

# Monsoon

ONE DOLLAR

# Journal

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## Raptors clinch spot in playoffs

By Harrish Thirukumaran

On March 5, 2020, the Toronto Raptors defeated the Golden State Warriors in a regular season re-match at the Chase Center.

The final score was 121-113. Shooting guard Norman Powell had a historic career performance in the Raptors' win. Powell put up 37 points, 13 for 20 from the field and 7 for 7 from the free throw line.

Point guard, Kyle Lowry scored 26 points with 10 assists that served as a great help to the Raptors' victory.

With this win over the Warriors, the Toronto Raptors clinched a spot in the playoffs. Fans will surely be looking forward to the reigning NBA champions defending the title.

The 2020 NBA playoffs will begin on April 18, 2020.



Raptors Vs Golden State Warriors  
Pic via: Facebook/Raptors

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**Spring is  
Here**



## Sri Lankans go to the polls next month

By Siva Sivapragasam

Sri Lankans will wake-up on April 25th morning to select a new set of legislators who will rule them for the next five years.

President Gotabaya Rajapakse dissolved the current Parliament and paved the way for general elections to be held on the 25th of next month (April). The current political scenario sees the three major parties UNP, SLFP and TNA split adding confusion in the minds of the voter.

The UNP which has a large political track record is split into with

Ranil Wickremesinghe leading one section of the party while Sajith Premadasa is the leader of the other section. The SLFP founded by former Prime Minister SWRD Bandaranaike is divided and one section is led by former President Sirisena while another section has formed a new party titled Podujana Peramuna led by the current Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse.

Voters in the Northern and Eastern Provinces who voted the TNA at the last election will see the TNA divided with one section led by veteran politician Sampanthan while the di-

vided section will have former Northern Chief Minister Wigneswaran as its leader. National security, employment, rising cost of living, economic development, political rights for the Tamils and external influence by foreign countries are likely to be the crucial election issues for the voter.

The Podujana Peramuna led by former President and strongman Mahinda Rajapakse is confident that they will romp home with a landslide victory. The new President of Sri Lanka, Gotabaya Rajapaksa wants a two-thirds majority in the coming parliamentary elections to be able to



bring about sweeping changes in the constitution to strengthen the Executive which was badly crippled by the 19th Amendment (19A) brought about by the previous regime.

Still, election trends in Sri Lanka have revealed mostly an identity of a Shakespearean drama.

As they say in the Oscar Awards "And the winner is" .....

Anybody's guess !

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# Ontario Confirms New Positive Cases of COVID-19

All Protocols Followed and Risk to Ontarians Remains Low

March 1, 2020 6:01 P.M.

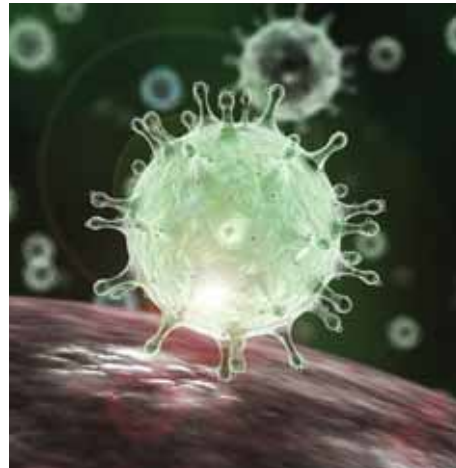
## Ministry of Health

TORONTO — Today, Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health, confirmed four new positive cases of COVID-19, bringing the total number of confirmed cases in Ontario to 15. Of these, the first three cases in the province are all resolved, with each of those patients having two consecutive negative tests at least 24 hours apart.

The latest confirmed positive case is a male in his 50s and a Toronto resident temporarily living in Vaughan. He is the brother of one of Toronto's recently reported cases who travelled to Iran. He did not develop symptoms until after arrival in Canada. He is currently in self-isolation and has had no community exposure. He was assessed and tested at Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital in Richmond Hill on Friday, February 28.

Another positive case is a male in his 40s and the spouse of York Region's first Iran travel-related case announced yesterday. He had travelled with his wife and toddler but was asymptomatic on all flights. He was tested and assessed at Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital on Friday, February 28. He had self-isolated prior to developing symptoms and has had no community exposure while symptomatic.

A third male in his 60s - who returned from Iran on Sunday, February 23, 2020. He presented himself to North York General Hospital's emergency department on Friday, February 28 where he informed the hospital of a cough and recent travel history. He was assessed and discharged home on the same day. As per protocols, he went into self-isolation where he remains with minimal contact with others. Toronto Public Health is actively engaged in contact tracing and case



management.

The fourth person is a female in her 70s from Newmarket and a contact of the recently reported positive Egypt travel-related Toronto case. She was in Egypt with the known Toronto case. She was tested and assessed at Southlake Regional Health Centre on Saturday, February 29. Since testing, she has been in self-isolation. York Region Public Health is working diligently on its usual process of risk assessment and contact follow up.

As a result of the coordinated efforts of our health care and public health system, all individuals who have tested positive have been quickly assessed and isolated.

At this time, the virus is not circulating locally. However, given the global circumstances, Ontario is actively working with city and health partners to plan for the potential of local spread. The province continues to carefully monitor this situation and encourage residents to stay informed by regularly reviewing credible information sources.

Dr. Williams will provide an update on the situation at the regularly scheduled media briefing on Monday, March 2, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. at the Queen's Park media studio.

Visit Ontario's website to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from COVID-19.

Via [news.ontario.ca](http://news.ontario.ca)

# Ontario Celebrates the Opening of the 2020 Ontario Winter Games

Province supporting athletes to reach their full potential while boosting local tourism

February 27, 2020 7:30 P.M.

## Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries

ORILLIA — Ontario is providing \$1 million in funding to the 2020 Ontario Winter Games in Orillia to give the province's best young athletes the chance to compete here at home while boosting local tourism.

Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, was at Centennial Park to open the 22nd Ontario Winter Games, alongside Honourable Jill Dunlop, MPP Simcoe

through spectators coming to the city to cheer on their sports.

The Orillia 2020 Ontario Winter Games run from February 27 to March 1 and include more than 3,000 athletes from across Ontario. Admission is free for all sport events at the Games, which feature 27 different sports and para-sports, including:

- Alpine and para alpine skiing
- Artistic swimming
- Cross country and para Nordic skiing
- Curling and wheelchair curling
- Hockey and sledge hockey
- Karate
- Wheelchair basketball



North, and Steve Clarke, Mayor of Orillia.

"Ontario congratulates all the athletes competing in the Orillia 2020 Ontario Winter Games, as you have made your communities and province proud," said Minister MacLeod. "With our \$1 million investment, we are demonstrating that Ontario is open for jobs and open for athletes. The Games are a wonderful example of how athletes and spectators have the power to enrich our communities, economies and civic pride."

The City of Orillia and surrounding communities are expected to benefit from \$5 million in economic activity

The Ontario Winter Games provide young and upcoming athletes with an opportunity to compete on a larger stage. For many of these athletes, the Games represent an important step on the path towards the Canada Games, Pan Am and Parapan Am Games, as well as the Olympics and Paralympics.

Ontario's investment in sport is part of the province's commitment to delivering a double bottom line: providing athletes, residents and visitors with the opportunity to experience the best of the world in one province, as well as supporting economic growth by attracting visitors and creating local jobs.

Via [news.ontario.ca](http://news.ontario.ca)

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# from the publisher's desk

## PUBLISHING TEAM

Managing Editor & Publisher: Logan Velumailum, B. Sc. - editor4mj@gmail.com  
 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  
 Health & Care: Ayktah Grover - www.aurawellness.ca, Dr. Amal Siva, Jeavana Sritharan, Andrea Shanmugarajah, Dr. S. Sivanesan, Dr. Nuwan Fonseka, Dr. Shiyam Loganathan, Dr. Harshini Sriskanda  
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 Business & Finance: Arun Senathirajah - asenathi@hotmail.com, David Joseph - David.joseph@investorsgroup.com  
 Education: RG Education Centers - www.rgeducation.com  
 Durham News: Durham Tamil Association - www.durhamtamils.com  
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# As global citizens, let's make an opportunity to call for change for women across the globe with International Women's Day 2020

By Harrish Thirukumaran

On March 8, 2020, the world will commemorate International Women's Day (IWD). It is celebrated in many countries around the world. It is considered a day when women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political. Since the early years, IWD has assumed a new global dimension for women in developed and developing countries alike. The growing international women's movement that has been strengthened by four United Nations women's conferences has helped make the commemoration a rallying point to build support for women's rights and participation in the political and economic arenas.

It was officially recognized by the United Nations in 1977 when IWD first emerged from the activities of the labour movements at the turn of the 20th century in North America and across Europe.

There is an assortment of milestones in the movement that helped to gain the recognition of women's rights as an achievement to be reflected upon and continue moving forward on.

The movement for women was first observed in the United States with the first National Woman's Day on February 28. Accordingly, the Socialist Party of America designated this day in honour of the 1908 garment workers' strike in New York, where women protested against working conditions.

But the first milestone in US was much earlier - in 1848. Indignant over women being barred from speaking at an anti-slavery convention, Americans Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott congregated a few hundred people at their nation's first women's rights convention in New

York. Together they demand civil, social, political and religious rights for women in a Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions. A movement is born.

In 1910, the Socialist International meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark established a Women's Day, international in character, to honour the movement for women's rights and to build support for achieving universal suffrage for women.

After World War II, March 8 started to be celebrated in a number of countries as a Women's Day. In 1975, during the International Women's Year, the United Nations began celebrating March 8 as International Women's Day. By 1977, the General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace to be observed on any day of the year by Member States, in accordance with their historical and national traditions.

The theme for IWD 2020 is I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights. It is aligned with UN Women's new multigenerational campaign, Generation Equality, which marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most progressive roadmap for the empowerment of women and girls, everywhere.

The purpose of International Women's Day is seen as a time to reflect on progress made to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women, who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities. As Secretary General Antonio Guterres has stated, "the 21st century must be the century of women's equality. Let us all play our part in making it so." As global citizens, let's make an opportunity to call for change for women across the globe.

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## Canada Historical Milestones:

### March 23, 1994

Wayne Gretzky scores his 802nd career goal against the Vancouver Canucks. With this goal, he beats Gordie Howe's record and becomes the highest-scoring player in National Hockey League history.



“One of the ways you learn about life is to associate with people.” - Lafayette Ronald Hubbard (March 13, 1911 - January 24, 1986) American Writer

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

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# Ontario Protecting Children and Youth from Dangers of Vaping

February 28, 2020 1:05 P.M.

## Ministry of Health

TORONTO — Following extensive consultation, Ontario is taking further action to protect children and youth from the health risks of vaping, while maintaining adults' access to smoking cessation options.

Today, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, announced that Ontario is proposing regulatory changes that, if approved, would limit where flavoured and high nicotine vapour products are sold at retail. At the same time, the province will expand prevention initiatives and services to quit vaping.

"Young Ontarians are increasingly using and becoming addicted to nicotine vaping products, putting their health at risk," said Elliott. "I've heard directly from concerned parents who grow more worried each and every day about the health of their kids. As a mother myself, I know there's a clear case for action to curb the alarming increase in youth vaping. That's why we are taking a balanced approach that protects our children and youth while

## Province Building Healthier and Safer Communities by Expanding Prevention Initiatives and Services to Help Quit Vaping

also avoiding fuelling an underground market for unsafe vapour products."

Ontario has consulted with health care experts, industry partners, parents and youth to develop protective measures to help keep children and youth safe. The proposed changes include:

1. Increasing access to services to help people quit vaping by expanding Telehealth Ontario;

2. Restricting the retail sale of flavoured vapour products to specialty vape stores and cannabis retail stores, which are restricted to people aged 19 and over, with the exception of menthol, mint and tobacco flavours;

3. Restricting the retail sale of high nicotine vapour products (more than 20mg/ml) to specialty vape stores;

4. Working with major online retailers of vapour products and stakeholders to ensure compliance with



age-based sales restrictions for online sales;

5. Requiring specialty vape stores to ensure that vapour product displays, and promotions are not visible from outside their stores;

6. Enhancing mental health and addiction services and resources to include vaping and nicotine addiction; and

7. Establishing a Youth Advisory Committee to provide advice on vaping

issues.

Ontario is also calling on the federal government to implement a national tax on vaping products.

"Vaping and the associated risks are a national health concern," said Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance. "I have strongly advocated to the federal government to work with Ontario and other provinces and territories on a national approach to taxing vapour products. Keeping kids safe is a national health concern and the evidence is clear - a tax could be an effective way to deter young people from vaping."

A national vaping tax would minimize regulatory burden and ensure a consistent tax treatment across the country.

Ontario expects the proposed regulation changes, if approved, would come into effect on May 1, 2020, except for the regulatory amendment to restrict the retail sale of high nicotine vapour products, which the province expects would come into effect on July 1, 2020, if approved, to align with the federal changes to labelling of nicotine on products.

Via [news.ontario.ca](http://news.ontario.ca)

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Purchase, Sale and Incorporation;

### Estate Law

Continuing Power of Attorney for Property/Personal Care, Wills, Estate Administration.



# Supporting Auto Parts Workers in Durham Region

## New Action Centre provides job training and services



February 28, 2020 11:00 A.M.

### Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

OSHAWA - Ontario is helping manufacturing workers in the Durham region get the training they need to rejoin the workforce quickly.

On behalf of Minister McNaughton, Whitby MPP Lorne Coe announced the opening of a second Action Centre to provide services and supports to help up to 1700 workers from Independent Parts Supplier companies that were impacted by the closure at the General Motors Assembly Plant in Oshawa. The Action Centre is in partnership with Unifor.

The new Centre connects workers with job and training opportunities, counselling services and workshops that help them improve their job search, résumé writing and interview skills.

A job fair is also being organized on April 22, 2020 at Durham College in Oshawa to help connect workers more quickly with local job opportunities.

"With this new Action Centre, we're helping more workers who were im-

acted by the closure of the GM Assembly Plant in Oshawa," said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. "We know this is a challenging time for many workers and families. Our government stands with the people in Durham region, and we will continue to help those affected by the closure adjust and retrain so they can quickly rejoin the workforce."

