiatives. Continuing to engage and share information with primary care physicians across the Region is essential to the success of the Durham OHT.

The Durham OHT will continue to foster collaboration and communication amongst all health care providers and will provide opportunities for increased access to patient information as well as clinical and data standardization which will support providers to

work as one coordinated team to improve health and social care.

The core group involved in the Durham OHT's full application submission is comprised of 18 signatory organizations from across the care continuum, there also broad support from more than 70 health care partners across Durham, representing various organizations in the health, social services, education and private sectors.

The Ministry of Health is expected to announce the province's first OHTs in late November 2019.

QUOTES

"Participation of primary care physicians is critical to support successfully providing connected care to the people we serve in Durham Region," said Matthew Anderson, Lakeridge Health President and CEO. "We are pleased to have the 41 primary care physicians from Clarington FHO formally join the Durham OHT as their involvement and active participation will continue to strengthen our ability to improve health outcomes of our local communities."

"The Clarington Family Health Organization (FHO) is very excited to be joining the Durham OHT as a formal partner", said Dr. Tony Stone, Lead Physician, Clarington FHO. "This is

a wonderful opportunity for us, as a group of primary care providers, to strengthen our partnerships with the hospital, community health care agencies, social services and patients as we work to enhance access and coordination of care for the people of Clarington and Durham Region."

"I am excited to see the collaboration of the Durham OHT partners as we develop a new model for coordinating and delivering people-centred health care for our local community," said Dr. Ed Osborne, local family physician, Clarington FHO, and Regional Palliative Care Lead for the Central East Regional Cancer Program. "It is critical that partners continue to work together as a team to ensure patients are at the centre of care, at any stage in their life."

"I am excited about participating in this process of building our Ontario Health Team and I know the members of our Clarington FHO have an important role to play in our community in continuing to provide excellent primary care as this new process develops." Dr. Harvey Williams, Physician, Clarington FHO.

For more information on the OHT process, please visit the Ministry of Health website at www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/connectedcare/oht/.

on.ca/en/pro/programs/connectedcare/oht/.

For more information on the Durham OHT process, please visit here: <https://www.lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/aboutus/durham-ontario-health-team.asp>

Durham Ontario Health Team Signatory Organizations

- Alzheimer Society Durham Region
- Brock CHC
- Carea CHC
- CBI Home Health
- Clarington Family Health Organization
- Community Advantage Rehabilitation Inc.
- Community Care Durham
- Complex Injury Rehab
- Durham Mental Health Services
- Grandview Children's Centre
- Lakeridge Health
- March of Dimes Canada
- Medical Associates of Port Perry
- North Durham FHT
- Partners in Community Nursing
- Regional Municipality of Durham
- SE Health
- Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada, Ontario Branch, Durham Site



Special Feature

Take it or Leave it

The Importance of Knowing Yourself

“Understand who you are; know yourself”

Before you find where you want to go on the map, you need to know where you are



So, what is the importance of knowing yourself? I can give you the most beautiful map, very well illustrated; everything is there; everything is marked—and there is a very beautiful place on the map that you want to go to.

But what is the most important thing you need to have on that map? And that is, “Where are you on that map?” Because, “turn left, turn right, and go straight” is all relevant to where you are. But if you don’t know where you are, what is “left?” What is “right?” What is “go straight?” What is “go around the roundabout”—it doesn’t mean anything.

And we forget! People are writing

books; people are making lectures, and they’re telling everybody, “You know, we have to turn left; we have to turn left.” And then, “Oh no, now we have to turn right.” Whose “right?” Whose “left?” Which “left?” Where are we going? Which “straight?” Because it’s all relative.

Unless you know who you are, living in this world is going to be very different. Because one of the things is going to be disorientation because you don’t know where you are. You’re lost. That feeling of—yeah, somewhere here—“What I am about to do, is that right? Do people like me? Am I popular?”

This is all before you ever get to loving yourself. You are more inter-

ested in whether other people love you. You’re not even interested in whether you love yourself. And it’s disorienting; look at what’s—what is social media all about? Approval from other people.

So, now I am bringing this message—it’s not my message. Socrates said this a long time ago. Some of the hieroglyphs that were deciphered from Egypt also said the same thing: “Understand who you are; know yourself.” Socrates echoes that—“Know yourself. Know thyself.” Because the importance of knowing yourself is so important.

- Prem Rawat

www.timelesstoday.com



An Interview with Charan Anandh, a long time associate of Prem Rawat in promoting the possibility of Peace in the lives of all human beings

Q: You are a disciple of Prem Rawat for a long time, can you tell something about Prem Rawat?

A: I was a disciple of Prem Rawat's father for almost fifteen years. And when his father passed away Prem Rawat is the one who accepted this challenge. At that time he was just about nine years old. He started speaking about peace when he was quite young at four years old. From that time onward, he wanted to bring the message of peace and hope to people around the world. By this time, he approached billions of people.

Q: Billions?

A: Yea, billion. Last year he spoke to more than one billion people. He has been talking from an early age on the

that we already have within us, called PEACE. Peace is the very nature of oneself. For example, if you sit near the burning fire, you will feel the heat, why? That is the nature of fire because we cannot separate heat from the fire. We cannot separate light from the Sun. So, our true nature, true-self is Truth-Consciousness-Bliss. This nature is within. When we were babies, we were in touch with it. But slowly, slowly, we lost the connection and don't know how to go deep inside and connect with it. He says 'it is important to learn about all the things that keep us busy, but we also need to learn how to get in touch with ourselves, that is where the peace is.

Q: We heard about regional



same message from that time. Someone asked him, 'tell us what your message is?'. He said my message is about peace. When he was speaking to the students, one student wrote him a note to talk about modern science and technology. Prem Rawat read it out and said, 'my friend, I am very fond of modern science and technology, but there are some old things also essential'. Then he questioned him, do you know how old the Sun and the Moon are? Aren't they still beautiful and essential? Do you know how old the sceneries of mountains of Himalayas is? Do you know how old those mountains are? Do you know how old your grandparents are? Then he said tell me how old this breath is? Then said, 'my message is neither new nor old, it is timeless'.

Q: His theories are scientifically based or environmentally based?

A: His message is practical. What he has spoken is scientifically proved. Prem Rawat talks about something

peace and global peace. Now, we hear about inner peace. What is inner peace?

A: The peace that we hear is external. You may have it for a while, and it fades away. When you have a job, you are happy, but you might lose it. We need many things to live, but they are not permanent. Your happiness will not be lasting. Our nature, our inner need, is to be happy all the time. That is not easy but possible. To have that peace, we need to know what is real and reliable. Then we can depend on it at any time anywhere. In the outer world, nothing is reliable. Everything is bound to change. But he says that change is the beauty of creation, but underlying the change is the unchanging reality that we need to know. Inner-self is immortal.

Q: We know that the real happiness, inner peace comes from inside. What are the steps to achieve that peace?

A: He says that first listen. Listen to get in touch with the thirst that you really want to know something more in your life. Get in touch with your genuine thirst. Without thirst, there will be no value. Without hunger, food has no value. He shows you the way to get in touch with your inner-self. He says, 'My master helped me to lit my inner lamp of knowledge, and I can light others with that lamp.' You have it within yourself.

Q: As a family man and so many responsibilities on my shoulder, how can I achieve that peace?

A: Everybody is busy, that is unavoidable. Prem Rawat is also very busy. He is not sitting on a mountain, and coming out and talking to people. He is a family man with four children and grand children. He takes good care of his family. A highly qualified pilot flying round the world. He travels around the world speaks to people. What his message is that even though you are hectic outside, the self-knowl-

edge can keep you in peace and calm inside. If we can create the problems we can solve the problems too. Knowledge will keep you the balance in life

His Peace Education Program (PEP) provides the steps to people around the world to achieve that peace. These videos are reaching inmates, schools, Universities and many peoples' lives are transformed by that. Knowledge of the self is of Highest importance. All actions culminate in Knowledge.

Q: There are so many things outside that distracts me. My concentration goes there. I am unable to achieve inner peace. How do you overcome that?

A: All these ups and downs are there .It is not easy. But I am not here to solve the problems. Go Beyond. It is Not easy but possible. If it is possible for me ,it is possible for you too. You are part of the world. See that you keep your cup full.

We have to perform actions in the world. Nature will force you to do actions. Whatever you do in the world, you have to come back home.

Q: For How many years are you following Prem Rawat?

A: Fifteen years with his father and I have been with Prem Rawat ever since 1966. The message is to follow your heart, not him. He said 'I have no followers' He always says, "listen to me, don't believe, think about it and let your heart be the judge". That is what I do. I listen to his profound message and follow my heart.

www.timelesstoday.com



Helius Medical Technologies, Inc. Announces Addition of P3 Health as New Authorized PoNS Treatment™ Clinic in Toronto, Canada

NEWTOWN, Pa., Nov. 19, 2019 -- Helius Medical Technologies, Inc. (NASDAQ:HSDT) (TSX:HSM) ("Helius" or the "Company"), a neurotech company focused on neurological wellness, today reported that a new location has been authorized to become a PoNS Treatment™ Center in Canada bringing broader regional access to its innovative PoNS Treatment in the Toronto area. P3 Health is a leading healthcare facility located in downtown Toronto's St. Lawrence Market area at 145 Front Street East Suite G2 Toronto, Ontario Canada M5A 1E3.

"The PoNS™ gives us an opportunity to manage a vital area of neurorehabilitation with more precision than ever before. We're extremely excited to integrate it into our clinic," said Elliot Jacobson, MD CCFP (EM) ABIHM.

Since the opening of the first certified clinic, Neurotherapy Montreal, in December 2018, the Company has made it a priority to make the PoNS accessible to Canadians from coast-to-coast. P3 Health is joining the existing list of neurological rehabilitation clinics in Canada: Surrey Neuroplastic Center in Surrey BC; Advantage 4 Athletes Training Center and Therapy Clinic in Markham, Ontario; Synaptic Spinal Cord Injury and Neuro Rehabilitation Centre in Calgary, Alberta; and Apollo South Physical Therapy Centre in Ottawa, Ontario.

"We are hyper-focused on our Canadian commercial launch and we are pleased that the strategy to accelerate expansion plans has driven the further development of the network of authorized clinics," said Philippe Deschamps, Helius CEO. "Patients who have had a mild-to-moderate traumatic brain injury are often not able to travel long distances and now, with a presence in Montreal, Vancouver, Toronto, Markham, Calgary and Ottawa — over 50% of Canadians will have direct local access to PoNS Treatment," continued Deschamps. To contact the authorized clinic nearest you, directly, please visit www.ponstreatment.ca.

With this expansion, Helius is fulfilling its commitment to create a nationwide network of leading neurorehabilitation clinics which are authorized to bring the innovative PoNS Treatment closer to home for those with mild-to-moderate traumatic brain injuries.

About P3 Health

P3 Health is a leading healthcare facility located in downtown Toronto's St. Lawrence Market area, founded by Dr. Timothy Cook, Internal Medicine and Functional Medicine specialist. Dr. Cook's unique perspective of the healthcare landscape, both locally



and abroad, led him to bring together the country's best, brightest and most progressive, functionally trained and integrative medical team. Utilizing each practitioner's diverse range of discipline and bringing together their decades of experience, has led to a state-of-the-art facility that truly embodies personalized, preventive and participatory healthcare. Using cutting-edge technology, unique lab testing, integrative services and customized protocols that delve beyond conventional care, P3 Health is where true functional and western medicine merge. P3 Health's primary focus is not only on managing chronic illness, but on lifestyle optimization, age management, disease prevention and health promotion.

P3 Health offers non-invasive neuro-rehabilitation based on one simple principle: the brain is capable of learning and changing throughout a person's entire life. This change is made possible through engagement of a phenomenon known as "neuroplasticity" — a term that describes the flexibility and adaptability of the brain and its metabolic environment.

About Helius Medical Technologies, Inc.