"The Ontario government's investment in this action centre will provide our members with the vital peer-led support and employment services during this difficult transition period," said Jerry Dias, Unifor National President. "Our union strongly supported situating the action centre within the Unifor Local 222 hall, which will provide our members with continued Unifor support and a comfortable and familiar environment in which to access these vital services."

Ontario's Rapid Re-employment and Training Service and local Action Centres are dedicated to connecting job-seekers with immediate supports and quick access to training for good, quality jobs.

Via [news.ontario.ca](http://news.ontario.ca)

# Prime Minister to host First Ministers' Meeting and meeting with national Indigenous leaders

February 27, 2020  
Ottawa, Ontario

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today announced that the next First Ministers' Meeting will take place in Ottawa on March 13, 2020. This will be the sixth First Ministers' Meeting the Prime Minister has hosted since 2015. The Deputy Prime Minister, Chrystia Freeland, will join the Prime Minister.

During the meeting, First Ministers will focus on keeping our economy competitive and making progress on issues that matter to all Canadians. They will discuss ways to create clean growth

and mitigate climate change, while at the same time developing our natural resources sustainably and creating good, middle class jobs. They will also focus on health care and infrastructure needs, transfers to provinces and territories, and Northern priorities.

First Ministers will also meet with leaders of the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Métis National Council on March 12, 2020. They will discuss how they can work together to advance the priorities of First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation.

Via [pm.gc.ca](http://pm.gc.ca)

# Statement by the Prime Minister on National Flag of Canada Day

February 15, 2020  
Ottawa, Ontario

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement on National Flag of Canada Day:

"55 years ago today, the Canadian flag was flown for the first time in our communities across Canada, on Parliament Hill, and at diplomatic missions around the world.

"Today, on National Flag of Canada Day, we celebrate both the anniversary of the Maple Leaf and the story it tells of our wonderful country.

"In times of uncertainty, the flag reaffirms that the common values that unite us – openness, generosity, peace, and freedom – are stronger than our

differences.

"Over the decades, the Maple Leaf has been a symbol in Canadian art, medals, badges, and coats of arms. It has travelled to the highest peaks on Mount Everest, into space with the first Canadian astronaut, and around the world on the arms of Canadian Armed Forces members. This summer, Canadian athletes will wear it with pride at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

"Today, I invite Canadians from coast to coast to coast to reflect on our flag and what it means to each of us – a symbol of our rich history, and a promise of the bright future we are building together."

Via [pm.gc.ca](http://pm.gc.ca)

# One Million Trees Program 50,000 new trees to be planted across Brampton in 2020



BRAMPTON, ON (February 19, 2020) – Today, Brampton City Council endorsed the planting of 50,000 new trees across the city every year, as part of the One Million Trees Program. This is another big step towards tackling the threat of climate change.

In 2019, Council voted unanimously to declare a climate emergency, while aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated in the city by 80 per cent by 2050.

Over the last five years, the City and its partners – including conservation authorities, the Region of Peel, school boards and the development industry – have planted, on average, 43,000 trees each year in Brampton. With an increase of at least 7,000 trees planted annually, the City is one step

closer to fulfilling the Brampton 2040 Vision and reaching a target of one million trees by 2040.

Trees play an important role in mitigating and adapting to climate change, growing the urban forest and making spaces more beautiful, and supporting public health. The One Million Trees Program will plant more trees, particularly along roads, public parks, and other City-owned lands in existing residential neighbourhoods and commercial/industrial lands, to enhance the green canopy and foster the delivery of ecosystem services.

The City is committed to sustainability and these efforts contribute to building a Green City, a Term of Council priority.

- via [Brampton.ca](http://Brampton.ca)



# Press statement by the PM on the State Visit of the President of the United States of America to India

My friend and US President Donald Trump,

Respected member of the American delegation,

Ladies and gentlemen,  
Namaste

President Trump and his delegation are once again warmly welcomed in India. I am particularly happy that he has come with his family on this trip. This is the fifth meeting between President Trump and me in the last eight months. President Trump's unprecedented and historical welcome in Motera yesterday will be remembered forever. Yesterday it became clear again that the relationship between America and India is not just between two governments, but people-driven, people-centric. This relationship is in the most important partnership of the 21st century. And so today President Trump and I have decided to take our relationship to the level of Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership. President Trump has been an invaluable contribution in bringing relations to this level.

Friends,

In our discussion today, we have positively considered every important aspect of this partnership – be it defense and security, energy strategic partnership, technology cooperation, global connectivity, trade relations or people to people relations. Increasing defense and security cooperation between India and the US is a very important part of our strategic partnership. India's defense capacity has increased through collaboration on state-of-the-art defense equipment and platforms. Our defense manufacturers are becoming part of each other's supply chains. Indian forces are doing most training exercises today with the forces of USA. In the last few years, there has been an unprecedented increase in interoperability between our forces.

Friends,

Similarly, we are also increasing



cooperation to protect our home-lands and fight international crime. Today, the decision on Home-land Security will give further impetus to this cooperation. Today we have decided to increase our efforts to hold terror supporters responsible. President Trump has made fighting the drugs and opioid crisis a priority. Today, we have also agreed on a new mechanism regarding serious problems like Drug trafficking, Narco -terrorism and organized crime. Friends, our Strategic Energy Partnership established shortly before is becoming stronger. And mutual investment in this area has increased. America has become a very important source of India for oil and gas. Our total energy trade has been around 20 billion dollars in the last four years. Be it renewable energy or nuclear energy, our co-operation is getting new energy.

Friends,

Similarly, Industry 4.0 and other emerging technologies of the 21st century are also setting new positions of India-US partnership, innovation and enterprise on it. The talent of Indian professionals has strengthened the technology leadership of American companies.

Friends,

India and the United States are

committed to openness and fair and balanced trade in the economic sector. Our bilateral trade has witnessed double-digit growth in the last three years, and has also become more balanced. If energy, civil air-crafts, defense and higher education, then in the last four-five years, only these four sectors have contributed about 70 billion dollars to the economic relations of India-US. Much of this has been possible due to President Trump's policies and decisions. I am confident that this figure will increase significantly in the coming times. As far as bilateral trade is concerned, there have been positive talks between our Commerce Ministers. President Trump and I have agreed today that the understanding that has been reached between our Commerce Ministers, let's our teams make it legal. We have also agreed to start negotiations for a big trade deal. We hope that it will yield good results in mutual interest. Friends, The cooperation of India and America globally is based on our common democratic values and objectives. This cooperation is particularly important for rule based international order, especially in Indo-Pacific and global commons. Both of us agree on the importance of sustainable and transparent financing in the devel-

opment of connectivity infrastructure in the world. This mutual understanding of ours is not only in each other, but in the interest of the world.

Friends

The most important foundations of this special friendship between India and America are our people-to-people relations. Be it professionals or students, Indian Diaspora has been the biggest contributor to this in the USA. These ambassadors of India are not only contributing to the economy of USA with their talent and hard work. Rather, we are also enriching American society with their democratic values and rich culture. I have requested President Trump to take forward the two sides discussion on the totalisation agreement on social security contribution of our Professionals. It will be in mutual interest.

Friends,

President Trump's visit has played a historic role in further strengthening our relationships in all these dimensions. Once again, I heartily thank President Trump for coming to India, and for taking Indo-US relations to a new height.

Thank You.

Via [pmindia.gov.in](http://pmindia.gov.in)

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# Polio eradication a UN priority, says Guterres in Pakistan visit

18 February 2020

## Health

In one of the last bastions of polio on the planet, millions of children are being given a fighting chance against the paralyzing and potentially fatal disease.

During his first official visit to Pakistan as UN Secretary-General, António Guterres stopped at a kindergarten in Lahore on Tuesday, as the country kicked off its initial nationwide polio campaign for the year.

While there is no cure for polio, vaccination can protect a child for life, and the campaign this month aims to reach more than 39 million children.

"Polio is one of the few diseases we can eradicate in the world in the next few years. This is a priority of the United Nations and I am extremely happy to see it is a clear priority for the Government of Pakistan," said Mr. Guterres.

"My appeal to all leaders, religious leaders, community leaders, is to fully support the Government of Pakistan and other governments around the world to make sure that we will be able to fully eradicate polio."

### Misconceptions and mistrust

Along with Afghanistan, Pakistan is the only place in the world with wild poliovirus transmission, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Last year, the country saw a resur-

gence of polio, with 144 cases; up from 12 in 2018. So far this year, there have been 17.

In Pakistan, nearly one-third of children aged 12 to 23 months miss out on basic vaccines, either because they live in hard-to-reach areas, or due to misconceptions about the importance of immunization.

Veteran vaccinator Farzana Sha-keel has been pelted with stones, shouted at, and even threatened during anti-polio vaccination campaigns in Karachi. "To this day, many people in my community think that vaccines are a conspiracy to prevent them from having more children, or to harm them in some way," she said.

### Going-door-to-door to save lives

While at the kindergarten, the UN chief vaccinated three children against polio. He also met with frontline workers from the Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme, a 265,000-strong force that goes door-to-door during vaccination campaigns to ensure as many children as possible are protected against the disease.

The UN Children's Fund, UNICEF, which manages the procurement and distribution of over 1 billion doses of polio vaccines worldwide each year, supports the programme in Pakistan, including through leading in vaccine supply and strengthening partnerships with local communities to build trust in



UNICEF/ASAD ZAIDI - A health worker vaccinates a 4-year-old girl against polio at the door of her house in Bhatti gate area of Lahore Punjab Province, Pakistan.

vaccines.

More than 60 per cent of the programme's workers are women, and they are critical to rallying support from parents, caregivers and communities.

Vaccination points also are set up at railway stations, bus stops and other transit points nationwide, targeting children who are travelling or on the move, with some 1.7 million vaccinated in 2018.

Immunization activities and other measures are further coordinated with a similar programme in neighbouring Afghanistan, given the frequent population movements between the two countries.

Pakistan's polio eradication pro-

gramme currently is re-strategizing its operations and approach to better respond to increased transmission of the virus, according to the WHO Representative in the country.

Dr. Palitha Malipala said this includes incorporating high-level commitment to polio eradication across the political sector and ensuring that health workers are not targeted.

"We will continue to support the Government of Pakistan, who spearhead this initiative in country, to overcome the challenges of the last year and put in place robust measures to ensure a polio-free world for future generations," he said.

Via [news.un.org](http://news.un.org)

# India Reports 3 More Cases of Coronavirus, Including Italian National

By Reuters

March 02, 2020 10:24 AM

NEW DELHI/BENGALURU - An Italian national tested positive for coronavirus in the western Indian state of Rajasthan, a major tourist destination, a hospital official said on Monday, taking the number of people who have tested positive in the country to six.

The patient had initially tested negative for the virus but a second test came out positive, a hospital official in Rajasthan's capital city of Jaipur told Reuters, declining to be named since he is not authorized to speak to the media.

"The patient has been moved to an isolation ward," the official said, adding that a third test would be conducted. Separately on Monday, the Indian government said two other people had tested positive for the coronavirus. The news hammered already rocky stock markets.

One of the new cases was detected in the capital, New Delhi, while the other was in the southern state of Telangana, the government said in a statement.

The New Delhi patient had been in Italy and the one in Telangana had been Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, the government said; both were



An Indian man with symptoms fills a form at a Corona virus help desk at the Government Gandhi Hospital in Hyderabad, India, March 2, 2020

"The government is monitoring the situation at the highest-level," Health Minister Harsh Vardhan told a briefing in New Delhi.

Authorities were screening travelers arriving from 12 countries, Vardhan said, adding that more than 1 million people had been screened on the border with Nepal.

In Jaipur, the hospital official said that at least 15 doctors, staff and patients who may have come into con-

tested.

Indian shares sank sharply on the news, ending lower for the seventh straight session.

The NSE Nifty 50 index erased gains of up to 2% to close 0.62% lower. The rupee was 0.07% weaker at 72.4300 against the dollar.

The coronavirus, which was identified in China late last year, has quickly spread to dozens of countries, killing nearly 3,000 people and disrupting

the world's second most heavily populated country after China. The government has advised Indians to refrain from non-essential travel to the worst affected countries, including China, South Korea, Iran and Italy.

Meanwhile, the three other patients who had tested positive for coronavirus in India have all been discharged from hospital, and were in quarantine in their homes, the government in Kerala state said last week.

All three had returned from Wuhan, the Chinese city at the epicenter of the outbreak.

U.S. intelligence agencies are monitoring the global spread of coronavirus and the ability of governments to respond, sources told Reuters last week, warning that there were concerns about how India would cope with a widespread outbreak.

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# Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister Modi of India in Joint Press Statement

Issued on: February 25, 2020

Hyderabad House

New Delhi, India

1:23 P.M. IST

**PRIME MINISTER MODI:** My friend and President of the United States, Donald Trump; respected members of the American delegation; ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. Once again, a very warm welcome to President Trump and his delegation in India. I am especially really happy that he has brought his family with him on this visit.

In the last eight months, this is the fifth meeting between President Trump and myself. Yesterday, the unprecedented and historic welcome for President Trump yesterday in Motera will always be remembered. Yesterday, it became clear once again that the relations between the United States and India are not just limited to the relations between two governments; they are people-driven and they are people-centric.

This relationship is the most important partnership of the 21st century. And therefore, today, President Trump and I have taken a decision to raise our partnership to the level of a comprehensive global strategic partnership. President Trump's contribution in raising our relations to this level have been invaluable.

Friends, during our discussions today, we had a productive exchange on every important aspect of our partnership, whether it is defense and security, our strategic energy partnership, technology cooperation, global connectivity, trade relations, or people-to-people ties.

The increasing defense and security cooperation between India and the United States is a very important aspect of our strategic partnership. Cooperation in ultra-modern defense equipment and platforms will enhance India's defense capabilities. Our defense manufacturers are becoming a part of each other's supply chains.

Indian forces are today doing the maximum training exercises with U.S. forces. In the last few years, there has been an unprecedented increase in interoperability between our armies, friends. In the same way, we are also increasing our cooperation in the area of homeland security and in fighting international crime.

Today, the decision taken on homeland security will further strengthen this cooperation. We have also taken a decision today to further increase our efforts in order to hold supporters of terrorism responsible.

President Trump has given priority to the fight against the drugs and opioid crisis. Today, we have also agreed on a new mechanism to fight serious problems, such as drug trafficking, narco-terrorism, and organized crime.

Friends, the recently established strategic energy partnership has become even stronger and, in this area, our mutual investment has grown. The U.S. has indeed become a very important oil and gas source for India. Over the last four

years, our total energy trade volume is about \$20 billion. Whether it is renewable energy or nuclear energy, indeed our cooperation finds itself instilled with new energy, friends.

Similarly, in the area of new emerging technologies, India and U.S. partnership has attained new levels, in terms of innovation and enterprise.

In the fields of Industry 4.0 and of the new technologies of the 21st century, the talent of Indian professionals have reinforced U.S.'s companies' technological leadership.

Friends, India and the United States are committed to openness and fair and balanced trade in the economic sector. Over the last three years, our bilateral trade has witnessed double-digit growth and it has also become more balanced.

Whether it is energy, civil aircraft, defense, or a higher education, over the last four or five years, just these four sectors has contributed \$70 billion to the relationship between India and the U.S. A lot of this is due to the policies and the willingness of President Trump, and I'm fully confident that, in the years to come, this will further grow.

As far as bilateral trade is concerned, our commerce ministers have had very positive discussions. President Trump and I, we have both agreed that the understanding reached by our commerce ministers will take it forward to give it a legal shape. We have also agreed to initiate negotiations for a bigger deal. We are confident that this will yield good results that will be in our mutual interest.

Friends, cooperation between India and the U.S. at the global level is founded on our common democratic values and objectives, especially in the Indo-Pacific region and other global commons.

Both of our countries agree on the importance of sustainable and transparent financing in the development of connectivity infrastructure across the world. This mutual understanding and synergy between us is in the interest of not just our countries, but also in the interests of the world at large.

Friends: Indeed, the cornerstone of this special friendship between India and the United States is our people-to-people relations. Whether it is as professionals or students, the Indian diaspora in the U.S. has contributed the most to furthering these relations. These ambassadors of India are not only contributing to the U.S. economy with their talent and hard work, they're also energizing [sic] the American society with their democratic values and rich culture.

I have requested President Trump that the contribution of our professionals, in terms of social security, should be discussed further within the framework of a totalization agreement. This will be of mutual interest to both of us.

President Trump's visit has played a historic role in further strengthening our relationship in all its dimensions. Once again, I wish to express my heartfelt



thanks to President Trump for coming to India and for taking Indo-U.S. relations to new heights.

Thank you. (Applause.)

**PRESIDENT TRUMP:** Well, thank you very much. And, Prime Minister Modi, this has been a very special visit — unforgettable, extraordinary. What can you say? Very, very wonderful to be with you. Thank you very much.

And Melania and I have been awed by the majesty of India and the exceptional kindness and generosity of the Indian people.

We'll always remember the magnificent welcome the citizens of your home state showed us upon arrival. It was a profound expression of strength and of — of real love. Really, it was love. And I think everybody saw that; everybody witnessed that for themselves.

The First Lady and I also reflected on the memory of Mahatma Gandhi at his ashram. And this morning, in Delhi, we laid a wreath in his honor. We visited one of your nation's most stunning cultural treasures: the world-famous Taj Mahal. And we look forward to continuing our visit tonight, doing a wonderful state banquet with President Kovind at the Presidential Palace.

I know Prime Minister Modi will agree that this has been a very productive visit for both of our countries. Earlier today, we expanded our defense cooperation with agreements for India to purchase more than \$3 billion of advanced American military equipment, including Apache and MH-60 Romeo helicopters — the finest in the world. These deals will enhance our joint defense capabilities as our militaries continue to train and operate side-by-side.

In our discussions, Prime Minister Modi and I affirmed our two countries' commitment to protecting our citizens from radical Islamic terrorism. In this effort, the United States is also working productively with Pakistan to confront terrorists who operate on its soil.

Together, the Prime Minister and I are revitalizing the Quad Initiative with the United States, India, Australia, and Japan. Since I took office, we have held the first Quad ministerial meeting — I guess you would call it a meeting, but it seems like so much more than that —

and expanded cooperation on counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and maritime security to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific.

As we deepen our partnership with India, we remember that our two countries have always been united by shared traditions of democracy and constitutions that protect freedom, individual rights, and the rule of law.

During our visit, we discussed the importance of a secure 5G wireless network and the need for this emerging technology to be a tool for freedom, progress, prosperity — not to do anything where it could be even conceived as a conduit for suppression and censorship.

To guarantee that the infrastructure of the future is built in a safe, transparent, and accountable manner, the United States is working with a range of partners, including Australia and Japan, to create the Blue Dot Network, a major initiative to ensure countries around the world to have access to private sector-led, sustainable, and trustworthy options for high-quality infrastructure development, and that's what's happening.

Another major focus of my discussions with Prime Minister Modi is forging bilateral economic relationships that is fair and reciprocal. Our teams have made tremendous progress on a comprehensive trade agreement and I'm optimistic we can reach a deal that will be of great importance to both countries.

Since I took office, U.S. exports to India are up nearly 60 percent and exports of high-quality American energy have grown by — thank you very much — 500 percent. That's great.

As India grows, so do its energy needs. Yesterday, ExxonMobil signed a deal to improve India's natural gas distribution network so that the U.S. can export even more LNG to India.

We are pleased to be joined by the Chairman of ExxonMobil LNG Market Development, Alex Volkov. Thank you, Alex, wherever you may be. Where is Alex? He's here someplace. Alex, thank you very much. (Applause.) Thank you very much, Alex. And the CEO of Chart Energy and Chemicals Jillian Evanko. Thank you very much. Thank you both. Thank you, Jillian. (Applause.) Thank you very much. **Contd. on page 10...**



# PM's address at the inauguration of 13th COP to the Convention on Migratory Species in Gandhinagar Gujarat

17 Feb, 2020

My dear friends!

I am happy to welcome you all to the 13th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Migratory species, at Gandhinagar, the land of the Mahatma Gandhi.

India is one of the most diverse countries of the world. With 2.4% of world's land area, it contributes about 8% of the known global biodiversity. India is blessed with diverse ecological habitats and also has four biodiversity hot spots. They are – the Eastern Himalayas, Western Ghats, Indo-Myanmar landscape and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. In addition, India is also home to around 500 species of migratory birds from across the globe.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For ages, conservation of wildlife and habitats has been a part of the cultural ethos of India, which encourages compassion and co-existence. Our Vedas spoke of protection of animals. Emperor Ashoka put great emphasis on prohibiting the destruction of forests and the killing of animals. Inspired by Gandhi Ji, the ethos of non violence and protection of animals and nature has been suitably enshrined in the Constitution of India. It also finds reflection in several laws and legislations.

Sustained efforts over the years have led to encouraging results. The number of Protected Areas have increased from 745 in 2014 to 870 in the year 2019 with an area coverage of nearly 1 lakh seventy thousand sq.kms. India's forest cover has increased significantly. The present assessment also indicates that the total forest cover is 21.67% of the total geographical area of the country.

India has been championing Climate action based on the values of conservation, sustainable lifestyle and green development model. The range of our initiatives include ambitious target of 450 MW in renewable energy, push towards Electric Vehicles, Smart Cities, Conservation of Water, etc.

The International Solar Alliance, the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, and Industries Transition Leadership with Sweden, have seen encouraging participation from wide array of countries. India is one of the few countries whose actions are compliant with the Paris Agreement goal of keeping rise in temperature to below 2 degree Celsius.

Friends,

India has initiated focussed species conservation projects/ programmes. These have shown great results. The number of Tiger Reserves has increased from 9 since its formative years, to 50 at present. At present India has the distinction of having a population of almost 2970 tigers. India has achieved its target of doubling the number of tigers two years before the committed date of 2022. I call upon Tiger Range Countries present here and also others to come together to strengthen tiger conservation through sharing of benchmarking practices.

India is supporting more than 60% of global Asian elephant population. 30 Elephant Reserves have been identified by



our States. India has also taken several initiatives and set standards for conservation of Asian elephants.

We have launched Project Snow Leopard to protect the Snow leopard and its habitat in the upper Himalayas. India recently hosted the Steering Committee of the Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Programme (GSLEP) of 12 Countries, which resulted in New Delhi declaration envisaging development of country specific framework and cooperation between countries for snow leopard conservation. I am happy to share that India would be taking a leadership role in promoting Green Economy including conservation of mountain ecology with people's participation.

Friends,

The Gir landscape in Gujarat is the only home for the Asiatic Lion and the pride of the country. We have initiated an Asiatic Lion Conservation project since January 2019 to protect the Asiatic Lion. I am happy to share that, today, the population of Asiatic lions stands at 523.

In India, the One-horned Rhinoceros are found in three States of Assam, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The Government of India launched the "National Conservation Strategy for the Indian One-Horned Rhinoceros" in the year 2019.

The Great Indian Bustard, a critically endangered bird has also been at the focus of our conservation efforts. As part of the captive breeding programme, 9 eggs have been successfully hatched from wild. This has been accomplished by Indian Scientists and Forest Department with technical assistance from International Fund for Houbara Conservation, Abu Dhabi. We have therefore, made the mascot, GIBI- The Great', as a tribute to the Great Indian Bustard.

Friends,

India is honoured to host the 13th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species at Gandhinagar.

As you might have noticed, the CMS COP 13 Logo is inspired by the traditional 'KOLAM' from southern India, which has a profound significance in the context of living in harmony with the nature.

Friends,

We have been traditionally practicing the mantra of "Athithi Devo Bhava", this has been reflected in the slogan/theme for the CMS COP 13: "Migratory species connect the planet and together we welcome them home". These species move between countries without any passports or visa, but are messengers of peace and

prosperity and it is our responsibility to protect them.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

India would hold the Presidency of this convention for the coming three years. During its Presidency, India would steer in the following areas:

India is a part of the Central Asian Flyway for migratory birds. With a view to conserve the birds along the Central Asian Flyway and their habitats, India has prepared a 'National Action Plan for conservation of Migratory Birds along the Central Asian Flyway'. India would be happy to facilitate preparation of Action Plans for other countries in this regard. We are keen to take the conservation of migratory birds to a new paradigm with active cooperation of all the Central Asian Flyway Range Countries. I also wish to establish an institutional mechanism for undertaking research, studies, assessments, capacity development and conservation initiatives by creating a common platform.

Friends, India has about 7500 kms coastline and Indian marine waters are rich in biodiversity, with innumerable species. India proposes to strengthen its association with the ASEAN and East Asia Summit countries. This would be in sync with the Indo Pacific Ocean Initiative (IPOI), wherein India will be playing a leadership role. India by 2020, will be launching its Marine Turtle Policy and Marine Stranding Management Policy. This will also address the pollution caused by micro-plastics. Single use plastics have been a challenge for environment protection and we in India have

been on a mission mode to reduce its usage.

Friends,

Several Protected Areas in India share common boundaries with the Protected Areas of neighbouring countries. Cooperation in conservation of wildlife through establishment of 'Trans boundary Protected Areas', would lead to very positive outcomes.

Friends,

My Government firmly believes in the path of sustainable development. We are ensuring that development happens without harming the environment. We have released the Linear Infrastructure Policy Guidelines to tailor development in ecologically fragile areas.

People are being made important stakeholders in the task of preserving the natural resources for future generations. My Government has been marching ahead with the slogan "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas, Sabka Vishwaas". Millions of people living in vicinity of forest area in the country have now been integrated in the form of Joint Forestry Management Committees and Eco Development Committees and associated with the protection of forest and wildlife.

Friends,

I am sure this conference will provide an excellent platform for experience sharing and capacity building in the area of species and habitat conservation. I also hope you will get the time to experience India's hospitality and rich diversity.

Thank you.

Thank you very much.

Via [pmindia.gov.in](http://pmindia.gov.in)

## Contd. from page 9

That's a big deal, Alex, right? Can you handle it? I think so, right? It's great.

To further strengthen our economic ties, the United States is pleased to announce that the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation will be establishing a permanent presence right here.

America is especially committed to working with India to improve development and empower women entrepreneurs. That is why my daughter Ivanka attended the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Hyderabad to highlight women's economic empowerment. Ivanka, please — great job you've done. Thank you very much. (Applause.) Thank you.

We have since launched the W-GDP initiative, which is now spearheading projects supporting women in the economy from New Delhi to Kolkata.

In our meetings with the Prime Minister, we discussed and agreed to create a counter-narcotics working group to confront the growing threat of illicit fentanyl and opioid production. We must rid our societies of these lethal, horrible poisons. We will rid our societies of these bad drugs that are pouring in.

Prime Minister Modi, we have made tremendous advances for our people over the past two days. And, working together, I know that our two nations will continue to achieve new breakthroughs, unlock new potential, and forge even brighter futures in the years ahead.

We think we're at a point where our relationship is so special with India. It has never been as good as it is right now and I think that's because the two leaders of each country — really, we feel very strongly about each other. And we have — we have done something that's very unique and we've made some wonderful deals for each of our countries.

Once again, we want to thank you and the entire nation of India for honoring the United States with its outstanding welcome. And I'm pleased to say that the U.S.-Indian partnership is now truly stronger than ever before. This was a great visit with a tremendous friend and a tremendous leader, Prime Minister Modi.

We won't be taking questions now; I'll be having a news conference at 5 o'clock and we'll take plenty of questions. Thank you all very much. Thank you. (Applause.)

END

Via [whitehouse.gov](http://whitehouse.gov)

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*Phyllis Diller*



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# Around the World

## Canada Global Affairs officials visits Sri Lanka North

Here is a pictorial Tweet Digest of Canadian High Commissioner David McKinnon and David Hartman, Director of South Asia at Global Affairs Canada visiting Jaffna, Sri Lanka few weeks ago!

"David Hartman and I welcomed chance to see Canada International Development investment in Jaffna District Siddha Medicine Production Cooperative still going strong. Local farmers supply raw materials to produce traditional medicines sold around the Northern Province." - High Commissioner David McKinnon



David Hartman (on left) and I (High Commissioner David McKinnon, to the right) heard from Jaffna mayor Emmanuel Arnold (Centre) about municipal issues (incl waste management and planning), economic development, politics, reconciliation and the city's close links with Canada, especially Toronto. Thanks for finding the time!"