Helius Medical Technologies is a neurotech company focused on neurological wellness. The Company's purpose is to develop, license and acquire unique and non-invasive platform technologies that amplify the brain's ability to heal itself. The Company's first commercial product is the Portable Neuromodulation Stimulator (PoNS™). For more information, visit www.helius-medical.com.

About the PoNS Device and PoNS Treatment

The Portable Neuromodulation

Stimulator (PoNS) is an authorized class II, noninvasive, medical device in Canada intended for use as a short term treatment (14 weeks) of chronic balance deficit due to mild-to-moderate traumatic brain injury (mTBI) and is to be used in conjunction with physical therapy. The PoNS is an investigational medical device in the United States, the European Union ("EU"), and Australia ("AUS"), and it is currently under review for clearance the AUS Therapeutic Goods Administration. PoNS Treatment is currently not commercially available in the United States, the European Union or Australia.

Cautionary Disclaimer Statement:

Certain statements in this news release are not based on historical facts and constitute forward-looking statements or forward-looking information within the meaning of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and Canadian securities laws. All statements other than statements of historical fact included in this news release are forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. Forward-looking statements are often identified by terms such as "believe," "continue," "look forward," "will" and similar expressions. Such forward-looking statements include, among others, statements regarding the Company's future clinical and regulatory development plans for the PoNS device and the potential regulatory clearance of the PoNS device.

There can be no assurance that such statements will prove to be accurate and actual results and future events could differ materially from those expressed or implied by such statements. Important factors that could cause ac-

tual results to differ materially from the Company's expectations include the uncertainties associated with the regulation of commercially available medical devices in Canada, including Health Canada's ongoing assessment of post-market data, the clinical development, regulatory submission and approval process in the United States, the European Union and Australia, as well as the Company's capital requirements needed to achieve its business objectives and other risks detailed from time to time in the filings made by the Company with securities regulators, and including the risks and uncertainties about the Company's business described in the "Risk Factors" sections of the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2018, its Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2019 and its other filings with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission and the Canadian securities regulators, which can be obtained from either at www.sec.gov or www.sedar.com.

The reader is cautioned not to place undue reliance on any forward-looking statement. The forward-looking statements contained in this news release are made as of the date of this news release and the Company assumes no obligation to update any forward-looking statement or to update the reasons why actual results could differ from such statements except to the extent required by law.

The Toronto Stock Exchange has not reviewed and does not accept responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of the content of this news release.

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Special Feature

Dunstan's Peter's journey from Sri Lanka to Canada is a story of sacrifice, unwavering work ethic and giving back to the community. Dunstan can be best described as a serial entrepreneur – he has founded more than half a dozen businesses spanning the automotive, real estate, telecommunications and financial services sectors. From his humble beginnings, Dunstan has always held on to two core beliefs: hard work and integrity – and it is these two beliefs that have propelled him to success today.

Dunstan was separated from his family at the age of twelve due to the civil war in Sri Lanka. He re-united with his family in Canada at the age of seventeen, but for five years, Dunstan was not able to attend school. During this time, Dunstan recalls reading stories from various scriptures that helped instill a desire to give back. When he arrived in Canada in 1993, Dunstan was seventeen years old but had only completed education up to grade 5. Dunstan's high school years in Canada were not those of an average student by any means. His daily routine consisted of going to school until 3:30 pm, stopping home for a quick snack, going to night school until 9:00 pm. After night school, he would take the bus to his night shift job, where he slept on a make-shift bed for five to six hours until his shift from 2:00 am to 7:30 am. Then, it was back on the bus to school for 9:00 am. Despite living on five to six hours of sleep and the very inviting chance to sleep in on the weekends, Dunstan upheld his sense of giving back by volunteering on weekends at Etobicoke General Hospital helping elderly patients. By the end of his high school years, Dunstan had supported himself and his family financially, and earned a scholarship to the University of Western Ontario. Any free time he had was productively used in extracurricular activities including track and field, martial arts and dance.

Dunstan continued to apply his work ethic during his university years as he graduated with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and a diploma in electronics & robotics process control, while working two part time jobs. He looks back on his experiences and is thankful for all the difficulties he has faced. He says that each situation presented an opportunity to grow.

After graduating, Dunstan worked with one of the big three automakers as an Electrical and Systems Engineer. Always one to seek improvements, it is during this time that he visualized improvements in the quality assurance controls. Dunstan made the leap into entrepreneurship by convincing his employer that he could improve the quality assurance processes.

Trinity Tech Inc. was founded in the basement of Dunstan's home in 2009. As of 2019, his company has assisted over 300 automotive suppliers, including the big three automakers and other fortune 500 companies, with various quality assurance needs. Today, Trinity Tech Inc. has six offices and five warehouses across North America and employs over 500 skilled employees. Dunstan recalls refinancing his home and working 36 hours without sleep to meet deadlines for clients and his company's growth is a testament to his sacrifices and perseverance.

Dunstan Peter

President & CEO of Trinity Tech Inc.

The success story of an Entrepreneur whose Engineering education, passion for innovation and business experience were core values to pursue his dream



Six years after the launch of Trinity Tech Inc., Dunstan realized that it was time to start learning about business in a larger, more impactful way. This led him to pursue higher education, and he graduated from Queen's University with an EMBA in 2015. With the knowledge he had gained, Dunstan expanded the Trinity name to Trinity Star Developments (real estate development, rentals and modular homes), TNext Communication (telecommunications), R2M (research to manufacturing), Quest Industrilandrial Supply (products supply), Trinity ECoating (car parts ecoating), With3D (3D Printing) and Trinity Star Foundation (non-profit)

As an immigrant himself, Dunstan understands the struggle that immigrants face and recognizes the value of diversity - approximately 60% of his employees are internationally trained engineers. Dunstan's company not only provides skilled immigrants with relevant Canadian experience, but he also mentors and trains them to ensure Trinity continually offers innovative solutions to clients. Dunstan has fostered a family atmosphere at Trinity Tech Inc. Whether its playing pool at the office, parties on Friday evenings, or just keeping in touch with employees, Dunstan makes sure his employees feel valued. "Success is about helping people, capturing their hearts and blessings as you pursue your dream," says Dunstan.

Recognizing the struggle that skilled immigrants face, Trinity Tech Inc. collaborates with ACCES Employment to provide skilled immigrants with Canadian work experience.

Trinity Tech Inc.'s initiatives in providing relevant employment opportunities to internationally trained professionals were recognized through the 2012 RBC Immigrant Advantage Award for SMEs. Trinity Tech Inc. was also recognized on the 2012 Walk of Fame at the Accessible Community Counselling and Employment Services (ACCES) general meeting in September 2012. The company was awarded Supplier of the Year in 2017 by the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council (CAMSC) for its continued support of diverse and marginalized communities across Canada. Always leading by example, Dunstan donates blood every year on his birthday, and friends, family and team members are welcome to donate blood and support the Canadian Blood Services. Trinity Tech Inc. has also donated to organizations such as SickKids, Canadian Medical Dental and Development Association (CMDDA), South Asian Autism and Awareness Center (SAAAC), Toronto Police Foundation, the Rotary club of Richmond Hill, Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce (CTCC), and the Centre for Leadership and Innovation's Youth Leadership Program. Dunstan also personally



financially supports post-secondary students in Sri Lanka in need of financial assistance.

2013 was another milestone year for Dunstan as his company, Trinity Events, hosted the largest South Indian music concert in North American history. The concert, attended by 25,000 guests, featured over 120 artists led by Maestro Ilaiyaraaja and was broadcast internationally on Vijay TV. Many political dignitaries attended, including Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Jason Kenny. For Dunstan, the event served as a celebration of Canada's growing diversity and provided a sense of community and recognition for fellow immigrants.

Dunstan's journey from facing civil war as a child to his current role as a serial entrepreneur is both unique and reminiscent of many Canadian immigrants' struggles. Dunstan and Trinity Tech Inc.'s success have been featured in the Globe and Mail and Queen's University's Smith Magazine and the company continues to explore new technologies. Dunstan is also a finalist for the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2019 Awards. Dunstan's plans for future include growing Trinity Group to triple digit million company, provide solution & modular homes, food and clothing to 250K homeless people in Canada in the next 7 years and complete PhD in Business Strategy at Harvard School of Business. Dunstan has no plans to retire and looks forward to exploring new technologies and emerging markets to expand the Trinity name and reinvest in his employees and local communities.



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Special Feature



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

WHAT'S IN A VOTE? A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME...

will still bristle with thorns upon the minorities

NOVEMBER 17, 2019

Congratulations on whichever President you voted in, Sri Lanka. A new era has dawned. Let us all hope for the best.

I wrote this before the elections but by today, you will know the results. I hope most of you remain happy with the way the die is cast. Such happiness though is a privilege some of us do not have.

As a member of the minorities living in this country, I fear the results – whoever wins. Because we minorities always lose. What remains to be seen is how much we'll lose.

The mainly combined minority vote that brought the last president to power did not see much improvement in minority rights. All that can be said was that circumstances were not as massively terrible as they once were but they certainly did not improve – we are still second class citizens in this country whose basic human rights can be trampled upon at will.

We can always hope they improve but the future does not appear any rosier for minorities – we keep seeing the thorns whilst the majority see only the roses – depends on which end of the branch you are used to being brushed with.

Sri Lanka vs Australia

Apart from the constant election coverage, two different yet similar pieces of news dominated the news cycle last week. One was about Dr. Shafi and continuing allegations against him despite women who claimed that he had made them sterile now falling pregnant.

The other was of the continuing court case in Australia of Arsalan Khawaja, who framed Sri Lankan PhD student Kamer Nizamdeen of plotting ISIS style attacks in Australia. He has pleaded guilty to the charges and the Australian media indicate that his conviction at trial will come fairly soon. In the meantime, he is incarcerated, and Kamer is walking free, with all allegations against him reversed – widely proclaimed by the Australian media, police and politicians as innocent so that no-one can ignorantly continue to harbour any suspicions against him.

Over here?

It's somewhat of a miracle that despite the heavyweight political influence wielded by those who sought to frame Dr. Shafi, the CID did go against the police, Buddhist monks, politicians and a hysterical Sinhala-Buddhist population to clear Dr. Shafi of all charges.

He very easily could have ended up with continuing trumped up charges against him as he languished in jail. Such a scenario would be nothing new in Sri Lanka. And most of our population would be blissfully content to continue to vilify him, his family and his Muslim community with impunity, while fancying themselves the victims.

Mercifully, for whatever reason, at least in this particular case the CID did act independently and honestly to clear him of all charges – not that that has done him or his community much good. The mass hysteria so easily whipped up by the media, politicians and clergy have yet to die down. And the people who framed him, including the Director of the Kurunegala Teaching Hospital and a Deputy Inspector General of Police are nowhere near being jailed or even socially pulled up. Neither have any of the media or the political heavy-weights who contributed to the witch-hunt against him retracted or even had the courtesy to apologize.

Instead, it is Dr. Shafi who was jailed, his wife who lost her job and their young children who were terribly bullied at school who've had their lives irreparably damaged – and their ongoing trauma is nowhere near over yet. No effort has been taken to repair the irreparable damage done to their reputations – all because he was an exceptionally successful doctor whom his colleagues including the head of the hospital he worked at, were jealous of.