- via: <https://twitter.com/McKinnonDavid>



## Views of Jaffna - Pictures via @McKinnonDavid



"On board at Jaffna International Airport after a somewhat circuitous drive to get here. Warm welcome from the professionals CinnamonAir however."

"Followed by a spectacular view on takeoff. Look forward to the day when regularly scheduled service returns on the Colombo-Jaffna route."



## Sunset in Jaffna



So, You've Written a Will...but are **ALL** your ducks in a row?



Come and Learn:

- An unprepared Estate can devastate your family...and your Executor
- The importance of having a proper Living Will & Health Directive
- Everything you should know about planning your wishes in advance
- If you are an Executor for a loved one, learn why you are at risk
- Learn how to help your Executor *Be Prepared, Be Ready*

"Consultants fluent in Cantonese, Mandarin, Hakka, Tamil and Portuguese will be available"

Complimentary Workshop Sponsored by



Special Guest Speaker  
Gordon MacGregor  
Canadian Preplanning Council

Seating is limited so R.S.V.P. today!



DATE: Wednesday, March 18, 2020

TIME: 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM  
Registration 1:45

LOCATION: Ogden Funeral Homes  
4164 Sheppard Ave E,  
Toronto ON M1S 1T3

R.S.V.P.: 416-659-0128

R.S.V.P.: [anita@ogdenfh.com](mailto:anita@ogdenfh.com)



## Sri Lanka Government decides to withdraw from UNHRC consensus resolutions

February 20: Sri Lankan Government today formally announced its decision to withdraw from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) resolution co-sponsored in 2015.

Cabinet Spokesman Bandula Gunawardena told reporters that the proposal to withdraw from the resolution was tabled by Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena who also sought the support of the international community for the move. He said that the resolution 30/1 and the follow up resolution 40/1 were harmful to Sri Lanka.

The announcement came after the Cabinet unanimously decided to withdraw from the resolution in its meeting last evening. The government has

said that the resolution had been co-sponsored without the consent of then President Maithripala Sirisena.

The government under President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, however, expressed its commitment to achieve sustainable peace through an inclusive, domestically designed reconciliation and accountability process, including through the appropriate adaptation of existing mechanisms. The resolution was co-sponsored by Sri Lankan Government in a bid to address war crimes accusations and initiate reconciliation mechanism, after defeat of Mahinda Rajapaksa in 2015 elections.

- via: **newsonair**

- **All India Radio**

## Karaikal - Jaffna Indian ferry service to take off soon: Indian Union Minister



By **Siva Sivapragasam**

The Indian ministry for shipping has proposed a ferry service between Karaikal in the Union Territory of Puducherry and Jaffna in Sri Lanka as a measure to promote tourism.

Shortly after chairing a meeting with ministers and government officials of Puducherry, Union minister of state for shipping Mansukh Mandaviya addressed a press conference saying that the project is expected to take off in three to four months.

Lok Sabha MP V Vaithilingam, who was present at the press meet along with the Union minister, said it would take around three hours for one-way ferry trip and would cost around INRs 6,500 to INRs 7,000 for a round trip. Some investors have already expressed interest with their proposals, he said.

Mandaviya said hundreds of Tamil-speaking people from Sri Lanka come to India on pilgrimage. Besides, Sri

Lankans also visit India to see Buddhist sites. The ferry service will facilitate their visit. It will not only give a boost to tourism but will also improve bilateral cooperation between the two countries, he said. A ferry service between India and Sri Lanka was operated between Dhanushkodi in Tamil Nadu and Thalaimannar in Sri Lanka, over a distance of 30 nautical miles.

After the 1964 cyclone destroyed infrastructure at Dhanushkodi, the service was operated from Rameswaram. In 1984, the Union government suspended the service due to the rise of ethnic conflict in the island nation. In more recent years, the TN government has been looking at a fresh site at Rameswaram to resume operations.

Karaikal Port will be the facilitator and the central government would extend support and to take the proposal forward a committee under chief secretary along with secretary (port) would be constituted at the earliest.

## Statement by UNHRC on Sri Lanka decision



High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet - pic via [unric.org](http://unric.org)

Full Text by High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights February 27, 2020, Geneva:

I move to our update on Sri Lanka, HRC/43/19, assessing the progress made in implementing Human Rights Council resolution 30/1. I regret that the new Government has announced a very different approach to the commitments previously made in the resolution which risks setting back efforts to advance reconciliation, accountability and human rights.

The State must work for all its people and the needs of all communities, particularly the minorities, must be acknowledged and addressed. I urge the Government to preserve and build upon the gains which have been made over the last few years. In particular, I encourage the Government to ensure the Office on Missing Persons and the Office of Reparations are provided with political and resource support. The families of missing persons from all communities deserve justice and redress.

Sri Lanka's independent institutions, strengthened under the 19th Constitutional Amendment, are a key pillar in its democratic structure. And the space for civil society and independent media should be protected. I am

therefore troubled by the recent trend towards moving civilian functions under the Ministry of Defence or retired military officers, and renewed reports of surveillance and harassment of human rights defenders, journalists and victims. The increasing levels of hate speech, and security and policy measures appear to be discriminately and disproportionately directed against minorities, both Tamil and Muslim.

The fundamental problem remains that Sri Lanka has still not addressed impunity for past violations, nor undertaken the security sector reforms needed to address their drivers and enablers. Systemic barriers that continue to exist within the criminal justice system remain an impediment to real justice. Domestic processes have consistently failed to deliver accountability in the past and I am not convinced the appointment of yet another Commission of Inquiry will advance this agenda. As a result, victims remain denied justice and Sri Lankans from all communities have no guarantee that past patterns of human rights violations will not recur.

I urge the Council to remain alert to this situation in terms of prevention and to explore all possible avenues for advancing accountability.

via: **ohchr.org**

### Coronavirus: How to stay safe



Wash your hands regularly



Sneeze/ cough into a tissue



Bin it! Throw your tissues away immediately



Sneeze/ cough inside your elbow



# BRAVE T.O. IS BACK!



The obstacle course in support of Scarborough Health Network Foundation is back for its fourth year to give you another chance to race, walk, climb and jump through challenges faced by Toronto's police, paramedics and firefighters – and have fun while you help support lifesaving care. Sign up or donate at brave.to!

# 8th Annual Family Day Walk-a-thon Helps Raise \$230,000 for SHN



Around 100 members of the Scarborough Muslim Community attended SHN Foundation's Family Day Walk-a-thon on February 17 to show support for the future of health care at Scarborough Health Network.

Now in its 8th year since its inception, the Family Day Walk-a-thon is part of a collective fundraising effort led by the Scarborough Muslim Community to deliver on a pledge to raise \$250,000 towards lifesaving care at SHN. The community launched the fundraising campaign in January 2018 with a goal of

reaching the pledge within five years to help support exceptional care, new facilities, and state-of-the-art medical technology at SHN.

The Scarborough Muslim Community has now reached \$230,000 towards their overall pledge in just over 2 years, a tremendous achievement by the community.

This year's Family Day Walk-a-thon took place at Centenary hospital, where SHN welcomed all members of the community to show their support. All ages, young and old, dressed for the weather on the holiday as the walkathon

began early in the afternoon and concluded with a few words of gratitude from Alicia Vandermeer, President and CEO of SHN Foundation.

"Thank you all for helping shape the future of health care here in Scarborough," said Alicia. "We are so close to achieving the \$250,000 goal and it is a reflection of the hard work and passion of the community." The funds raised by the Scarborough Muslim Community will go directly towards SHN Foundation's vision for building better health care facilities and improving patient care across the hospitals.

The Dr. Bruce Johnston Conference Room was filled to its capacity as we kicked off an extra special Valentine's Day at Scarborough Health Network (SHN) with our For the Love of Research and Innovation Symposium, held last Friday at Centenary hospital.

The event was born out of a desire to properly showcase the extraordinary work of our colleagues and team members in the community and across our health network – the work that is driving forward SHN's strategic direction to 'Transform the patient experience through innovation, education and research'.

Attendees were treated to impassioned speeches from the organizers and a very lively keynote presentation from Dr. Michelle Greiver (Director of the University of Toronto Practice-Based Research Network) that really set the tone for the afternoon's activities. They walked a gallery filled with over 60 research, innovation and Bright Ideas Program poster submissions, using an online survey to vote for their favourites as they went. The day was capped off with an expert panel discussion on the importance of this kind of work in addressing the challenges we face in health care, and an awards ceremony to announce the winners.

A key goal of the event was to increase awareness of the incredible health care research we do here in Scarborough, and to draw attention to what differentiates our work. "It is unique

## STANDING ROOM ONLY FOR SHN'S FIRST FOR THE LOVE OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SYMPOSIUM



because the research is more health outcomes-focused than say the basic research or bench research that you get in other places, or the big clinical trials that you get at other hospitals," Anne Davies, Manager, Medical Education and Research said.

As an integral part in realizing the vision for this event, Davies was elated by the outcome, particularly the overwhelming attendance and enthusiasm displayed throughout the day.

The day was a true celebration of SHN's belief in all of us to generate new ideas and use our creativity to improve our workplace. There was no finer example of this on display than the submissions for Bright Ideas - an SHN program that empowers front-line staff, physicians patients and families to recognize opportunities, and implement solutions, to make things better at SHN.

With such positive comments and reactions to the activities from those present, the lead

organizer, Chief of Staff, Dr. Dick Zoutman is looking forward to turning this resounding success into a bigger and better research symposium in 2021.

He gave a sneak peek into what's happening and the next steps for research at SHN. "Over the last year, we've been looking at how much research we're doing, what kind of research, and similarly what kind of teaching education activities are available. Using an inventory of all of these activities, we've conducted focus groups to ascertain what our people have seen and what they need. Now, we're bringing in external experts, like Dr. Greiver today, to help us plan a strategy to develop research and education at SHN."

SHN is particularly grateful to HIROC and Delmanor Wynford, for sponsoring the event, as well as to our speakers for their engrossing presentations.



## EXPANDING DIALYSIS SERVICES AT CENTENARY HOSPITAL



It's been almost a year and a half since the new satellite hemodialysis unit at Centenary hospital began treating patients, and now it is expanding hemodialysis care in Scarborough.

The unit will now offer evening dialysis, increasing the access of care to support three patient shifts, 6 days a week.

The evening shift will operate from 5:00 to 11:00 p.m., adding to the already occurring morning and afternoon shifts supporting patient dialysis.

The unit will open in a three-phased approach over the next 8-12 weeks. Over the course of the three phases the unit will slowly open evening shifts. Phase one will add six evening dialysis stations, followed by nine stations in phase two and finally operating at full capacity of 12 stations, three months following opening.

"Expanding this service even further to offer evening dialysis is allowing us to continue to grow dialysis care within our community and provide for more patients," Dr. Tam, Chief of Nephrology notes.

In its first year, the unit thrived in meeting its mission to increase access to care, serving 29 patients with end stage renal disease and providing over 4,400 hemodialysis treatments.

Not only has the hemodialysis unit grown to allow for greater access to care for patients, it has enabled future nephrology program integration initiatives and standardization across the General and Centenary sites, such as the introduction of interventional radiology procedures for dialysis related needs at the Centenary unit.

## POINT-OF-CARE ULTRASOUND AT SHN IS CHANGING EMERGENCY CARE FOR THE BETTER

Danielle Lucky is passionate about helping people. It's why she loves working in the Emergency department (ED) – where people come when they need help the most. When a patient walks into the ED, providing them with the care they need, as fast as possible, is crucial.

This year, Danielle became the first physician assistant (PA) in Canada to undergo formal training in advanced point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS). At Scarborough Health Network (SHN) an innovative new program geared towards expanding the use of POCUS, is training highly skilled PAs, like Danielle, to do just that.

Danielle and her fellow PAs work within multi-disciplinary teams to provide a broad range of medical services including patient histories, physical examinations, and ordering and performing appropriate diagnostic tests and procedures. The PAs work with SHN physicians with a high degree of autonomy and their role continues to grow as their training and knowledge expand.

When an opportunity to expand her skills to include using POCUS to help diagnose Emergency patients came around, Danielle couldn't wait to be involved. Introduced in 2016, SHN's Emergency Ultrasound Fellowship program trains emergency physicians and PAs in advanced POCUS and improves care for patients.

Using POCUS machines helps health care professionals make quick diagnoses right at the patient's bedside, ensuring rapid diagnoses and course of treatment. POCUS allows PAs to conduct an ultrasound wherever the patient needs it.

"Expanding the fellowship program



helps grow the PA profession in Canada," explained Danielle. "Being able to support patients at the bedside, resulting in less wait times and better patient centred care, is important to me." Spearheaded by one of SHN's emergency physicians, the program is helping shape the future of emergency care.

Dr. Jeffrey Shih, the Emergency Ultrasound Fellowship program director at SHN, has trained emergency physicians in advanced POCUS skills since 2016. He immediately saw the benefits of expanding the program to include PAs.

"PAs bring an immense value to physicians in our Emergency department, by supporting our clinical work and providing high quality patient-centred care – something I see first-hand."

"Our goal for the physician assistants who complete the program is to generate high quality ultrasound images for the physicians they work with, allowing for more productive, efficient, and patient-centered care," explained Dr. Shih. The program has been a success and is expanding.

Last June, Danielle and Dr. Shih introduced PA students at the University of Toronto to the fellowship program and the basic principles of ultrasound. In addition, the program has sparked interest internationally. In late 2019, Dr. Shih and Danielle presented this unique PA Ultrasound Program at the 10th Annual Mediterranean Emergency Medicine Congress in Dubrovnik, Croatia hosted by the American Academy of Emergency Medicine.

"We had a lot of interest and discussion among emergency physicians from around the world, some who had never heard of PAs and some who work with PAs and see the utility that would come with advanced point-of-care ultrasound skills," explained Dr. Shih.

"By adapting the Emergency Ultrasound Fellowship program at SHN to train physician assistants, we will continue our reputation of being trailblazers in the fields of emergency ultrasound, teaching, and physician assistant education."

Learn more about SHN's Emergency departments.

## ADULT MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS COMMUNITY FORUM

Presented by Scarborough Health Network (SHN's) Community Advisory Council in collaboration with SHN's Mental Health program.