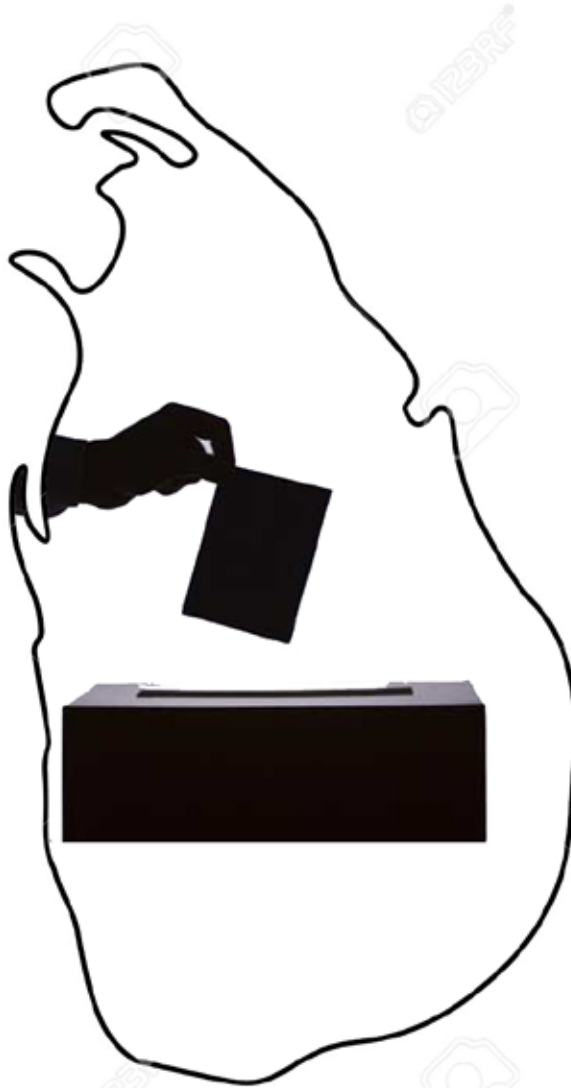
Kamer Nizamdeen too was subjected to his horrendous misfortune due to jealousy by a colleague – in that case allegedly over a woman. Yet the Australian police despite arresting Kamer almost immediately, did investigate and release the framed innocent party quite quickly. Whereupon they also immediately arrested the party attempting to frame him and threw the book at him.

See the difference?

This is probably why most of our youths, Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims alike want to get on a boat to Australia. The Burghers beat us to it a long time ago. They saw the writing on the wall long before the rest of us.

The lure of Australia

Several years ago, when hazardous boat journeys to Australia were the norm here, before the Australian government eventually put a stop to it, I wrote an investigative article on why so many of our youths felt impelled to go. Across the board, no matter their ethnicity, all the youths I interviewed said they felt disenfranchised by the State here and hoped to have a chance to establish themselves on foreign



shores – a chance their own shores were not affording them.

I interviewed a wide cross-section of politicians, economists and sociologists too for the article. I remember one particular quote given by economist turned politician Dr. Harsha de Silva standing out: “I am amazed at the reports of all these boat people trying to escape to Australia. It is happening every day now. What is Australia? A country that came about due to the hard work of deported convicts. If they can come to this level with a history of only 200 years, why can't we with a history of 2000 years work to improve the infrastructure of our country to match it?”

Perhaps because a country of deported convicts just 200 years ago managed to build a functioning democracy while we at 2000 years are just feudocracies attempting to re-establish hereditary monarchies and/or blatant dictatorships under the guise of a democracy? And our voters for the most part appear to have no problem with that?

This is a land of kings, dictators and

despots – not a polity used to being accountable to the people.

And the way they rule is still the via the stratagem of the good ol' “Divide and Conquer.”

It never fails. Keep the majority afraid of the boogeymen, usually the minorities set up to take the fall – and they will keep voting for “a Hitler who will exterminate the pests.”

Yes, that's exactly how many Sinhala-Buddhist voters describe their voting stratagem which is what is so worrying for us minorities – especially as we are the “pests.”

We could try pointing out with enough and more evidence that these strong men who will supposedly protect the county are the ones who manufactured the likes of Mohamed Zahran – and then allowed them free rein all the way up to the Easter bombings – but logic is not something a hysteria induced majority appear to have time for.

“Eradicate the pests – we'll cheer you on” is the only language they exhibit.

Whither Justice?

We keep hearing that we want strong men to ensure justice. But what justice? Justice for whom? We can read and be cheered up by news that Arsalan Khwaja is in jail in Australia and justice has prevailed.

Then we read about continuing allegations against Dr. Shafi and see people who ought to know better continuing to opine he must somehow have been in the wrong. Because that is somehow easier to believe than the counter-narrative that he was obviously framed.

A few independent journalists have released stories on exactly how DIG Jayalath and Dr. Weerabandara, the Director of the Kurunegala Teaching Hospital attempted to frame him. It had gone to the extent of the CID filing complaints with courts that the two were repeatedly trying to block their investigations, while continuing to fuel the media with aspersions against Shafi. Yet they continue to walk boldly and free. Justice did not prevail in the previous government. All our last president saw fit to do was release a heinous murderer apropos of nothing as one of his last acts, even as others more deserving than that dastardly character continue to languish in jail.

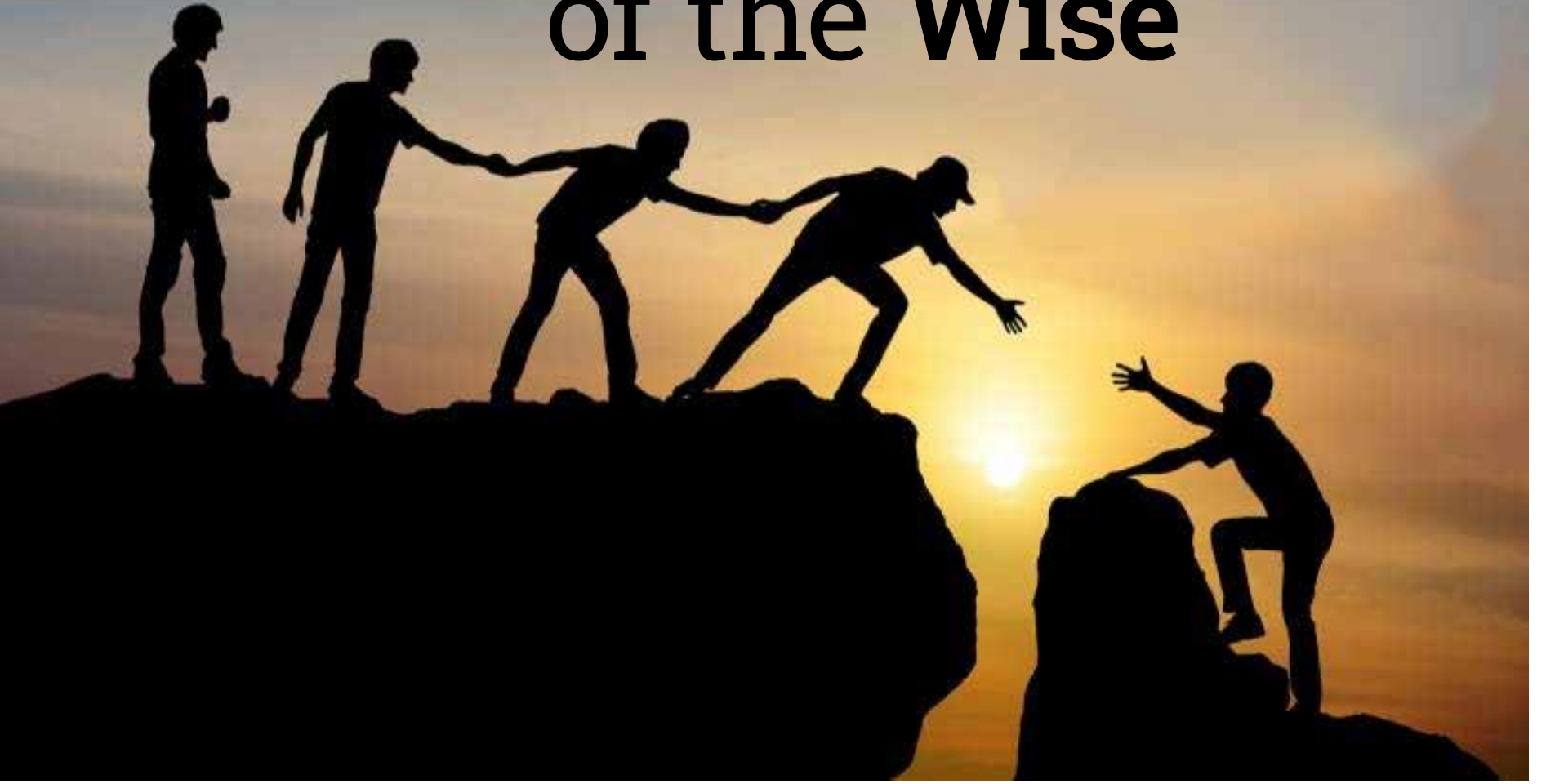
Our outgoing Nero and his media division have spent a lot of time exhorting us to feel sorry for this young man born with a silver spoon in his mouth.

As for the downtrodden, the needy, the under-represented, the minorities – keep throwing the book at them. No semblance of justice for such as they.

A new rose has just bloomed – may it prosper. And may it not sport too many thorns at us. That's all we minorities can hope for.



The Friendship of the Wise



- shutterfly.com

By: J.A. Rajah

Leaders should carefully selectively opt for the friendship of ethically oriented and wise counsellors. Bible asserts the same idea when it says 'Wisdom flows from the mouth of the righteous'.

Valluvar uses the phrase, "aranarinthu mootha arivudaiyar", to describe the wise men. Political leaders should cherish the friendship of wise and accomplished persons for solving contemporary problems and preventing future ones. It is the rarest and rare privileges of a good leader, to have the wise and great men as his true friends.

**A wise leader should have men of

greater wisdom than him to advise him. Such a leader will be really powerful. A leader should use his own intuition to choose his counsellors wisely. A leader who is guided by worthy and true friends, need not have fear of harm from his enemies. When a leader has counsellors who possess the courage to reprove him when necessary, nothing on earth can bring disaster to him. Without courageous counsellors to point out his faults and protect him, a leader will ruin himself even without foes. Ravana met his ruin as he did not have courageous ministers to warn him of his impending disaster.

Kamban effectively speaks the words: 'Adukkum eethadatheethenru aanra aethuvo arivu kaadi iddikkunar illai neeye enni enni unnai mudikkira pothu'. Ravana ruined himself by giving way to his own feelings and thoughts and brought about his own ruin. Without capital, there is no gain. Similarly there is no stability for a political leader, without the support of the wise and virtuous men. It is foolish to incur the hatred of the foes; but it is ten times worse to lose righteous men. Plato, the Greek political philosopher characterised the final attainment -that is wise and virtuous - as a 'form of good.'

*"Thamin periyar thamara ozhlukuthal,
Vanmaiyul ellam thalai".*

(Kural: 441-450).



Valluvar's Views



St. Thiruvalluvar the HOUSEHOLDER

By: Kumar Punithavel

About two thousand years ago, there lived a great philosopher poet, who wrote Thirukkural a book, which has become the abiding authority on all ethical subjects for not only the Tamil nation, but to the world at large. It is independent of all religions, but theistic in nature. It deals with all aspects of human life within its three sections, Virtue, Wealth and Love!

In the distance past householders life was simple and straightforward. In a household there were only two ministries to administer. One is the ministry of internal affairs which took care of the matters arising in the maintenance of the household, like cooking, cleaning nurturing the children etc. The second is the ministry of external affairs like wage earning, defence of the household etc. This was fair as physically man was stronger and thus he can be more productive in matters needed strength, whereas household chores needed multitasking and women were good at it.

The two wars of the last century made great changes in this simple life style. Men had to go to the war fronts and there was shortage of personal for production inclusive of war efforts. Women rose up to the occasion and took over the external matters like production etc which was man's job previously. At the end of the war, when the men returned from war, the world ended up with an economy with two wage earners.

During Thiruvalluvar's time life was simple and both husband and wife had great respect to one another. He must have been extremely satisfied with his householder's life, so much so, on the chapter of domestic virtue as fiftieth couplet he writes,

வையத்துள் வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்பவன்
வான்உறையும் தெய்வத்துள் வைக்கப் படும்

Who shares domestic life, by household virtues graced,

Shall, mid the Gods, in heaven who dwell, be placed.

For him if a person lives a proper householder's life he will be elevated to reside among Gods in the heaven! St. Thiruvalluvar the householder earned his living by weaving. Yes, he was a weaver by profession. Whereas Vasuki the wife stayed home and took care of the matters arising in running the house.

St. Thiruvalluvar has written one thousand three hundred and thirty couplets comprising of two lines each in his treatise Thirukkural which deals with universal ethics. However the great saint poet Thiruvalluvar has written only one verse with four lines in his whole life. This too he wrote praising the virtue of his wife Vasuki. Probably he felt that she is greater than anything else in his life.

St. Thiruvalluvar must have had a perfect householder's life. He found a perfect woman in his wife Vasuki, and realized there is none greater a chaste woman in the world. So much so as his fifty-fourths couplet he has written as follows;

பெண்ணின்
பெருந்தக்க யாவுள்
கற்பென்னும்
திண்மைஉண்
டாகப் பெறின்

If a woman
might of chastity
retain

What choicer
treasure doth the
world contain?

54.

Such was the
high esteem St.
Thiruvalluvar held
about women.

It is told that during their early householder's life, he made a request that when Vasuki serves him meals with the food she should keep a cup of water and a needle. Being a devout loving wife, who had full trust in her husband, she never asked him for the reason.

It was a time husband had full faith in the judgment of the wife in matters concerning the house, and wife had full trust in her husband.

The time came Vasuki to depart from the world and leave her husband

forever. The dying wife looked at her husband wistfully. St. Thiruvalluvar looked most kindly at her expression and asked, 'What is it you want dear?'

She replied, 'Dear husband when you married me, and on that day I stood and spread the rice for you, you gave me a request to always place, with your meals, a cup of water and a needle. I know not why it was to this day. Neither you nor I had never ever used them'. He looked at her with great admiration and love, and most kindly answered, 'It was that if a grain of rice were to spill, I might pick it up and purify and eat it without wasting'. Both of them were careful that the opportunity never came for him to use the needle. Satisfied with the answer the meek kind Vasuki closed her eyes forever.

She had never during her whole married life questioned her husband's decisions and requests! And also, it is clear; no grain of rice had ever been spilt!

As he lay that night, after her death and cremation, with heart full of grief and



- pinterest.com

pondered the wonderful wife's greatness. He loved her and missed her so much he was heard to exclaim his one and only four line verse he ve composed.

அடிசிற் கினியாளே! அன்புடை யாளே!
படிசொற் கடவாத பாவாய்! - அடிவருடிப்
பின்தூங்கி முன்எழுஉம் பேதையே போதியோ!
என்தூங்கும் என்கண் இரா.

'Sweet as my daily food! O full of love! O wife,

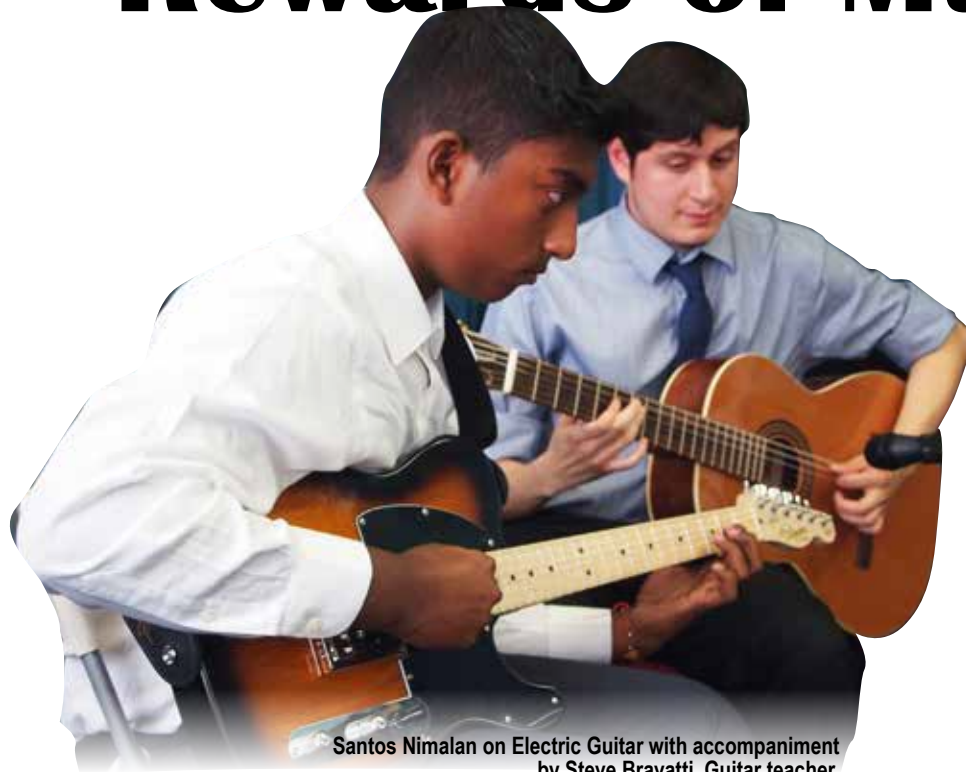
Obedient ever to my word! Chafing my feet,
The last to sleep, first to rise, O gentle one!

By night, henceforth, what slumber to mine eyes?

People's life has changed a great deal, but one cannot fail to admire the great love, trust, respect and admiration this couple had for one another. The only four line verse he sang came out when he was in his most grief stricken moment, at the death on his beloved died. He never wrote another four line verse.



Rewards of Music Education



Santos Nimalan on Electric Guitar with accompaniment by Steve Bravatti, Guitar teacher.

By: Navid Niknejad, MM

Music-making is perhaps the most brain-stimulating activity among human beings: as playing a musical instrument requires profound engagement and complex coordination of the different parts of the brain. Furthermore, as a sophisticated form of communication, music has deep roots in history and culture. Making music not only requires the employment of di-

ments, one must understand the mathematical relations of the rhythm, hear different tone colors and dynamics, and grasp the underlying logic of the form and harmony. It is only after mastering such features that the musician can aim for creativity and artistic expression, which is the ultimate goal.

Since the styles of music can vary drastically depending on when and where a piece was written, performers have to be knowledgeable about the background of the music and integrate that knowledge into their interpretation. For instance, a dance movement by Johann Sebastian Bach from the seventeenth-century Germany cannot be played in the same way as a Latin American dance from the early twentieth century. Studying a piece of music in search of well-informed interpretative decisions can be a journey through history.

The multifaceted nature of music makes it an ideal activity for self-improvement. Music, even as a leisure activity, can be an effective way to practice concentration, as practicing music requires the complete engagement of different brain parts and one must be fully focused when

playing. Additionally, music-making improved the coordination of mind and body, enhances listening and analytical skills, and improves all types of memory (such as auditory, visual, and muscle memory). Above all, playing a musical instrument is a fun and rewarding experience that provides not only the joy of learning and achieving your goals, but also allows you to share your passion with others by performing in public.



Abhishek Nimalan - Classical guitar

verse types of intelligence but also needs an understanding of the era and culture that the music is originated in.

A successful musical performance needs the application of different types of intelligence; brain parts that control precise motoric activities have to work together with the parts that perform mathematical calculations, as well as the ones that create artistic expression. In addition to well-organized body move-

Jazmine Tolentino - Voice performance.



Omkar Ganeshan - Piano Lesson with teacher Lilit Khachatryan.



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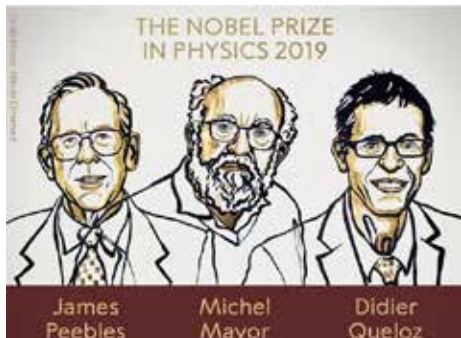


2019

NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSICS WAS AWARDED TO COSMOLOGY

Trio Scientists Honored for Refining Our Understanding of The Evolution of The Universe

By: Uthayan Thurairajah

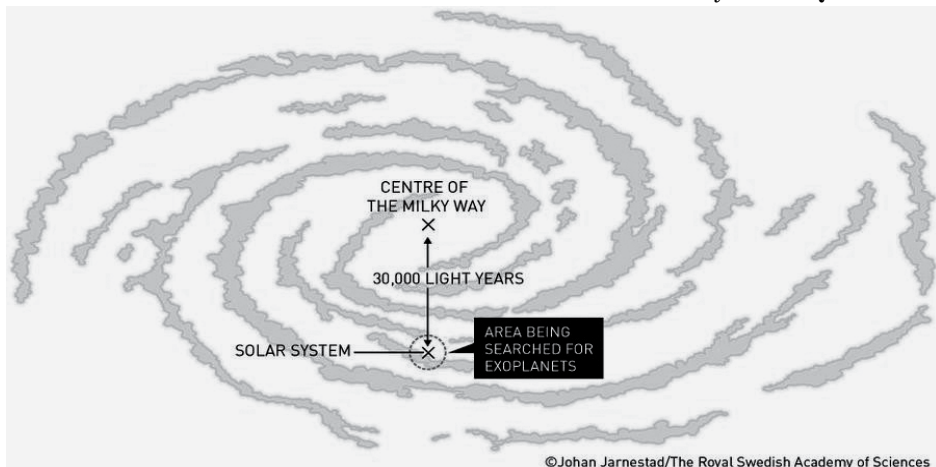


The Nobel Prize in physics awarded to trio scientists for explaining the history and structure of the universe and for shifting our view of Earth's position in it. Manitoba-born James Peebles, Princeton University, received one-half of the Nobel "for theoretical discoveries in physical cosmology." The other half will be shared by Swiss scientists, Didier Queloz and Michel Mayor, "for the discovery of an exoplanet circling a solar-type star." Professor Michel Mayor, University of Geneva, Switzerland, and Didier Queloz, the University of Geneva and the University of Cambridge, U.K.

Dr. Peebles was born in Winnipeg, Canada, in 1935 and achieved his undergraduate studies at the University of Manitoba. He earned a Ph.D. from Princeton University in New Jersey in 1962. Currently, at Princeton, he's the Albert Einstein Professor of Science. Peebles was pivotal in changing the field of cosmology. The study of the universe's origin and evolution — from one of speculation to actual science, according to the Nobel Prize organization. Peebles investigation led to the discovery that just 5% of the universe is ordinary matter and energy, while about 95% is unseen stuff that physicists call dark matter and dark energy.

Queloz and Mayor declared the first search of a planet or an exoplanet outside our solar system, circling a sun-like star in October 1995. The pair was able to see 51 Pegasi b, a gas giant comparable to Jupiter using custom-made devices at the Haute-Provence Observatory in southern France. "This finding started a change in astronomy, and over 4,000 exoplanets have since been found in the Milky Way. Peebles will get half of the 9 million kronor Nobel prize, while Queloz and Mayor split the other half.