**Monday, March 2**  
6:30 - 9 p.m.

**Scarborough Civic Centre**

150 Borough Drive, Scarborough  
(3 minute walk from Scarborough Town Centre and Scarborough Centre Station)

Light refreshments will be served.  
Free parking on site.

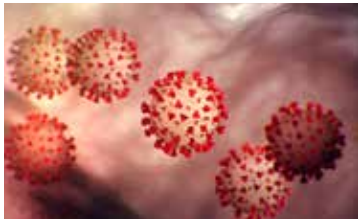
**If you or someone you know is living with mental health challenges and addictions, we want to hear from you.**

- Hear from people who have used mental health and addiction services and people who have provided these services.
- Learn about mental health and addiction services in Scarborough.
- Talk in small groups about problems related to accessing and improving care.

**You will also have the opportunity to join our panel discussion to connect about:**

- Accessing mental health programs and services
- Empowering seeking help
- Improving access to services
- Providing culturally responsive care
- Sharing personal barriers

**Learn more and register:**  
adultmentalhealthaddictions-community-forum.eventbrite.ca or  
416-431-8200 ext. 2204.



# CORONAVIRUS- FROM EPIDEMIC TO PANDEMIC PROPORTIONS-QUO VADIS?..

By: J A Rajah

## A. The Nature of Covid-19:

The Coronavirus is now declared by the WHO as a global catastrophe that has to be stopped. The deadly disease may spread to other nations beside China. It is now said to be more serious than SARS that broke out in 2004. Recent statistics reported 2442 people lost their lives in China with over 76,936 people have been infected by it. The number of infected persons continue to rise. Singapore with 58 cases of confirmed Coronavirus patients appears to be the most threatened nation outside China.

Many counties have sent food supplies and medical supplies to help China. The coronavirus can cause a variety of illnesses ranging from common cold to more respiratory infections like bronchitis, pneumonia or severe acute respiratory syndrome. (SARS). These viruses are spread person to person through close contact, like that for instance in a household, workplace or hospital. It is people with weak immune system or resistance who can get this disease. Elderly people or people with chronic diseases like cancer, diabetes, heart problem, lung disease may easily fall prey to this illness.

## B. Coronavirus as epidemic in China:

The coronavirus originated in Wuhan, China in 2019. The mainland China is identified as an affected area and travelers returning from affected areas like Hubei province in China are requested to contact the local public health unit within 24 hours on arriving in China. Such persons are instructed to stay at home and stay out from contact with others including those in their homes for at least 14 days from the date they left the Hubei province in China. Since there are a large number of Chinese people in Canada, the government is very vigilant about it. Air travel and ship travel have been badly affected by the spread of Coronavirus. 848 Americans have been evacuated from China. 100 public health labs are set up in the US to screen Coronavirus patients. Twelve cases of CV cases have been registered in the US. It will become a pandemic when there are outbreaks in more than one continent.

A cruise ship (Diamond Princess) is halted off the coast of Oklahoma in Japan with 3900 passengers and 456 infected persons halted for quarantine purposes. 32 (positive for

CV) Canadians are also in it. Healthy Canadians (129) in the ship have been flown back to Canada and kept in quarantine at Cornwall, Ontario before being released. Another ship with 279 Canadians evacuated from China is halted near Cambodia.

## C. Coronavirus as Pandemic:

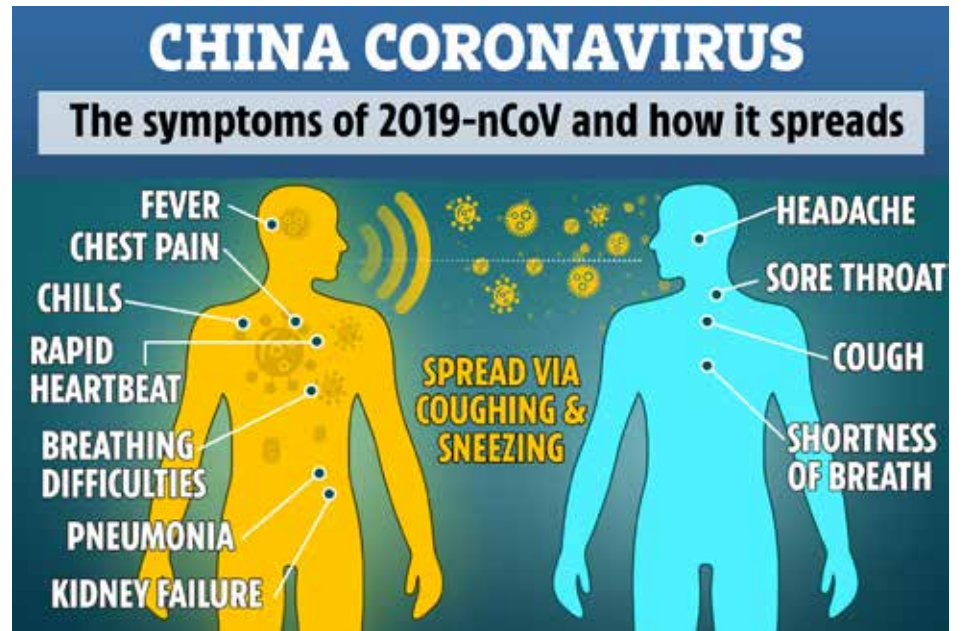
In Canada, vigilant steps are being taken to contain the spread of the virus. It is reported that nearly 600 persons have travelled to China on a holiday and arrangements have already made for their safe return. They will be kept in quarantine camps in Trenton in South Ontario before they are released. The Ministry of Health will take several precautions for the health and safety of the Ontarians. Monitoring hospitals will be assigned for potential cases of the virus in individuals with a travel history to affected areas in China. All necessary steps will be taken to investigate, complete lab tests, and do case and contact management to prevent and control the spread of the infection. Hospitals, paramedics



- foreignpolicy.com

and public health units near Pearson International Airport will co-operate in screening and providing all the help necessary.

The symptoms for CV are flu, cough and difficulty in breathing. It also includes serious conditions like pneumonia, kidney failure. There are no specific treatment for CV and there is no vaccine that protects against CV. Patients will be able to recover on their own. Those reported with CV should drink plenty of fluids, get sufficient sleep and rest. They should try a humidifier or hot bath to palliate cough or sore-throat. CV spreads through person to person contact in a household, workplace or hospital. Practical measures that are to be taken to avoid CV is washing hands with soap and water, sneeze or cough protectively, avoiding contact with sick people and stay at home if you are ill. One should also avoid farms, contact with animals and surface droppings



- thesun.co.uk

in affected areas. If a person has CV he should restrict activities outside the home. They should not take public transport. They are also expected to wear facemasks.

Coronavirus is reported as a global threat and have alerted severe monitoring in countries like Hongkong, Phillipines, Vietnam, Thailand, Japan, Singapore, Australia, Iran, South Korea and the US. It has now been recognized as pandemic and has shattered all hopes of eliminating it. The Coronavirus has hampered supply chains leading of China and is highlighting problems in the US and Canada. China is a major supplier of raw ingredients to manufacture pencilin, ibuproben, aspirin and other routine medicines, fueling concerns about future shortages.

## D. It's Devastating Effects on China:

China, the country with the highest number of peopling and the second strongest economy in the world is badly affected by the CR epidemic. Its trade.-foreign exports and imports, airways, shipping are all vastly hampered by the contagious disease. Its efforts to contain the disease to the province of Hubei is severely challenged. Even 1700 health workers are affected by the virus. China is taking all the precautions necessary to control the spread of the virus. Hospitals are overcrowded. Several patients die on the way to hospital. Due to lack of space, only serious cases are admitted to hospitals. In Wuhan, they constructed a 1000 bed

hospital in just 10 days. Schools are closed at least until the 1st of March. India, Sri Lanka and Bangaladesh have evacuated their citizens from Wuhan. They are mainly students studying in the universities. Major airlines have suspended their flights to and from China. Some countries have evacuated their citizens from Wuhan and the wider Hubei province in an effort to stop the spread of the infection. It is said that there is a shortage of face masks in the country. In China, the illness showed no signs of slowing down.

The WHO has given a name for the virus as COVID-19 as it was first identified in 2019. There is a report that some Chinse ate exotic wild life and that it may have caused the outbreak of the virus. It has now banned the eating of these meats except for in rural areas like Tomolon. The Chinese community is already suffering and stressed at being in the frontline of the outbreak. The virus has affected China' relationship with other counties. It has pulled out its team from participating in the world cup in Gymnastics. In Australia, there are incidents of social abuse directed towards patients and medical staff with Chinese appearance. Keeping away from Chinese shops and establishments should be reckoned as being silly and overcautious. Some who have never visited their home country in recent-times are unjustly shunned. Even in Toronto some people seem to be reluctant to go Chinese grocery stores and eating places. This should be regarded as unacceptable in a multi-racial society. However, in Toronto, they have erected a memorial to commemorate the Chinses Dr. Wen Liang at the City Hall. He is the one who first identified the disease and later fell prey to it.



# Lakeridge Health First in Ontario to Report Personalized ED Wait Times

## Bowmanville Hospital tests technology to inform patients of the expected times to see a physician

Bowmanville – Bowmanville Hospital has introduced the Personalized Predicted ED Wait Times, a pilot initiative that will tell patients in the emergency department (ED) how long they are expected to wait to see a physician.

Using artificial intelligence, the system predicts individual wait times by considering a person's health status, acuity and factors including the number of health professionals available, how many patients are in the ED, the urgency of all patients' needs, and the time, day and season. Lakeridge Health is the first Ontario hospital to introduce an individual predicted wait time.

"Waiting in a hospital emergency department is often a source of anxiety and frustration for patients and families," said Dr. Ilan Lenga, Chief Information Officer, Lakeridge Health. "By informing patients with a personalized, realistic, expected wait time, we hope to alleviate some of the stress that they experience in the ED."

When patients are triaged at the Bowmanville Hospital ED, they receive real-time information about their an-

ticipated wait time to be assessed by a physician. A TV monitor in the waiting room is updated every 30 minutes with current wait times for each patient, informing each individual about how long they can expect to wait, at all times.

"Improving the patient experience in our emergency departments is a key priority for Lakeridge Health," said Susan deRyk, Interim President and CEO. "Through regular consultations with patients, results of real-time patient and family surveys and community feedback, people have told us that it is important to know what to expect during an emergency room visit. This system will provide important information about access to services to empower people with the information they need during their care and treatment in the emergency department."

Patients receive a personal predicted wait time if they have non-acute medical needs and are likely to be discharged from the ED. The most seriously ill and injured patients will not receive a personalized wait time as they always receive urgent treatment in the ED.

"Waiting in the emergency de-

partment is stressful," said Dawn Finnegan, Patient and Family Experience Advisor. "For many patients, one of the biggest concerns is the wait time and this new tool can help to reduce some of the frustration and anxiety and improve communication."

The new Personalized Predicted ED Wait Time initiative was developed in collaboration with Durham College's Hub for Applied Research in Artificial Intelligence.

"We are proud to partner with Lakeridge Health's team and bring our expertise in artificial intelligence to benefit patients and the community," said Don Lovisa, president, Durham College. "Leveraging the power of AI, our employees and students are enhancing the quality of life and experience of patients and their families, while we prepare the skilled professionals who will continue to advance our healthcare system."

The system will be evaluated and adjusted, as needed, based on the results and feedback from patients. Following the pilot, the system is anticipated to be adopted by the three other Lakeridge Health EDs.



## Lakeridge Health

### About Lakeridge Health

Lakeridge Health is Durham Region's acute health care provider. With five hospitals, four emergency departments, a residential treatment centre and more than a dozen community health care locations, Lakeridge Health is working to provide the best experience for patients and their families. Home to the R.S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre and Pinewood Centre, Lakeridge Health also provides regional mental health, eye care and nephrology services.

With a committed and dedicated team of more than 5,400 employees, more than 760 physicians and more than 1,600 volunteers, Lakeridge Health provides care to the more than 650,000 people living and working in Durham Region.

# World experts and funders set priorities for COVID-19 research

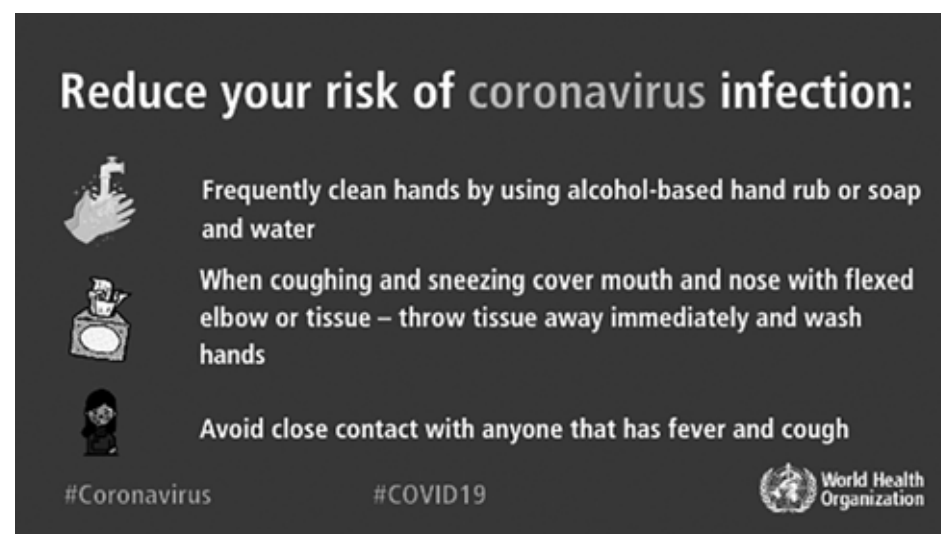
12 February 2020 - World Health Organization News release

Geneva, Switzerland: Leading health experts from around the world have been meeting at the World Health Organization's Geneva headquarters to assess the current level of knowledge about the new COVID-19 disease, identify gaps and work together to accelerate and fund priority research needed to help stop this outbreak and prepare for any future outbreaks.

The 2-day forum was convened in line with the WHO R&D Blueprint – a strategy for developing drugs and vaccines before epidemics, and accelerating research and development while they are occurring.