FIND PLANETS

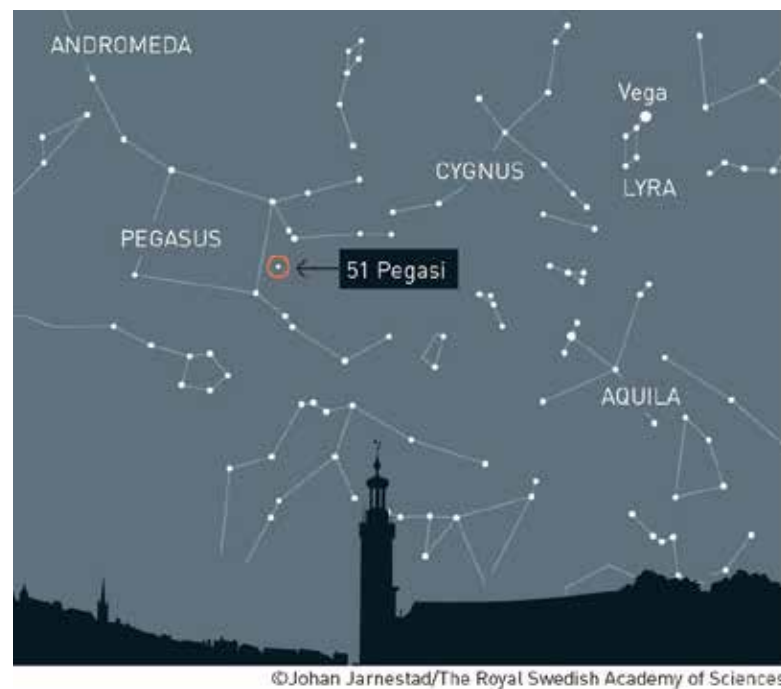


There are two methods that scientists use to find planets around stars. One is the transit system, where scientists watch the planets across the front of their parent stars. The sensitive telescopes can detect the minuscule dimming of the starlight as the planet goes by and casts its shadow on the radar. Nasa's Kepler's mission telescope that has used transits to find hordes of new planets that were extremely successful.

Didier Queloz and Michel Mayor used a complex technique. They looked at

how stars are dragged around by planets that swing around them. The radial velocity method uses the Doppler effect. The planet's gravity draws its stars towards Earth. The Light from the star is shifted towards the blue wavelengths of the electromagnetic spectrum. The rays are compressed and getting them bluer. As the planet moves around the star and pulls it backward, the starlight is stretched out and turns towards the red end of the spectrum. Scientists can measure this wavelength variations, and work out first if there is an unseen planet orbit around a star. Secondly, how long a year lasts in the world.

Mayor and Queloz concentrated their research on watching for hidden worlds in the Milky Way. They discovered the first planet outside our solar system in 1995. The discovery of 51 Pegasi b, which



is a gaseous ball similar to Jupiter, is a change in astronomy. Mayor teaches at the University of Geneva, while Queloz teaches at the University of Cambridge and the University of Geneva.

Dr. Prof. Martin Rees of the University of Cambridge greeted Peebles as "the most prominent and honored leader of empirical cosmology with a packed record of success spanning half a century." Dr. Rees added that Mayor and Queloz have

CHANGED VIEWS

This year Nobel Prize in Physics pays a new knowledge of the universe's composition and history, the first discovery of a planet circling a solar-type star outside our solar system. The trio scientists for groundbreaking discoveries about the evolution of the universe and the Earth's place within it. The discoveries have forever changed our conceptions of the world. Canadian scientist James Peebles has been awarded half of the prize for his theoretical discoveries about the evolution of the universe. The Swiss astronomers and scientists Didier Queloz and Michel Mayor share the other half of the award. The Swiss astronomers discovered the first planet beyond our solar system.

Peebles was compensated for laying a foundation for modern cosmology, including his realization that weak microwave radiation that charged the cosmos 400K years after the Big Bang contains vital hints to what the universe observed like at the first stage and how it has evolved over the subsequent 13 billion years.

Queloz and Mayor have been recognized for their joint discovery in 1995 of the first exoplanet, 50 light-years away in the constellation of Pegasus. The planet, 51 Pegasi b, is a gaseous ball about 150 times more massive than Earth and has a scorching surface temperature of about 1,000C. Queloz, who holds posts at the University of Geneva and the University of Cambridge, told a press briefing at London that he had been expecting a call about a grant he was working on when the news came through. "I couldn't think at all; I had a complete blackout. It is emotionally intense," Queloz said. Mayor is his former supervisor and fellow laureate.

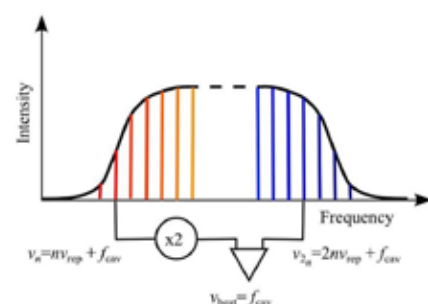
CERN APPLAUDS

CERN congratulates the trio scientists on for enrichment to our understanding of the growth of the universe and Earth's place in the universe. Cosmology studies the universe's origin, structure, and final destiny. Peebles' intellectual framework of cosmology, developed since the 1960s, is the foundation of our knowledge of the cosmos today. Thanks to his original theoretical effort, scientists now have a model that can explain the universe from its most beginning moments to the present day and into the far future. Meanwhile, Mayor and Queloz has explored our cosmic neighborhood and announced the first finding of a planet outside our

Solar System revolving a solar-type star in the Milky Way in 1995.

Like cosmology and astronomy, Particle physics tries to understand what the universe is made of and how it works. CERN uses particle accelerators to investigate the building blocks of the universe instead of telescopes on the ground and in space. The cosmological investigations indicate that the universe is mainly made of dark energy, dark matter, and a tiny amount of ordinary matter. Scientists have yet to discover the precise nature of the two dark elements.

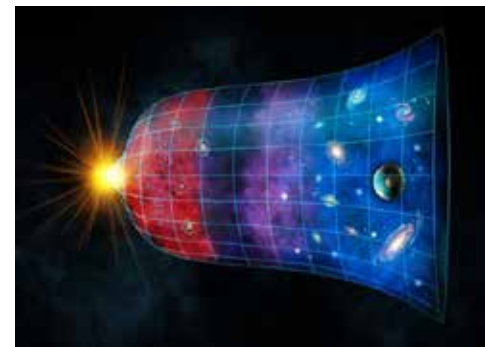
Trials at CERN are trying to hunt down new, foreign particles that could make up dark matter and shed light on the observed development of the universe. The NA64 and CMS experiments have reported current results on hunts for dark photons, and the ATLAS research



on a search for light supersymmetric particles. Theoretical physicists at CERN help guide those experiments and prompt current ones with their investigation into high-energy physics and cosmology related fields.

"The need for Einstein's cosmological constant, the existence of dark energy and the properties of the dark matter still pose considerable practical difficulties," told Peebles in a CERN interview in 2016. "I think that the new generation of experiments will drive us to a deeper understanding and a reconsideration of our previous ideas about these topics, and I am looking forward to that," said Peebles.

Dr. Peebles helped predict the cosmic microwave background radiation—the first light in the universe, which allows scientists to trace the earliest periods in the universe. Over a 50years career, he has shaped our sense of how the big bang created material, how galaxies made, and what makes up the missing bulk of the universe — the unknown things of dark energy and dark matter. It is fascinating. We have clear evidence that our universe did expand from a hot and dense state. Even though the theory is fully tested, we still must admit that the dark matter and dark energy are mysterious.



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

Year-end tax reminders and tips!

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

To be sure you keep your tax bill as low as possible, tax and financial planning should be a year-round activity. Starting early and being diligent about your tax life is important but it's only one aspect of your total financial life. When you have a complete financial plan in place, it's easier to keep everything on track and on target. That's why consulting with your professional advisor will make sure all your tax-reduction strategies and overall financial objectives are in place and working for you.

Capital gains and losses Tax loss selling is a crucial year-end activity for investors, where we realize capital losses on security positions as a means to partially or fully offset realized capital gains in the current tax year, previous years or simply to carry the losses forward. For those of you who do not make a significant number of changes to the portfolio, the degree of realized gains in any given year may be small;

but the contribution deadline for 2019 is March 2, 2020. RRSP contribution room can be carried forward indefinitely and you may want to consider deferring a deduction to a future year when you'll be in a higher tax bracket. Always make your maximum contribution each year – you'll get the most in immediate tax savings and in long-term growth. How much you can personally contribute can be found on your most recent notice of assessment from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Each year, the Canada Revenue Agency identifies your unused contribution room for the upcoming tax year on your Notice of Assessment. If however, you are unable to locate your Notice of Assessment, a quick call to the Canada Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-8281 or a visit to www.cra.gc.ca can provide the information you need.

RRSP withdrawals If you intend to withdraw cash from your investments held within an RRSP and expect your income to increase significantly



David Joseph, M.A., CFP®, CLU, RRC.

Financial Consultant

david.joseph@investorsgroup.com

Phone: (905)-895-6718

Toll Free: 1-888-565-9996

Fax: (905) 895-5581 <http://www.investorsgroup.com>

in a spousal RRSP, through a pension-income split with a spouse, or by paying a salary to other (eligible) family members.

Home Buyers' Plan (HPB) By delaying a withdrawal from your investments held within an RRSP under HBP until after December 31, you'll extend the time period for purchasing a new home and for the first repayment by an additional year.

Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) If your child is turning 15 this year and you want to ensure he

(TFSA) Make a \$6,000 contribution to your investments held with a TFSA. The contribution isn't tax deductible but the money and interest earned inside your TFSA are tax-free and so are withdrawals, which can be made at any time for any purpose.

Tax Deductions and Tax Credit Take full advantage of all that are available to you and make sure the items you claim were paid in the year they are claimed.

These are just a few opportunities for year-end tax savings. Talk to



however, gains can creep in unexpectedly, such as through mutual fund distributions. Sell money-losing investments by the December 31 settlement date to offset capital gains. If you plan to repurchase the assets you sold at a loss, don't fall afoul of the superficial loss rules which will remove any tax advantage if you repurchase an identical capital property within 30 days after having disposed of it.

RRSP contributions The contri-

next year, consider making the withdrawal before year end. If you turn 71 this year and are required to wind up your RRSPs before December 31, it's tax-advantageous to transfer the funds to investments held within a Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF) or annuity. You can also continue to make contributions for your spouse until he or she turns 71.

Income-splitting Save on taxes by contributing to investments held with-

or she will be eligible for the Canadian Education Savings Grant (CESG) in the years the child turns 16 and 17, by the end of the year you must be able to show that you contributed at least \$2,000 to their investments held within an RESP (with zero withdrawals) or you contributed at least \$100 for you child in any four year period (again, with zero withdrawals).

Tax-Free Savings Account

your professional advisor to make sure you're not missing out on others.

Disclaimer:

This report specifically written and published as a general source of information only, and is not intended as a solicitation for mortgage or to buy/sell specific investments or insurance, nor is it intended to provide investment advice. For more information on this topic, please contact me.

Holiday Spending Tips to Stay Out of Debt

Have you made it your goal to stay out of debt this holiday season? We all do it at least once, we say we're going to stay on budget this Christmas and then we blow the budget and put everything on our credit cards. This isn't unusual, people all over the country have done it and it's not only our faults. There are a few options available to you if you want to get out of debt.

Little debts on credit Cards

The first option is good if you only have a small amount of debt on a few credit cards, you can consolidate your debt into a credit line. By taking all of your high interest credit cards and putting them onto an unsecured line of credit, you will pay a much lower interest rate, which will allow you to pay off the debt faster. The trick to this option is to make sure that you cut up the credit cards you consolidated so that you are not tempted to use them again.

If you have amassed more than just a little debt, another option if you are a homeowner is to consolidate your debt into a secured line of credit or a home equity loan. What this means is the bank will allow you to borrow against the equity in your home at an even lower rate. You will save even more money on interest and you can pay down this debt a lot faster, but again make sure to close the accounts of the credit cards



you consolidate so you are not tempted to use them.

Refinancing of your current mortgage

This option is not always the best thing for everyone but for some people it can allow you to incorporate all of your debt into your mortgage so you only have one payment every month. If this is something that you are considering it could save you thousands of dollars, and if you follow a good plan after you refinance you could pay down your mortgage even faster.

Debt Consolidating

Consolidating the debt will help you to get out of debt much faster and much

cheaper. This is not the only solution because you want to make sure you don't get into debt next year, and the only way to do that is to make a good budget. It is vital to write up a good budget and stick to it every month, write down all of your cash spending so you can keep track of it.

Sum up all receipts of past Christmas holidays

In addition, a good way to make sure you don't get into debt next Christmas is to add up all of the receipts for your Christmas shopping for the previous year, this will give you an accurate amount of what you spend on Christmas not just what you hope

to spend. If you take that amount and divide it by twelve, it will give you a monthly amount you can add to your budget. It's much easier to add a small amount every month to your budget than put it on credit cards and try to pay it off later. Putting away a monthly Christmas budget into a separate savings account every month will allow you to buy all of the gifts you want and do it without getting back into debt.

In case of you have credit or debt issues visit

www.gtacredit.com
or call 416-489-2000.

MONEY PROBLEMS?

Make One Small Monthly Payment For All Your Debts



Ask Yourself?

- Are you using your Overdraft all the time?
- Are creditors constantly Threatening & Harassing you at home or at work?
- Are you struggling to pay your Rent, Mortgage or Car Payment?
- Are your financial difficulties the cause of your Marriage or Health Problems?
- Do you think your Credit Rating is in jeopardy forever?
- Are you afraid of Losing your car, house, RRSP, Stocks or any other assets?
- Do you have Court Orders against you?
- Are you having any trouble with Government (CRA) about personal tax or any other tax issues?



If your answered "Yes" to any of the above questions then you should contact us for a Private & Confidential meeting with one of our Govt. Registered Counsellor



Mark Shamly
Tamil/Sinhalese
Consultant

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Manuelpillai Cyril Francis

Pedagogue, Publisher and Philanthropist



February 15, 1928 - November 18, 2019

By: J A Rajah

Francis Master, a renowned, educator, publisher and philanthropist passed recently in Waterloo at the age of 91. The Tamil people have lost a great champion of Tamil Heritage and education. He was a Zoology Teacher at St. John's College, Jaffna and Jaffna Hindu College. He was an old boy of St. Patrick's College, Jaffna but later joined the staff of St. John's. He was a very successful teacher of Zoology at the GCE advanced Level. He was instrumental in publishing large number of Text-books in Tamil for all grades. He also owned a press called Marcil Press which

took over the publication of his textbooks.

He was also engaged in the activities of the Jaffna YMCA making it a lively institution.

He migrated to Canada after retirement with his family and settled down there. He continued his work for Tamil cultural advancement and philanthropy. He founded the Tamil Cultural Association and Tamil Cultural Heritage School of Waterloo Region and Guelph. He promoted Tamil literary interest among his friends and associates.

He founded the Marcil-Thangam Charity Fund to finance his

philanthropic projects. He championed the cause of orphaned girls in Karuna Nilayam, Killinochchi. He funded the meals for them and also encouraged his friends to contribute. He helped the education of these girls and made the brightest of them to continue their education at Chundukuli Girls College, Jaffna. Some of them have entered the University.

We as a Tamil community have lost an important person who contributed a lot to Tamil people and Tamil language. May his soul rest in peace.

LAUNCHING OF TWO HISTORICAL DVD FILMS

Acted, directed and produced by S. Srikanthalingam

C. Kamalaharan

It was an evening of hectic schedule at the Canada Kanthasamy temple auditorium where two DVD films were screened in front of a fully packed audience. Past students and teachers of Nadeswara College Union College Mahajana College and those engaged in fine arts and literary activities turned up in large numbers. Former principal of Union College a bilingual writer and dramatist Mr. Kathir Balasundaram graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The function took off to a flying start with the lighting of the traditional oil lamp.

The first item was the welcome address delivered by the popular writer Veenai Mainthan K.T. Shanmugarajah followed by the inaugural address delivered by the famed carnatic vocalist Kandiah Arudsothy. An inspiring session of speeches presided by R. N. Logendralingam chief editor of the weekly edition of Canada Uthayan kicked off on time.

A galaxy of educated elite delivered impressive speeches blessing Subramaniam

Srikanthalingam the actor director and producer of the two DVD films and the Chief Guest Mr. Kathir Balasundaram.

1. Kalasoori A. Sivanesaselvam – Former chief editor of Virakesari and Thinakkural

2. Dr. N. Subramania Aiyer – Former Tamil professor at University of Jaffna

3. Mr. S. Santhirasekari – Former teacher at Mahajana College

4. Mr. C. Kamalaharan – Former teacher at Nadeswara College and English lecture at Jaffna Campus



Lighting Lamp



S Srikanthalingam Felicitated



Kathir Balasundaram Felicitated



Sword fight scene in Pandara Vanniyan

5. Mr. Guru Aravinthan – Head Tamil Writers Association in Canada

In addition special speeches were also rendered by another set of educated elite highlighting the services rendered by both the distinguished luminaries.

1. Thirumalai Srikanthan – Dialogue writer for the short film Sangili Kumaran

2. Dr. V. Ananthasayanan – Head London Tamil Institute UK

3. Attorney - at - law S. Vigneswaran – California and Ontario

4. Mr. Nadarajah Muraleetharan – Former Head World Tamil Unifying Association

Switzerland

5. Mr. Singarajah Skanharaja – Former President of Mahajana College OSA Canada

It was a joyous moment for the audience when a warm welcome was accorded to the Guest of Honour Gary Anandasangaree MP as he entered the auditorium halfway through the proceedings and delivered a remarkable speech.

Srikanthalingam is a popular multi – talented personality whose forte is acting and drama. Professionally he is a successful solicitor in UK and a social activist. Earlier in Sri Lanka he was the sub editor of the National daily Virakesari and a private tutor for the A/L students.

Both the two historical films portray the unbowed stubborn warriors; Bandaravanniyan of Vanni and Sankili Kumaran the last king of Jaffna. The audience remained spellbound viewing the screening of the two warriors who fought vehemently and defended the country from the foreigners who had usurped their land.

Srikanthalingam was at his best as he took up the roles of both the warriors. His rugged and explosive

voice with fiery eyes reminded me of the role of Veerapandia Kattabomman perfectly executed by Sivaji Ganesan. The role of the unyielding foreigner was equally balanced by Dr. Ananthasayanan. Both the films were so engrossing that there prevailed pin drop silence throughout the screening. Kathir Balasundaram the chief guest after being richly honoured by the organisers launched the DVDs which were sold like hot cakes in no time.

Yalkovan Balasundaram the coordinator of the function along

with Srikanthalingam made all arrangements and saw that the function was conducted smoothly without hindrance. His vote of thanks covered everyone and everything that were needed to be mentioned. Though the function continued for more than five hours there wasn't any trace of weariness on the faces of the audience who remained enchanted. They were provided coffee and short eats during the function and were served with dinner packets as they left the auditorium.



Acceptance speech by S Srikanthalingam



Dr V Ananthasayanan



S Vigneswaran



Nadaraja Muralitharan



Singaraja Skanharaja



Thirumalai Srikanthan



Vote of Thanks



Gary Anandasangaree, MP, Scarborough-Rouge Park



Veenai Mainthan



C Kamalaharan



Kandiah Arudsothy



A Sivanesachelvan



Dr N Subramania Aiyer



S Santhirasekari



Guru Aravinthan



DVD Launching



The Speakers on Stage

Monsoon Kitchen



GENIE SISTERS

SAMAYAL SANTHAI



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 a seasoned homemaker who loves making traditional dishes for her friends and family. Follow us on Instagram: @ninjaeatsfood and @tamil_food

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.

Spiced Cranberry sauce



Ingredients:

- ✓ 250g cranberry sauce (whole or smooth)
 - ✓ 1 tsp garam masala powder
 - ✓ 1 small star anise
 - ✓ 2 cloves
 - ✓ ¼ tsp ajwain seeds
 - ✓ 1-inch piece cinnamon
 - ✓ 2 tbsp oil
 - ✓ 10-15 curry leaves
 - ✓ ¾ tsp paprika powder
 - ✓ ¼ turmeric
 - ✓ Lemon juice around 2-3 tbsp, or to taste
 - ✓ Salt (to taste)
- Optional:*
- ✓ Desiccated coconut

Method:

Dry roast the ajwain seeds, star anise, cinnamon and cloves until the aromas from the spices are released. Lower the flame slightly, then add the oil. After a minute of frying the spices, add the curry leaves and fry for a further two minutes. Then add the paprika, turmeric, salt and garam masala and mix quickly. Make sure the spices do not burn at this point but try and let it fry for around 30 seconds to release the natural oils. Add the cranberry sauce and mix everything well together. Add the lemon juice, mix again, then let it all simmer for 5-6 minutes stirring in between. Serve at room temperature.

Before serving, sprinkle with desiccated coconut to give the sauce a winter look.

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



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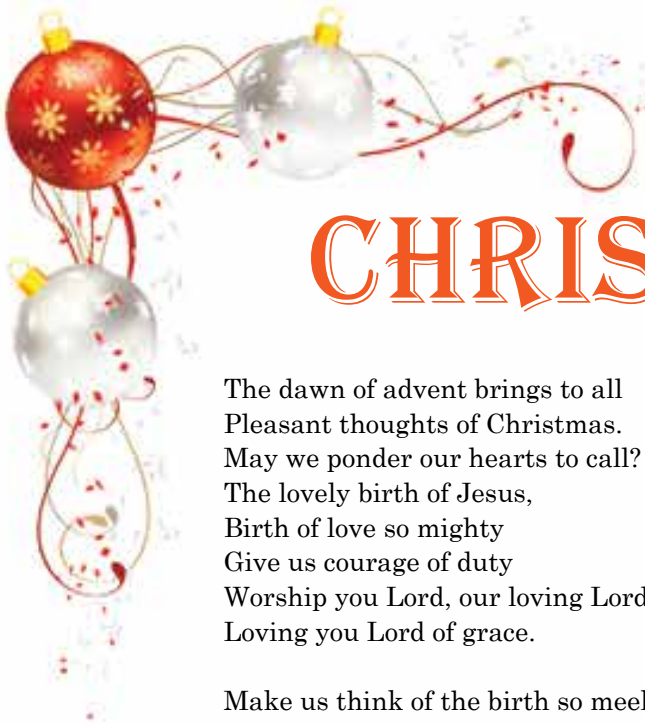
Resolute HR Management



Finance Conference by SAAC on Nov 9, 2019

Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada (SAAC) is renowned for its professional development activities for its members and others in the accounting, finance and taxation fields. In the same initiative, SAAC had its Finance Conference on Saturday, November 9th, 2019 at BMO Institute IFL, Scarborough. This was a professional development event and it included dinner. The event was a sold out event and well attended by over 100 accountants and finance professionals and business leaders. *Please see here some of the pictures taken at event.*





CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The dawn of advent brings to all
Pleasant thoughts of Christmas.
May we ponder our hearts to call?
The lovely birth of Jesus,
Birth of love so mighty
Give us courage of duty
Worship you Lord, our loving Lord
Loving you Lord of grace.

Make us think of the birth so meek:
The birth of peace on earth.
Let us resolve our hearts to seek
Love that's much of worth.
Love that's very patient
Love that's very kind;
Mutual love, eternal love
Love that endures all things.

Let us extend our wishes to all,
Wishes and best of greetings.
Listen and the poor and the oppressed call
Calling and announcing their suffering.
A call that must be answered,
A call that cannot be ignored,
An urgent call, needy call
A call to do the needful.

Christmas greeting s, we wish you all
To everyone in this land.
May you receive the showers that fall
Blessing of love and charm.
In the year that follow;
What's expected happen
A happy year, a peaceful year
A peaceful year to all.

Kingsley



The Drieberg College PPA 20th Carol Service

By: J A Rajah

The Drieberg College Past Pupils' Association, Chavakachcheri, held its twentieth annual carol service at the Milliken Methodist Church on the 16th of November in a grand manner. It was the first of its kind this year and was attended by nearly 500 persons including past pupils, their families and well-wishers.