"This outbreak is a test of solidarity -- political, financial and scientific. We need to come together to fight a common enemy that does not respect borders, ensure that we have the resources necessary to bring this outbreak to an end and bring our best science to the forefront to find shared answers to shared problems. Research is an integral part of the outbreak response," said WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "I appreciate the positive response of the research community to join us at short notice and come up with concrete plans and commitment to work together."

The meeting, hosted in collaboration with GloPID-R (the Global Re-



search Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness) brought together major research funders and over 300 scientists and researchers from a large variety of disciplines. They discussed all aspects of the outbreak and ways to control it including:

- the natural history of the virus, its transmission and diagnosis;
- animal and environmental research on the origin of the virus, including management measures at the human-animal interface;
- epidemiological studies;
- clinical characterization and management of disease caused by the virus;
- infection prevention and control, including best ways to protect health care workers;
- research and development for can-

didate therapeutics and vaccines;

- ethical considerations for research;
- integration of social sciences into the outbreak response.

"This meeting allowed us to identify the urgent priorities for research. As a group of funders we will continue to mobilize, coordinate and align our funding to enable the research needed to tackle this crisis and stop the outbreak, in partnership with WHO," said Professor Yazdan Yazdanpanah, chair of GloPID-R. "Equitable access – making sure we share data and reach those most in need, in particular those in lower and middle-income countries, is fundamental to this work which must be guided by ethical considerations at all times."

During the meeting, the more than



300 scientists and researchers participating both in person and virtually agreed on a set of global research priorities. They also outlined mechanisms for continuing scientific interactions and collaborations beyond the meeting which will be coordinated and facilitated by WHO. They worked with research funders to determine how necessary resources can be mobilized so that critical research can start immediately.

The deliberations will form the basis of a research and innovation roadmap charting all the research needed and this will be used by researchers and funders to accelerate the research response.

- via: [The World Health Organization - who.int](http://www.who.int)



## Take it or Leave it

# Absence and Presence

**Absence—is nothing! The presence is real; it is this breath that just came into you.**

We want our children to be good. We want our children to grow up well. What do we tell them when we see them in the morning? Monday or Tuesday, what do we tell them? “Are you ready? Are you ... You’re late, you’re going to be late. Get ready.” We don’t tell the, “I love you.” We don’t tell them, “I love you.” “So good to see you.”

I know, in some cultures, women, men are shy to say, “I love you.” But can’t you say the same thing another way? “So good to see you today.” Aren’t you glad to see them that day? Aren’t you? Do you say it?

And what do you want? You want everybody in your family to be happy. After all, all the men that are here, you work very hard to make everybody happy in your family. Don’t you? Don’t you go to your job from morning till evening? Don’t you work really, really hard to make them all happy? And do you once tell them you love them? No.

Strange! I find that very strange. Why is it wrong for you to be human? Aren’t you human? Relationship of darkness, light. Relationship of absence, presence. All the things you imagine you are, you are not. But what you are, you don’t know. So you imagine yourself to be a doctor, a lawyer, a housemother, a wife. An I.T.—“it”. IT technician. It. “It” is referred to people without life, things without life. It. I.T. It means you go into a room, and try to plug wires and see if something works or doesn’t work.

You ask somebody, “Excuse me, sir. Who are you?” “Oh, I’m a salesman.” Really? You’re not a human being? This relationship of absence and presence. We don’t understand the pres-

We need to be human and understand the relationship between the absence and the presence.

ence. The presence is real. Absence is nothing.

What is the presence? The presence is, this breath just came into you. This is the presence. Do you understand the meaning of this breath? Do you understand the value of this breath? When you were born ... when you were born, when you came out of your mother’s womb. Yes, all of you came out of a mother’s womb. You better have come out of a mother’s womb. Otherwise, you should be stuffed and sent to a museum. You all came out of a mother’s womb.

In our societies we don’t respect women. Women have one thing over every man. A woman can give birth to a man or a woman. A man can’t do that. And we forget. We forget, we forget because we are playing the wrong game. Not of the presence, but of the absence.

And so far we keep this ... this is the game my friends, of ignorance. And what you are looking for, that word “Peace” indicates knowledge. Not ignorance. And the world is trying to figure out in the world of ignorance what knowledge means. Impossible. I say, impossible. Impossible.

Never figure it out. That’s why the world doesn’t know what peace is. Because we’re playing a game of ignorance with ourselves, and wars that we hate are a result not of knowledge, but of ignorance. So, which world do you

want to live in? Which world do you want to live in? The world of presence or the world of absence?

When you live in the world of absence, you have to have beliefs. Believe it’s there, believe that’s there, believe this there, believe this there, believe this there. Believe that Gods live just slightly above the clouds.

I’m a pilot. When I travel around the world, I fly myself. So you’re climbing above the clouds going, “Hmm! Anybody there? Anybody there?” There’s nothing there. Clouds, more clouds, more clouds, more clouds, more clouds, more clouds, more clouds.

We live in the world of present, in the world of knowledge ... Where? Where? Where? Then the answer is here, here, here, here.

- Prem Rawat

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- Prem Rawat

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# TAMIL HERITAGE

By **Thuraiyuraan**

## What is Heritage?

The history, tradition, practices etc of Countries, Society or Company that exists from the past and continues to be important, is defined as heritage.

## Tamil heritage

Tamils have a very ancient and rich heritage to be proud of and to celebrate in the present context. Due to various reasons, Tamils are now living in nook and corners of the world. The mass exodus of Sri Lankan Tamils started after the 1983 pogrom. Before that wealthy people sent their children for higher studies mostly to the UK. Some bright students got scholarships to study in the UK, USA and Canada and most of them returned to Sri Lanka on completion of their studies. Some lecturers in the universities were also offered scholarships to further their studies in their own fields.

After the commencement of the Civil War in Sri Lanka, many migrated to South India, Malaysia, European countries, UK, Canada and the USA.

Most of these Tamils living in foreign lands have been maintaining their culture and traditions along with their language Tamil. Now their children are all grown up and have started to live with many other immigrant communities and with the mainstream population. Hence the younger generation of Tamils is facing an uphill task of maintaining their heritage. Some have already lost their heritage due to the folly of their parents and have started to follow the footsteps of the mainstream community. Hence it is the fundamental duty of the Immigrant Tamils to educate and inculcate our rich and ancient traditions and culture to the first generation Tamils living in foreign lands.

Back home we were living with our heritage and hence the necessity to stress its importance to our children was not warranted. But the situation our children are facing in foreign lands is entirely different. They must be well informed of our rich and ancient heritage of our ancestors, who gave us these, over a period of nearly 50,000 years as given below:

Tamil language- It is the duty of every Tamil parent to stress the importance of Tamil as our first language (mother tongue). The entire culture and traditions are entwined with our language. Language and culture are two sides of a coin. Here I am giving a few important facts about our ancient and rich language, Tamil.

1. Tamil is the oldest living language in the world. It is thought to

have been born around 5000 BC. Our literature collection is very vast.

2. Tamil was declared a classical language by UNESCO in 2004, based on criteria requirements such as antiquity, rich and varied ancient text and original literacy tradition.

3. The word Tamil has several meanings. Apart from being the name of the language Tamil also means things like beauty, sweet and natural.

4. Tamil is the only language that is also personified as God. Located at Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu is a temple for Tamil Thai (mother) which is a God that is considered as a personification of the Tamil language as a mother..

5. Tamil is actually pronounced as T a m i z h and not t a m i l. It has a special letter zha ( ழ ) maybe not found in any other language.

6. Tamil is an official language of Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tamil Nadu and

you are the owner of Tamil, a rich and ancient language.

Every Tamil should be aware of the Tamil sangams held in South India (Tamil Nadu) since 10527 BC. Short details are as follows;

First Tamil sangam - 10527 BC. Founded by Pandian King Kaicina Valuthi at South Madhurai. 4449 poets participated- lasted for 4440 years. Literary works created are Muthunagai, Muthukuru and Kalariyavilai - Everything went under the sea during a deluge.

BC 6000 to 3000 - Second Tamil sangam founded by King Venkateswari Cheliyan at Kapadapuram- 3700 poets participated. Lasted for 3700 years. Grammatical treatises such as Agasthiyam and Tholkappiyam were made. Only Tholkappiyam survived another deluge.

BC 1915 - Third Tamil sangam held

fathers. An excellent example is the temple built by king Raja Raja Cholan who lived 1000 years back in Tamil Nadu, India. The building techniques followed by the architects and builders then are unknown to the present Society. Likewise, we have thousands of temples in India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia and many Asian countries which are considered as magnificent works of artistic excellence.

Other than this we have a rich Heritage of Fine Arts called Bharatha Natyam and Carnatic music which are standing monuments of our ancestors, which make us proud. Some of our younger generations are learning this art form with much interest, which is an encouraging sign.

January of every year has been declared as Tamil Heritage Month by the government of Canada since 2016. We Tamils have to be thankful to the Cana-



Pondicherry. There are about 75 million Tamil speakers all over the world. (Ref: Encyclopedia Britannica)

The children born in foreign countries are not fully informed of the rich and antiquity of our language and think that it serves no purpose in learning it and hence not interested in learning it. In Canada under the Heritage Language Program, Tamil is taught in schools as an after school program along with so many other languages. The teachers are paid by the provincial government. But it is a pity that many of our children are not making use of the opportunity given to them to learn Tamil. Some of them are learning French, Spanish and Chinese with a view to make money and get better employment opportunities. Partly the parents are to be blamed. You are identified as a community because of your language or your country of birth. Hence you must be proud to say that

at Thirupparamkunram - Founded by Mudathirumaran. 449 poets participated- lasted for 1850 years. Many literary books were lost but we are lucky to get the following works:

Eddithokai (8 works), Paththupaddu (10 anthology of poems), 18 literary works, Silappathikaram and Manimekalai and some small epics.

During and after 1st AD, we have many Tamil literary works created by various writers, poets and religious dignitaries like Nayanmars, Alvars and Siththars (Mystics) up to the present day. These are available on websites, so that anyone interested could read them.

Over and above this we have many granite temples with Architectural excellence which baffles the modern architects. King's palaces and beautiful Monuments built by ancient kings are bearing testimony to the artistic skills and techniques used by our fore-

dian government for this magnanimous gesture. During the month of January many festivals and events celebrating Tamil culture and language are held in most of the important cities, where Tamils are living abundantly. In these events the younger generation are eagerly participating, which is an encouraging sign. Similarly, it would be better if other countries where Tamils are living in large numbers to follow suit and declare Tamil Heritage Month. I would like to encourage Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu to follow the footsteps of Canada. This monumental action will help the future generation to maintain their culture and language, wherever they are living. If you forget your own language, you will lose your identity and in course of time you will lose your roots as well. Hence it is the prime duty of every Tamil to safeguard their language and their country of birth. Let us all live as proud Tamils.



## Special Feature

By D.B.S. Jeyaraj

Cinematic history was made on 9 February at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles where the 92nd awards ceremony of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) was held. For the first time in its 'nonagenarian' lifetime, the Academy award known as Oscar was presented to a non-English film in the prestigious Best Picture category.

The recipient of this singular honour was the The Korean film 'Gisaeng-chung' known to the world at large in English as 'Parasite'. In addition to the Best Picture award, 'Parasite' also won Oscars in the Best Director, Best Original Screenplay and Best International Feature Film categories. "Parasite" was directed by South Korean Film maker Bong Joon -ho who also co-authored the film's screenplay.

The Oscar for the Best Picture has been in existence from the time the



Scene from the movie "Parasite"

# Korean Film Maker Bong Joon-Ho's "Parasite" Makes Oscar History

academy awards event commenced in 1929. Initially it was known as the Best Outstanding Production. The change to Best Picture came in 1962. Although the nominations for Best Picture have been preponderantly from English language films, there have been 11 non-English language film nominations so far. Among such films nominated were 'Grand Illusion,' 'Z,' 'Cries and Whispers,' 'Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon,' 'Babel' and 'Roma'. They were directed by Jean Renoir, Costa-Gavras, Ingmar Bergman, Ang Lee, Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu and Alfonso Cuaron respectively.

However none of these films made by eminent directors ever won the Best Film award until 'Parasite' came along. By winning the award for 2019, the South Korean film 'Parasite' and its director Bong Joon-ho have finally shattered the formidable glass ceiling.

### A Personal Triumph

The success of 'Parasite' at the Oscars was a personal triumph for South Korean film maker Bong Joon-ho. The film was nominated in six 'Best' categories at this year's Oscar awards. They were for Film Editing, Production Design, Original Screenplay, Director, International Feature and Picture. The film which won in four out of six nominated categories lost in only the categories of Editing and Production design.

Bong Joon-ho who won the Best Director award also won the Best Original Screenplay award along with Han Jin-won. Bong who wrote the story of 'Parasite' co-authored the screenplay with Han Jin-won. With 'Parasite,' of which he was co-producer, winning Best International Feature film and Best Film awards, Bong Joon-ho's tally

was initially hailed as four Oscars on one night. Only the legendary Walt Disney had achieved this in 1953. However it was clarified later that the tally was only three.

According to new Oscar award rules the International Feature film award though accepted by the director was credited to the country and not to an individual. Incidentally the name of the award category was changed from Best Foreign Film to Best International Feature film only from this year.

Winning three Oscar statuettes on one night places Bong Joon-ho in the same league with nine other illustrious film makers. The nine others who have won three Oscars for one film in one night and their films are James L. Brooks ('Terms of Endearment'), James Cameron ('Titanic'), the Coen brothers ('No Country for Old Men'), Francis Ford Coppola ('The Godfather Part II'), Alejandro González Iñárritu ('Birdman'), Peter Jackson and Fran Walsh ('The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King') and Billy Wilder ('The Apartment').

### Bong Joon-ho's Beginnings

Bong Joon-ho was born in 1969 as the youngest of four children in South Korea's Daegu city. His father was a professor and mother a housewife. The family later re-located to South Korea's capital city – Seoul. Bong graduated from Yonsei university with a degree in Sociology. While an undergraduate he had completed two years of mandatory service in the Army as required by Korean law. Thereafter he joined the Korean academy of film arts and completed a two-year course in film making.