The choir, consisting of twenty-five choristers, gave a fine recital of Tamil carols effectively accompanied by a variety of musical instruments. Rev. Dr. Ben Manickam who gave the message proclaimed that Jesus revealed the love and care of God in a very spectacular manner that salvation has become an astounding reality for humanity.

Special mention must be made of Ebenezer

Thevasagayam who trained the choir in a very remarkable tremendous zeal that won the plaudits of many devotees. Many carols like 'Immanuel ennodiruppare', 'Nanum neeyum paaduvoma Baby Jesus piranthare', 'Jill, Jil, Jil Kurlir Kaattile', 'Christmas enral koddademe' - were pleasing to the ear and had a characteristically 'baila' tune. The choir, clad in college colours - Green and Red - looked very attractive and bright.

The President of the PPA, Gunam Hunt spared no efforts to make it a memorable carol service fitting the standards expected of the dedicated group of carol singers. Mrs. R. Thevasagayam showed her acute interest in making a success of his son's efforts by inviting and ushering in large number of past pupils and devotees for the glory of God and His mighty presence.





Durham Tamil Association Celebrates Youth Festival 2019

Durham Tamil Association (DTA) celebrated the Annual Youth Festival with a well-attended audience. The event was the 18th. Year function for the Association. DTA thanked everyone who attended the event and the youth, teachers, parents and volunteers for the tremendous hard work they put in to make the event a success. Everyone appreciated the hard work at every practice and the dedication the youth showed preparing for the event and the high caliber of programs provided at the event.

DTA feels proud that the youth are able to provide a platform as in the youth festival. The Association also expressed their appreciation and thanks to the dignitaries who attended the event and supported the youth. DTA also thanked the sponsors who provided adequate support to make the festival a huge success.





Durham Tamil Association Celebrates Youth Festival 2019



THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA

Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple

Compiled by *Kidambi Raj*

Part I

SIGNIFICANCE FOR WHAT HINDUS BELIEVE IN AND DO

Picture of a typical Hindu Temple - sg.starsinsider.com

1. What is Hinduism?

Hinduism is the third largest religion in the world. Hindus often focus on individual disciplines such as meditation, yoga, chants. Many of these practices have been popularized in recent years through the Transcendental Meditation Society, Hare Krishna Movement and New Age groups in the west.

Hinduism is largely an Eastern religion. About 90 percent of all Hindus live in India. Hinduism emerged in South Asia around 2000 BCE, thousands of years before Jesus or Muhammad lived. Hinduism is extremely diverse.

Hinduism believes that Karma is the foundation of life. It unites all living things and is the defining energy in the universe's cycle of cause and effect. Karma has been described as the sum or essence of an individual derived from past and present thoughts and actions. It is what you have earned, and hence it determines your future. **Bad Karma** leads to negative consequences in this life or the next. On the flip side, **Good karma** brings rewards. This way of thinking in Hinduism means that one does, which produces good or bad karma is much more important than what one believes.

The goal of life in Hinduism is to attain salvation or moksha. In other words, Self-realization and freedom from cycle of death and rebirth is the ultimate goal.

Hinduism actually believes in only one God, but in many forms. The people choose the form they want to follow.

Both male and female deities are worshipped with equal reverence in Hinduism. This is also because in Hinduism, God is considered both male and female, or as the one who has no sex or both.

Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism were all derived from Hinduism.

2. Why do we go to the Temple?

A temple is a place where a devotee tries to remain free from the perception of evil of birth, death, old age, disease and entanglement with children, spouse, home and the rest of the world. The main motive is to do worship and every other thing becomes unimportant.

A Hindu Temple is meant to encourage reflection, facilitate purification of one's mind,

and trigger the process of inner realization within the devotee. Visiting temple activates one's sense organs. One can absorb the positive energy only when the five senses are activated. So, one should visit the temple in order to activate our sense organs to absorb positive energy.

In the temple idols are installed after **Prathista** or consecration. After consecration, the idol becomes energized and imbibed the cosmic energy. So, the devotees will be able to absorb positive cosmic energy. Further, the sanctum sanctorum is completely enclosed on three sides and beneath the Main idol's placement known as **Moolasthanam**, the copper absorbs the earth's magnetic waves and radiates to the surroundings. Thus a person who regularly visits the temple and makes clockwise pradakshina of the main idol's placement, automatically receives maximum cosmic energy which gets absorbed in the body.

Irrespective of the benefits mentioned above, by going to Temple regularly we attain purification of mind. It can also be termed as purification of body as body is an extension of mind. By going to the temple, we get mental peace and self-satisfaction and feel connected to God. Getting the purification of mind is the first step for evolving spirituality.

Critics may say, "God is everywhere and so we can pray to him from anywhere and so why go to temple?". The answer is simple. When we can study at home, why should we go to school or college? Similarly, a scientist needs a calm and peaceful place for his research and invention this can be done at home. In the same way a devotee needs a place full of positive energy place for his/her prayer.

3. Do Hindus worship many Gods?

Contrary to prevailing misconceptions, Hindus all worship one Supreme Being, though by different forms and names. One of the unique understandings in Hinduism is that God is not far away, living in a remote heaven, but is inside each and every soul, in the heart waiting to be discovered. Knowing that God is always with us gives us hope and courage.

Hinduism is both monotheistic and henotheistic. Hindus are never polytheistic in the sense that there are many equal Gods. Henotheism literally

means "One God" which defines the Hindu view. It means the worship of one God without denying the existence of other Gods. Hindus believe in one all-pervasive God who energizes the entire universe. Hinduism gives us the freedom to approach God in our own way, encouraging a multiplicity of paths, not asking for conformity to just one.

4. Why do we worship Idols?

Idols actually means the statue of inspiration, spirituality and true faith. The Hindus who worship Idols, are actually worshipping God's divine form. Hindus concentrate on the faith that imagining God's form enlightens spirituality in us. These are just the way of remembering one's form to describe His glorious personality. An Idol or an image is a living embodiment of God. It is not a lifeless form. According to Puranas, with devotion you can awaken the divine power which is hidden in any object.

Devout Hindus accept idol worship as a simple way of expressing their faith, love and devotion to God. There is a child like innocence and purity of approach when a person stands reverently in front of an idol or an image and bows to it in a total submission. It is possible only when a person has strong faith and absolutely no egoism. Those who worship God with devotion and humility know that idol worship connects them to God and open their hearts to divine love.

A devout Hindu is not ashamed of going to a temple and bowing before an idol. He has no hesitation to stand in front of it and speak to it as if he is talking to an individual with exemplary faith and devotion. The idols may not speak to him, but he knows that his prayers will surely be heard, and his devotion and love to the deity will surely be reciprocated. Even if his prayers are not answered, he continues his worship considering it a part of his karma, fate or the way God sometimes chooses to respond. But deep in his heart he knows that he is engaged in a spiritual practice, and in the end it will only do him good and take him close to God.

When you greet a person, you actually greet the body or the form of that person. You assume that the body is the person although the person is hidden in the body. The same holds true in the case of idol worship. Ignorant people see it as idol.

THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA

Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple



The devotees see at as deity. Ordinary people who are busy with their own lives and who are not well versed in the scriptural knowledge or religious scholarship, may find it difficult to grasp the deeper knowledge of the Self or the abstract notion of an invisible, formless God. For them idols and concrete images are extremely useful and convenient to express their simple devotion and connect to the idea of God at the mental and emotional levels and on the most personal terms. An image can directly appeal to a devotee and instantly draw him into a reverential and devotional state.

Idol worship is more effective than praying. In idol worship you combine the power of prayer with the power of concentration and meditation.

When a devout Hindu folds his hands in front of a deity to pray or offer his respects, his hands point not only to the deity in front of him but also the deity that lives in him. Thus, symbolically in idol worship one worships the concrete form of God but also the subtle, invisible and formless Self in the body.

5. Why do we light a Lamp during Pooja?

A lighted lamp represents the kindling of inner light of knowledge. The light of knowledge dispels darkness of ignorance. The altar lamp serves to remind us of the highest aspiration of Hinduism, to awaken wisdom. The same symbolism is found in the burning of camphor flame and waving it around in front of the deity. It is a prayerful gesture that the entire world will become enlightened. We place our hands just above the flame and then our eyes to indicate our own desire and aspiration for wisdom. Camphor melts away indicating the self-merging with the Supreme light of the universe.

The Lamp or Deepam has two components. One is the wick and the other Oil or ghee, the medium that helps the wick to burn. According to Hinduism, the Wick symbolizes human ego and the oil or ghee the medium used to burn the wick symbolizes materialistic tendencies. When one lights a lamp and leaves it, the wick eventually is completely



Kuttu Vilakku

burnt and the oil or the ghee is also completely used up. What that phenomenon symbolizes is that slowly and gradually one should get rid of ego and materialistic tendencies

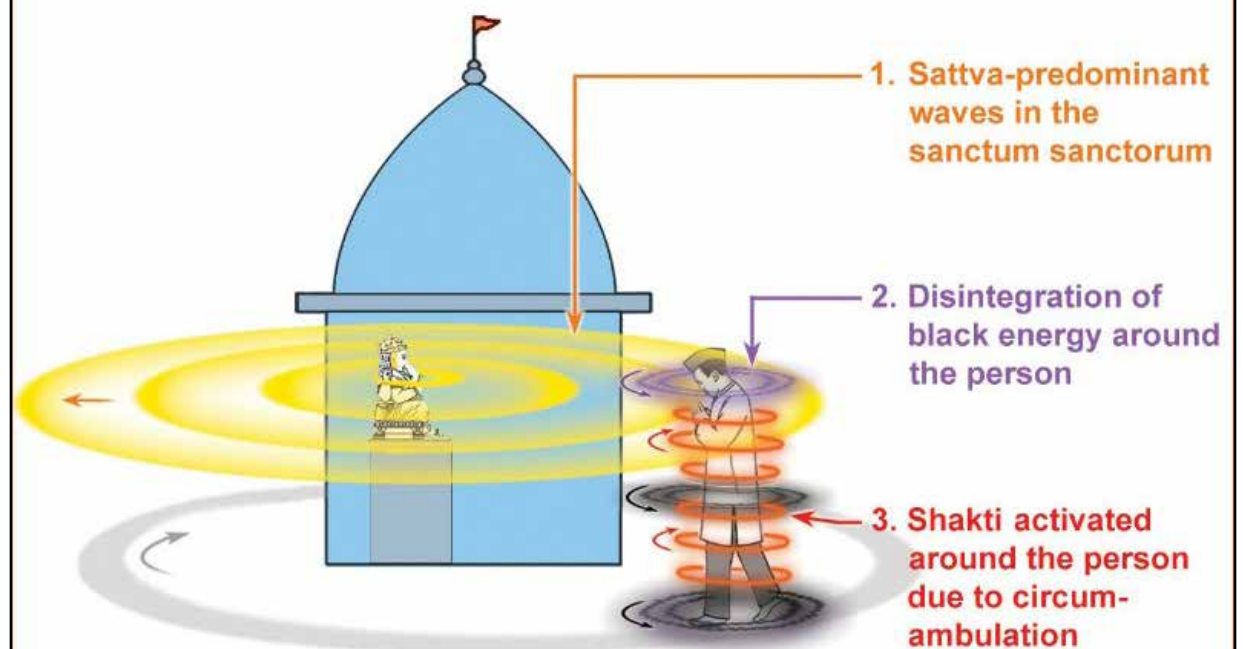
The burning lamp represents the element of fire. Fire is one of the five principal elements of this material creation – earth, water, fire, sky and air. Fire represents purity. Whatever comes in contact with fire is immediately purified, the way the impure gold is converted into pure gold.

The philosophy of the lamp is profound. We light away lamp to drive away sadness and welcome happiness with open arms. You want to acquire knowledge and drive away ignorance, so we pray to Deepalakshmi.

Bottom portion of the lamp	: (Lotus seat) Lord Brahma
The middle pipe of the lamp	: Lord Vishnu
The portion where Oil/ghee is filled	: Rudran
The portion where wick settles	: Lord Maheswara
The end of the wick	: Sadasiva
Oil/Ghee	: Natham

Subtle-benefits of circumambulating the Deity in a Temple

(To understand the subtle-process, read points sequentially - 1, 2, 3)



Significance of Pradakshana

Lamp represents Durga, Saraswathi and Lakshmi

The 5 faces of a lamp denote the 5 qualities that a woman needs to have:

Affection, Intelligence, Resoluteness, Patience and Caution

The portion where the oil is filled indicates the mind of the woman. When you light a lamp, you light your soul. It helps us in developing our intellect.

6. Why do we ring a Bell in the Temple?

A temple **Bell** or **Ghanta** as it is called in Sanskrit is symbolic of antarala, the gap between sky and the earth. The ringing of the bell produces what is regarded as an auspicious sound. It produces the sound Om, the universal name of the Lord.

The scientific reason is a Bell's ring clears our mind and helps us stay sharp and keep our full concentration on devotional purpose while we are entering the inner sanctum. The temple bell is not made up of just an ordinary metal. It is made of various metals including cadmium, lead, copper, zinc, nickel, chromium and manganese.

Why do we ring the bell? Is it to wake up the Lord? No, Lord never sleeps. Is it then to let Him know we have come? He does not need to be told, as He is all knowing. Is it then a form of seeking His permission to enter His area? It is a homecoming and hence entry needs no permission. The Lord welcomes us at all times. Then why do we ring the bell?

The ringing of the bell produces what is regarded as an auspiciousness within and without, to gain the vision of the Lord who is all auspiciousness.

While doing ritualistic aarati, we ring the bell. It is sometimes accompanied by the auspicious sounds of the conch and other musical instruments. An added significance of ringing the bell, conch and other instruments is that they help drown any inauspicious or irrelevant noises and comments that might disturb or distract the worshippers in their devotional ardour, concentration and inner peace.

7. Why do we offer food to the Lord before we eat?

Offering food to the Lord before we eat is not a mere ritual, nor is it a mere act of superstition. It is a noble tradition that sets us free from the sin of selfishness.

In Bhagavad-Gita (3.13) Lord Krishna declares, "The pious who eat what is left of a sacrifice are freed from all kinds of sins, but those evil verily eat sin, who cook food for themselves."

You can do it silently, with an attitude of expressing gratitude and reverence. The attitude is more important than the act itself.

Food is a form of energy or Shakti. The food one

eats contains many energies. Some of them are good, but some are harmful. These impurities cannot be removed from the food, with normal precautions. However, by offering it to Gods, one can neutralize them and make the food sacred. When you offer food to God before eating it, you convert it into sacrificial food and make it pure. This is one of the important reasons why our tradition encourages the practice of offering food to God.

8. Why do we do Pradakshana (circumambulate)?

In Hinduism whatever is practiced is not just based on beliefs, but there is scientific reasons behind each and every tradition and culture. In short in Hinduism science and spirituality are intertwined. Devotees when they visit the temple do **Parikrama**, **Pradakshina** or **Circumambulation** around our deities and temple. Walking around the innermost chamber of the shrine housing the temple deity is called **Parikrama**.

According to Skanda Purana Ch.9 v.68 – In the Pra-Da-Ksi-Na. The syllable **Pra** dispels sin, **Da** bestows what is desired, **Ksi** causes the destruction of Karman and **Na** is the bestower of salvation. It is said that the sins committed by the mind are destroyed by the first step, the sins committed in speech by the second and the sins perpetrated by the body in the third step. Also, according to this purana, the number of Pradakshina is **one** for Lord Ganesa, **two** for Surya (Sun), **three** for Lord Siva and **four** for Devi and Vishnu.

Why is Parikrama or Pradakshana is done? It is performed so that one can unburden all his stress, ego, worries, negative emotions and materialism with which one has entered the temple and it helps one to be able to get into one's spiritual self to connect with God in the temple. When we do the Pradakshana, our body absorbs the entire positive energy activated inside of a temple, thereby helping us to attain peace within ourself.

9. Why is Pradakshana done only in a clockwise direction?

During the **prathishta** (consecration) of any deity in the sanctum sanctorum of a temple, along with the idols, sacred **yantras** are placed under the idols. It is believed that these yantras have inbuilt cosmic energy which emits out of them. So, our ancestors have started the custom of pradakshana.

In Hindu culture, the right side is considered more auspicious than left. It is also said that we must always towards the left of our elders. That is, our right-side faces elders. Similarly, our right side must face the deity during the pradakshina. So, we do it in clockwise and our right side always towards the deity.



Juanita Nathan elected Chair of York Region District School Board (YRDSB)

By Siva Sivapragasam

Juanita Nathan has been elected as the Chair of the York Region District School Board (YRDSB) on December 2, 2019.

She is the first person of Tamil origin to be elected as the Chair of any school board in Canada. YRDSB is the third largest school district in Ontario with over 127,000 students in 180 elementary schools and 33 secondary schools. York Region students consistently perform above average in provincial testing and the Board is one of the top achievers in Ontario.

Juanita Nathan is a three-term elected public school board trustee for York Region District School board representing Markham ward 7&8. She is also a community youth outreach worker; seniors support staff, and a counselor for abused women.

Juanita dedicates her time and energy striving to make positive chang-



es in the lives of youth, parents and seniors. Juanita currently works for YOUTHLINK and Family Services of York Region and Volunteers regularly with York Region Equity Council, Canadian Mental Health Association and Markham Tamil Organization. She is also the current president of Markham Tamil Organization. Juanita was a former vice-president of the Canadian Tamil Congress.

Great Heroes Day observed around the globe

Tamils marked the the November 27th Great Heroes Day around the globe and paid tribute to the fallen heroes, according to several media reports.

"Kanagapuram, where in 2016 one of the first public commemorations since the end of the armed conflict was held, once again saw massive crowds

despite heavy rain," London based Tamil Guardian said in a report on observations in the Homeland.

In Greater Toronto, thousands of people paid tribute at the annual facilities set up at the Markham fair grounds.

(In pics: Kanagapuram observations via Tamil Guardian)



Tamil Community Centre Steering Committee submits funding application to government

Toronto, ON - On November 11, the Steering Committee for the Tamil Community Centre project submitted its application for the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program: Community, Culture and Recreation Stream.

The Committee would like to thank community members for their support and pledges. The provincial and federal governments opened up this funding stream in late August. If successful, our application could receive 73% of the cost for construction from governments.

This grant is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the community. The Steering Committee requested the help of the community through financial pledges. The project cost is \$40 million.

The community needed to show that we can raise our contribution of \$10.8 million for this project. The Steering Committee is pleased to announce that the total amount of pledges collected to date is \$11.2 million.

It is expected that the Committee will hear back from the provincial government in mid-spring of 2020. The Committee will keep the community up to date on the process.

In the meantime, please visit www.tamilcentre.ca to find the latest information on the project including results from the online consultation survey tool, and statistics and maps about the Tamil community in the GTA and the need for a community centre in Scarborough.

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Ticket Price - \$100, \$50, \$20.00
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Deepavali Celebration – TCA workshop

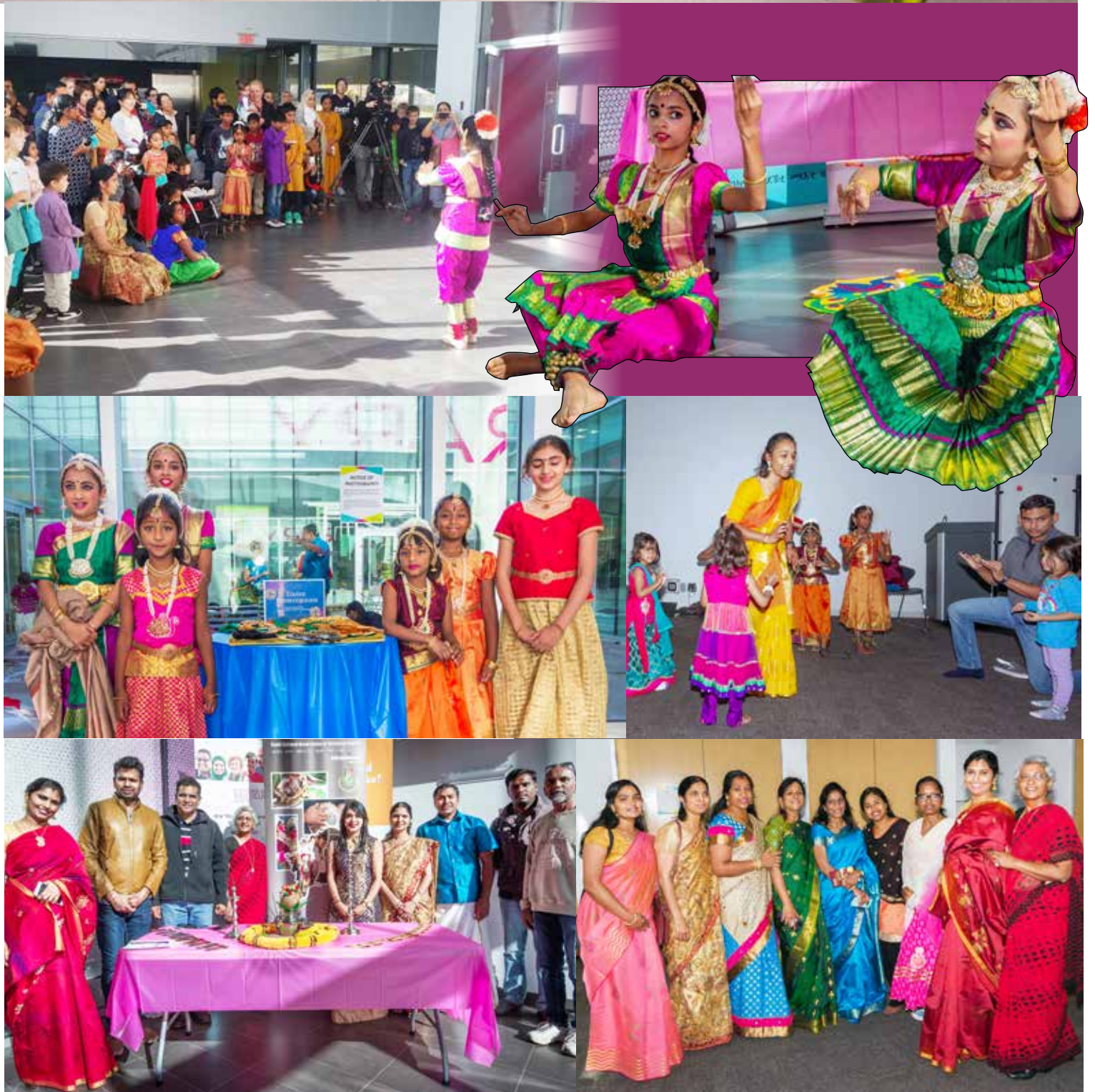


Waterloo: Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region along with Waterloo Public Library conducted a show and tell of what Deepavali means to local Tamil community and show case their traditions during that period.

Saturday, October 29th was a beautiful sunny day in the City of Waterloo. Indian decorations were beautifying the entrance of the main public library at the Fisherhallman Road in Waterloo.

A busy day for the community. Members woke up early, one group doing hall decorations and other making sweets. The event started at 9.00am. Mrs. Yoga Arumugam, the president and Mr. Dennis Loyola the Secretary of Tamil Association of Waterloo welcomed all the guests and explained the reason for having an event like this to the public. Indian classical dance performances were held and public participation was very visible. It was a hands on learning conducted by the dance teacher. Arts and Cultural items were on display along the entrance.

Indian food was served by Raja Fine foods from Kitchener to all those who attended. Waterloo MP, Bardish Chagger attend along with City councillors.





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இந்து, கிறிஸ்தவ அந்திமச் சடங்குகளுக்கான ஒழுங்குகள்
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