Bong Joon-ho then spent five years in films working for other directors

in different capacities such as actor, writer, cinematographer and assistant director. He also made several short films. His first directorial venture in feature films was in 2000 when he made 'Barking Dogs Seldom Bite'. Bong followed this up by directing more films like 'Memories of Murder,' 'The Host,' 'Mother,' 'Snowpiercer,' 'Okja' and now 'Parasite'. The director mainly films stories written by him personally and very often writes or collaborates in scripting the screenplay. Interestingly enough the films 'Snowpiercer' and 'Okja' are classified as English language films.

### Stiff Competition

Bong Joon-Ho had stiff competition in being crowned with the Best Director laurel. Those in the running with him were Martin Scorsese ('The Irishman'), Quentin Tarantino ('Once Upon a Time in Hollywood'), Sam Mendes ('1917') and Todd Phillips ('Joker'). Bong Joon-ho seemed genuinely surprised to win the directorial award. His acceptance speech sounded very sincere and touched the gathering at the venue as well as millions of viewers on TV.

"After winning Best International Feature, I thought I was done for the day and was ready to relax. Thank you so much. When I was young and studying cinema, there was a saying that I carved deep into my heart, which is that, 'The most personal is the most creative.' That quote is from our great Martin Scorsese," said Bong Joon-ho, pointing to Martin Scorsese in the audience. "When I was in school, I studied Martin Scorsese's films. Just to be nominated was a huge honour. I never thought I would win." An emotional Martin Scorsese stood up amidst deafening applause and acknowledged

Bong.

The Korean director then went on to say: "When people in the US were not familiar with my films, Quentin always put my films on his list. He's here, thank you so much. Quentin, I love you." Quentin Tarantino smiled and waved. Bong continued by saying: "And Todd (Phillips) and Sam (Mendes), great directors that I admire. If the Academy allows, I would like to get a Texas chainsaw, split the award into five and share it with all of you. Thank you. I will drink until next morning, thank you."

### Multi-award Winning Commercial Success

Apart from the Oscar bonanza, 'Parasite' has struck gold by winning many other international accolades too. It won the Palme d'Or at the prestigious Cannes Film festival in 2019 with the Jury voting unanimously. 'Parasite' also received three nominations for the Golden Globe awards and became the first Korean film to win in the Best Foreign Film category. The film also got the Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture. 'Parasite' received four nominations at the 73rd British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) and won two awards for Best Foreign Language Film and Best Original Screenplay.

While being critically acclaimed, the film was also a worldwide commercial success. The 132-minute-long film premiered at the Cannes festival on 21 May 2019. It was released nine days later in Korea on 30 May 2019. The film made on a budget of \$ 11 million had as of 9 February grossed \$ 175.9 million worldwide. Of this the box office earnings in South Korea was \$ 72 million while the USA and Canada combined



earnings topped \$ 36 million. With the Oscar win the film is going to be re-released in thousands of cinemas from this weekend. This obviously would result in gaining more revenue.

#### What Makes 'Parasite' Tick?

What is it that makes 'Parasite' tick? The film starring popular Korean artistes Song Kang-ho, Lee Sun-kyun, Cho Yeo-jeong, Choi Woo-shik and Park So-dam is described as a dark comedy thriller about class contradictions in contemporary urban South Korea. Not wishing to be a spoiler, I will not delve into too much of detail about the story and stick only to a vague outline.

The film is basically about two sets of families. One very rich and the other poor. There is also a third very poor family. The rich family resides in a luxurious mansion while the poor family lives in a squalid basement. The third is in a secret sub-basement.

The family striving for upward mobility gets a chance to go up in the world when an employment opportunity in the form of tutor to the daughter in the rich family household offers itself to the son in the poor family. He grasps it with the aid of fraudulent university qualifications. Thereafter the family slowly infiltrates the upper class mansion through deceit and false pretences. All four members of the poor family are now ensconced in the rich household serving the elitist family in different capacities. In the process they displace another poorer family eking out a living in the same way as domestic aides.

At one stage the rich family is away on vacation and the poor family enjoying full freedom act as if they are lords of the manor. The rich family returns earlier than expected and the poor family is brought down to earth. Realisation dawns that the status quo will not change. The earlier hilarious easy-going sequences of the film give way to serious, dark scenes inclusive of violence. Ultimately the son who aspired to ascend "upstairs" with his family from their original abode returns home and descends "downstairs" to the basement.

#### Intriguing Title

The title of the film is most intriguing. Director Bong Joon-ho in a media interview speaks about the choice of 'Parasite' as the film's title. Here is the relevant excerpt: "It was considered almost a little risky and dangerous. Particularly the marketing team was pretty hesitant because, in Korea, the word 'parasite' has a very realistic and negative connotation." Joon-ho went on to explain that the title could be perceived in a couple of different ways, as it has a metaphorical double-meaning that could refer to either of the two central families in the South Korean dark-comedy thriller.

"Because the story is about the poor family infiltrating and creeping into the rich house, it seems very obvious that



**Bong Joon Ho, Best Picture, Best Directing, Best International Feature Film, Best Original Screenplay for "Parasite"**  
Pic via: Facebook/TheAcademy



**Walt Disney**



**Martin Scorsese**

'Parasite' refers to the poor family, and I think that's why the marketing team was a little hesitant," he explained. "But if you look at it the other way, you can say that the rich family, they're also parasites in terms of labour. They can't even wash dishes, they can't drive themselves, so they leech off the poor family's labour. So both are parasites."

The film relates mainly to social inequality and the class divide where the under privileged, marginalised sections of society can only dream of a better life through upward mobility. Bong Joon-ho brings this stark reality to life through his film. The contrast between the two classes – the haves and the have-nots – is illustrated powerfully by contrasting the "heavenly" mansion and the "hellish" basement. Bong also uses stairs and staircases as a vivid metaphor in many scenes. They indicate ascension and descension between



**The mansion in 'Parasite'**



**Clip from "Parasite"**

the bottom layer "downstairs" and top level "upstairs".

#### Reflecting Contemporary South Korean Society

An important aspect about the internationally-praised 'Parasite' is that the film has been a tremendous commercial success in its home and native land of South Korea too. Several reviewers, critics and commentators have attributed this success to the fact that 'Parasite' reflects contemporary South Korean society effectively. Bong through his black humour narrative has spotlighted both the desperate ambition of the "lower" classes and the shallow superficiality of the "upper" classes.

South Korea boasts of being the fourth largest economy in Asia and the 11th biggest economy in the world. However, there is enormous inequality in incomes. There is immense class conflict among the privileged, less privileged, underprivileged and marginalised sections of society. Sociologists describe the prevalent mood of Korean society as "a feeling of unresolved resentment against injustices suffered, a sense of helplessness because of the overwhelming odds".

It is against this backdrop that Bong Joon-ho's 'Parasite' appeals to Koreans. They see the reality of life reflected in the film through the prism of dark humour. This is the main reason for the success enjoyed by 'Parasite' in Korea and its global reception.

South Korea has in recent times undergone a renaissance in film making. Over 200 films are produced annually. The Busan International Film Festival has become Asia's most important film festival. Moreover Korean films have begun to exert great influence over film makers in Asia. For instance many films made in India are adapted or inspired by Korean films.

In that context the Oscar harvest of 'Parasite' will certainly provide a boost to Korean cinema and take it to greater heights. It would also infuse confidence and hope into many filmmakers of non-English language films that their creations too have a chance of winning a Best Picture Oscar in the future.

(via [dbsjeyaraj.com](http://dbsjeyaraj.com) ~ DBS Jeyaraj can be reached at [dbsjeyaraj@yahoo.com](mailto:dbsjeyaraj@yahoo.com) ~ This article first appeared in "Daily FT" ~ft.lk)



# Special Feature

# Samyukta Awards 2020 - a spectacular Music/Entertainment Event

By Siva Sivaprasam

The recently held Samyukta Wedding Show and Awards Night 2020 drew large crowds at the Cinnamon Banquet & Convention Centre in Scarborough.

The title Sponsor for the event was Altona Homes and the shows were compered by Priyanka, the well-known South Indian TV host.

The event was hosted by Kavikan Creation with Weddingman as the Official Partner. Collaborating Partners were Aalaya Textiles, Debonair Designs and Athma Boutique.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the Event

- Pictures Courtesy - Kavikan Creation - 416 268 2828)





# Samyukta Awards 2020



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# KOALAS ARE THE MAJOR VICTIMS OF BUSHFIRE

(Their chances of survival at risk)

*C. Kamalaharan*

What a gruesome sight  
To view the pathetic plight  
Of the Koalas trapped in bushfire  
That served as their funeral pyre

How timid innocent and harmless are they  
Leading a sedentary life throughout the day  
Tucked into the forks of the eucalypt trees  
They are soothed by the gentle breeze

For hours they remain there  
Without moving elsewhere  
It's their preferred permanent base  
Unwilling to move to another place

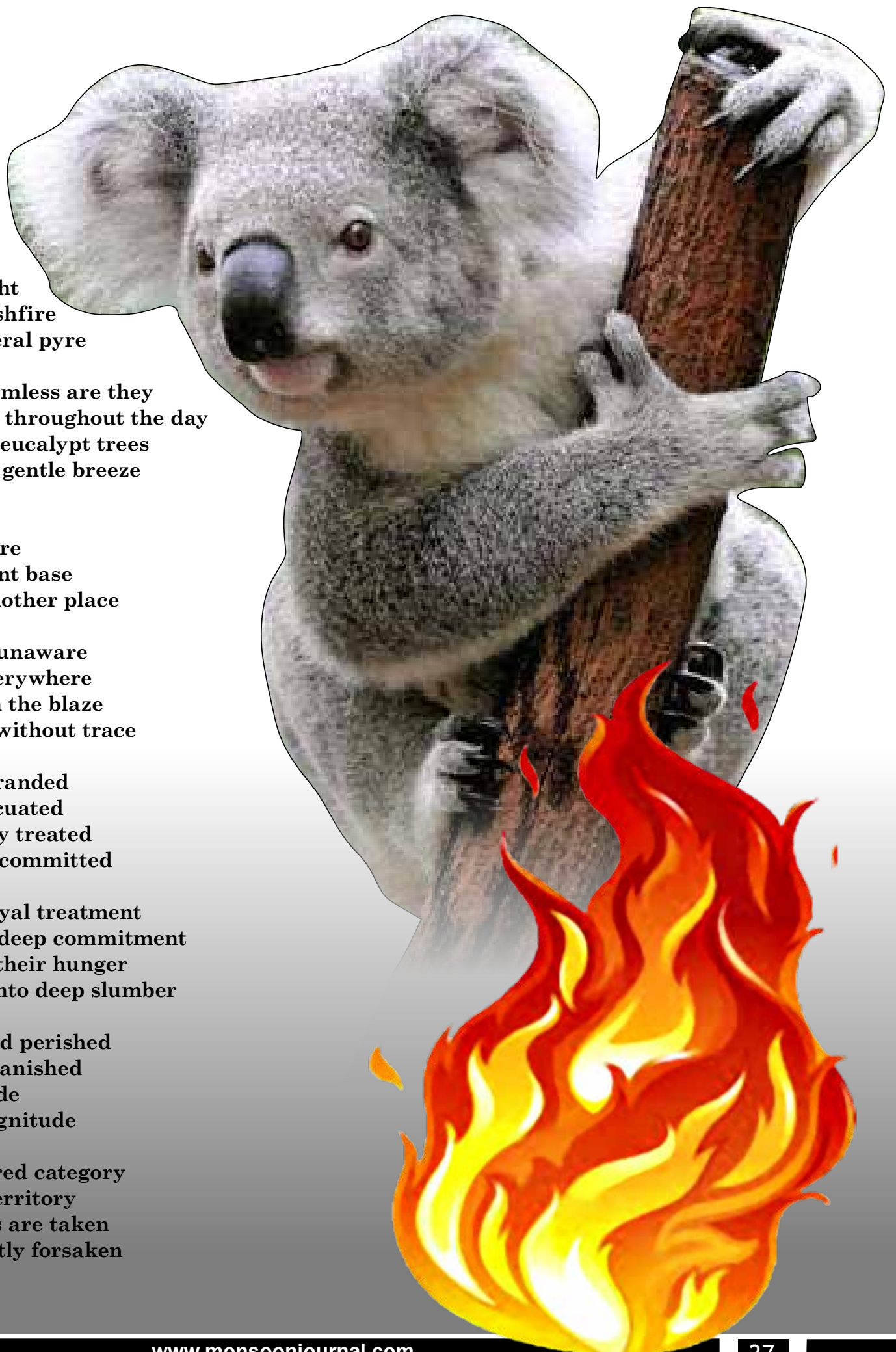
On that fatal day they were unaware  
Of the fire spreading everywhere  
In split seconds they were in the blaze  
And vanished from site without trace

Fortunate were those left stranded  
As they were timely evacuated  
Tenderly cared and promptly treated  
By pet lovers who were committed

They were provided right royal treatment  
By the 'paediatricians' deep commitment  
Bottle-fed in cots to satisfy their hunger  
And rocked in cradles into deep slumber

More than half their clan had perished  
And many others had vanished  
The remaining live in solitude  
Facing problems in magnitude

Koalas now under endangered category  
Within the fire raged territory  
Unless immediate measures are taken  
They will be permanently forsaken







# Saint Patrick's Day

By: Raymond Rajabalan

Saint Patrick's Day, is the feast day which annually celebrates Saint Patrick (386-493), the patron saint of Ireland, on March 17. It is the national holiday in the Republic of Ireland; the overseas territory of Motserrat (a Caribbean island) and the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

## Celebration overview

Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated worldwide by Irish people and increasingly by many of non-Irish descent. Celebrations are generally themed around all things green and Irish; both Christians and non-Christians celebrate the secular version of the holiday by wearing green, eating Irish food, imbibing Irish drink, and attending parades.

The St. Patrick's Day parade was first held in New York City on 17 March 1766 when Irish soldiers marched through the city. Ireland's cities all hold their own parades and festivals. Other large parades include those held in a number of cities in America. In Canada a large and colorful parade is held annually in Toronto and Montreal. Large parades also take place throughout Europe the Americas, Australia and Asia.

As well as being a celebration of Irish culture, Saint Patrick's Day is a Christian festival celebrated in the Catholic Church, the Church of Ireland (among other churches in the Anglican Communion) and some other denominations.

## History

The person who was to become St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was born in Wales about AD 385. His given name was Maewyn and he almost didn't get the job of Bishop of Ireland because he lacked the required scholarship.

At the age of 16, Patrick, who was still a pagan, was sold into slavery by a group of Irish marauders who raided his village. During his captivity, he became closer to God. He escaped from slavery after six years and went to Gaul where he studied in the monastery under St. Germain, bishop of Auxerre for 12 years. During his training he became aware that his calling was to convert the pagans to Christianity.

His wishes were to return to Ireland and to convert the native pagans to Christianity. His superiors instead appointed St. Palladius. But two years later, Palladius was transferred to Scotland. Patrick, having adopted that Christian name earlier, was then appointed as second bishop to Ireland.

Patrick was quite successful at win-



ning converts, a fact that upset the Celtic Druids. Patrick was arrested several times but always escaped. He traveled throughout Ireland, establishing monasteries across the country. He also set up schools and churches that would aid him in his conversion of the Irish to Christianity. His mission in Ireland lasted 30 years. After that time, Patrick retired to County Down. He died on March 17 in AD 461. The day has been commemorated as St. Patrick's Day ever since.

Much Irish folklore surrounds St. Patrick's Day. Not much of it is substantiated some of this lore includes the belief that Patrick raised people from the dead. He also is said to have given a sermon from a hilltop that drove all the snakes from Ireland. Of course, no snakes were ever native to Ireland, and some people think this is a metaphor for the conversion of the pagans. Though originally a Catholic holy day, St. Patrick's Day has evolved into more of a secular holiday.

One traditional icon of the day is the shamrock. This stems from a more bona fide Irish tale that tells how Patrick used the three-leafed shamrock to explain the Trinity. He used it in his sermons to represent how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit could all

exist as separate elements of the same entity. His followers adopted the custom of wearing a shamrock on his feast day.

## Shamrock ("three-leaf clover")

The St. Patrick's Day custom came to America in 1737: That year St. Patrick's Day was publicly celebrated in Boston. Today, people celebrate the day with parades, wearing of the green, and drinking beer. One reason St. Patrick's Day might have become so popular is that it takes place just a few days before the first day of spring.

It was only in the mid-1990s that the Irish government began a campaign to use Saint Patrick's Day to showcase Ireland and its culture.

The first Saint Patrick's Festival was held on March 17, 1996. In 1997, it became a three-day event, and by 2000 was a four-day event. By 2006, the festival was five days long.

Many Irish people still wear a bunch of shamrock on their lapels or caps on this day or green, white, and orange badges (after the colors of the Irish flag).

And although Saint Patrick's Day has the colour green as their theme, one little known fact is that it was once blue that was the colour of this day.

The biggest celebrations on the is-



land of Ireland outside Dublin are in Downpatrick, Northern Ireland, where Saint Patrick was buried following his death on March 17, 493. The day is celebrated by the Church of Ireland as a Christian festival.

Saint Patrick's Day parades in Ireland date from the late 19th century, originating in the growing sense of Irish nationalism (The first parade did not begin in Ireland but in the United States)

## In Canada

The longest-running Saint Patrick's Day parade in Canada occurs each year in Montreal. The parades have been held in continuity since 1824; however, St. Patrick's Day itself has been celebrated in Montreal as far back as 1759 by the Irish soldiers of the Montreal Garrison, following the British conquest of New France.

St. Patrick's Day parade is also held in various other parts of Canada including Toronto, Halifax Vancouver and St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.

St Patrick's Day is a public holiday in the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador on the nearest Monday to March 17 each year. It remembers St Patrick, a missionary who converted many of Ireland's inhabitants to Christianity in the 5th century. His feast day also celebrates Irish culture.





Agshayaa is a huge hockey-enthusiast. She dedicates much of her free time to the sport and is an excellent player. Pictured above is Agshayaa in front of a Wayne Gretzky statue in Bradford, Ontario.

# Pet Peeves

This can make you miss out on important information.

There are so many different types of pet peeves. The first one is when people scratch the chalkboard with their fingernails. Some people think it is “satisfying”, but instead, it is irritating for me. Another pet peeve is when someone tries to talk while chewing their food at the same time, which is disgusting. Stomping or tapping your foot on the floor to get someone’s attention can also be annoying. You attract everyone else’s attention, too. One big pet peeve for me, which became popular recently, is the water

bottle flip. It is when you try to flip a water bottle and make it land upright on a flat surface.

Pet peeves are really bad because they bother us so much. They can distract us, annoying us, make us lose our train of thought, or even make us lose our temper sometimes. Some of the pet peeves I mentioned are being tapped on the shoulder multiple times, someone knocking on your door while you try to study, talking with food in your mouth, and the water-bottle flip. Are any of these your pet peeves, too? What pet peeves do you have?

**By: Agshayaa Suresh**

Almost everyone in the whole world has pet peeves. Pet peeves are really annoying, and it could get really distracting. A pet peeve is something which a person finds particularly annoying, such as tapping on the table continuously. I faced a lot of pet peeves before. They are really annoying to me. Pet peeves are really bad for you because they can bother you a lot. There are so many different types of pet peeves that people have. Pet peeves are irritating, and I wish it could stop. As I get older, old pet peeves do not bother me as much, and I develop new pet peeves.

I have a lot of pet peeves that really annoy me. My first pet peeve is when someone is constantly humming, but when I tell them to stop, they don’t listen. This becomes very distracting. My second pet peeve is when someone

constantly taps on my shoulder to get my attention. My third pet peeve is when someone is knocking on the door constantly when I am working and concentrating on a project. This usually disrupts my train of thought or momentum.

Pet peeves are bad for you because they can bother you so much that it becomes a nuisance. Pet peeves do not let you focus very well, like when you are working really well on your project, and then a pet peeve causes you to forget something with the disruption. It can get irritating. Pet peeves can also interrupt interesting conversations you are having. It can be rude, but does not necessarily reflect that the person that was bugging you does not have manners. Pet peeves might not let you pay attention to the teacher in class when they are giving instructions.



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# LIGHT AND DARKNESS NEEDS TO SURVIVE AND FLOURISH

## World Sleep Day Recognizes the Importance of Better Sleep Health

By: *Uthayan Thurairajah*

The world sleep day brings us the slogan, 'When sleep is sound, health and happiness abound' - a need for modern civilization when a lot of people are living in the curse of urbanization and industrialization. World association of sleep medicine (WASM) has been actively working for a long time to secure a sound sleep for a healthy world nation. People recognize sleep as a more significant factor in their overall health and well-being than family, work, and social life. A new study from Philips in aid of World Sleep Day has captured a fascinating snapshot of how people see sleep. Thus, study conducted nearly 8,000 people across ten (10) countries. About Eighty-seven (87) percent of the people surveyed stating sleep is essential to them. Fifty-seven (57) percent of respondents admitted that they had not done anything to try to improve it. Meanwhile, only 12 percent consistently sleep through the night, with 18 percent of respondents waking up early.



### WORLD SLEEP DAY

World Sleep Day sees the importance of good night sleep for every human being. It is time to review our nighttime routines and think about adjusting. It is the annual practice of how sleep not only benefits but impacts our lives. The World Sleep Day Committee is committed to educating the public on ways of lessening the burdens of sleep problems through the prevention and management of sleep disorders. Sleep is some-



thing all humans require but often gets shortchanged by our busy lives. Studies have shown how crucial proper night's sleep is to determine health and living a balanced lifestyle. The National Sleep Foundation advises adults to get an average of 7-9 hours of sleep per night. This number increases the younger you are. It is predicted that 80% of people utilize the weekends to catch up on



sleep. A consistent sleep plan benefits the quantity and quality of sleep by adjusting the circadian rhythms. You allow your body to restore fully for the day ahead with a proper rest and wake cycle. World Sleep Day was founded in 2008 and is celebrated annually on the Friday before the northern hemisphere vernal equinox. This year's date will be Friday, March 13, 2020.

### SLEEP HEALTH

World Sleep Day is a globally accepted awareness event drawing health professionals, patients, and researchers together to experience sleep and its significant impact on our health. World Sleep Day 2020 will incorporate the



motto, 'Better Sleep, Better Life, Better Planet.' It is highlighting sleep is a pillar of health, allowing for better decision making and cognitive understanding. When sleep fails, health declines, decreasing the quality of life. Sound sleep is a treasured function. World Sleep Society has compiled ten tips for healthier sleep.

### MELATONIN

Melatonin is a nighttime hormone that is formed by the pineal gland in the brain. Melatonin levels vary in 24-hour cycles and are controlled by our body clock. The production is reduced by being in bright light, and the levels increase at night. It is also called 'the hormone of darkness.' Some plants have small amounts of melatonin as well. These include plants we use as food. Melatonin travels to all parts of the body once it gets into the blood. Melatonin appears to be important in helping to manage the internal body clock. Melatonin has antioxidant and free radical scavenging properties, and



some say it has anti-cancer and anti-aging effects. The blood melatonin level increases about 2 hours before sleep. It helps to set the conditions, and the core body temperature goes down slightly at this time.

Melatonin is utilized to treat insomnia. The first way is as a medicine to make you feel sleepy. The second is to reset the internal body clock to a different time of days to treat jet lag or delayed or advanced sleep syndrome. In these situations, melatonin therapy is



often combined with Bright Light Therapy at night. Light is applied in the morning in the case of jet lag or delayed sleep phase syndrome or the evening in the case of advanced sleep phase syndrome. Recently a synthetic form of melatonin has also been developed to treat depression.

### SLEEP EXPERTS

Dr. Liborio Parrino, Chair of the World Sleep Day Committee, expresses, "If we want to offer to the planet's survival, a wise action is to increase the period of our sleep time. Increased sleep periods mean less consumption of food, fuel, electricity, and oxygen (breathing is reduced during sleep). Quality of sleep reduces the risk of work-related and vehicle accidents, increases the secretion of melatonin, and protects the circadian rhythm, which prevents early aging in humans. "Extending our sleep period also improves our body and mental acts throughout the day and enhances our dreaming, as REM stages are mostly concentrated in the final portion of sleep, which is often curtailed by the urging rules of modern life."

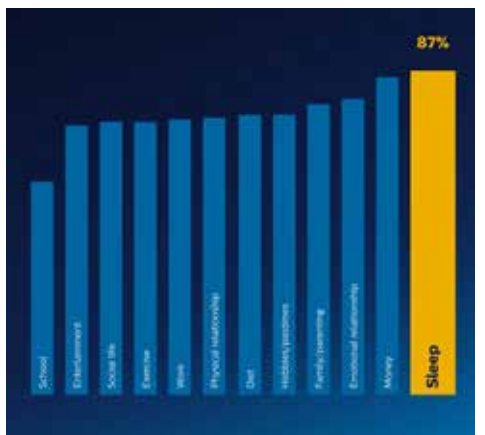
Phyllis C. Zee, MD, Ph.D., Professor of Neurology and Director of the Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine at Northwestern University, goes on to recommend, "prioritizing sleep with nutrition and exercise, having regular sleep and wake timing and duration is important. If suffering from a chronic sleep disturbance, discuss it with your doctor." Over the past decade, the ad-

vances in our understanding of neural mechanisms, linking the significant relationship between cognitive health and sleep. Rising evidence indicates that sleep is an active process in which recently-encoded memories are consolidated and transferred for long-term storage. Dr. Zee adds, "Sleep enhances the ability to remove waste products from the brain—which can harm brain function."

Professor Dr. Fang Han, MD, The Sleep Center, Peking University in Beijing, China, states, "Sleep is essential for one's cognitive well-being. Sleep can rebuild your brain function in many aspects, such as learning, memory, and mood." Sleep disorders may cause impairment of a person's oxygen supply, disturb your immunological system, or damage your brain structure. Dr. Han states, "World Sleep Day is an opportunity to be aware, sleep regularly, sleep enough, and treat sleep disorders."

### 10 COMMANDMENTS

Short sleep habits can cause poor-quality sleep-in adults. It can also be caused by clinical sleep problems. To improve overall wellness and sleep, World Sleep Society has formulated the 10 Commandments of Sleep Hygiene for Adults:



1. Set a routine work and bedtime.
2. Do not surpass 45 minutes of daytime sleep if you do.
3. Do not smoke and avoid excessive alcohol 4 hours before bedtime.
4. Avoid caffeine 6 hours before bedtime, including coffee, tea, sodas, and chocolate.
5. A light snack before bed is acceptable and avoid heavy, spicy, or sugary foods 4 hours before bedtime.
6. Exercise regularly but avoid right before bed.
7. Use an inviting and comfortable bed.
8. Use a comfortable sleep temperature and ventilation.

- continued on page 41

**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

# Invest like a business owner

## -Take the emotion out of Investing

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

Here's what an emotional investor does: Checks the market constantly, worries about every uptick and downturn, rapidly realigns his or her portfolio at the first sign of a stock or market downturn, tends to jump into and out of the market chasing hot stocks and dumping down stocks. And here's one other thing an emotional investor does: Severely limits his or her chances for long-term financial success.

Rational investors know that the best approach is to take the emotion out of investing. Many of them are business-owners and replace emotional investing with a business-owner approach. They have found success incorporating these business-owner principles into their investment plans.

**Clear investment goals** Rational investors set goals and have the disci-

work with a qualified financial advisor to determine how much you will need to save to achieve your goals.

**Know when to delegate** Successful business-owners know they can't do everything

themselves so they hire capable people with the talent and ability to enhance their business. Similarly, rational investors delegate their investment decisions to professionals who have the talent and ability to help them achieve and sustain their financial goals. The best way to achieve your financial goals is having access to sound financial advice grounded in a comprehensive financial plan. Advisors perform tasks vital in the financial lives of their clients including improved financial literacy, developing a culture of savings and investments, developing and executing



David Joseph, M.A., CFP®, CLU, RRC.

Financial Consultant

[david.joseph@investorsgroup.com](mailto:david.joseph@investorsgroup.com)

Phone: (905)-895-6718

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Investors are increasingly looking for options to minimize risk within their equity portfolios without necessarily sacrificing returns. One option for investors is to consider investing in lower volatility equities. When market volatility occurs, recovering from a decline in a portfolio value takes time. The larger the decline, the greater the market gain that must occur to break

facts not on feelings. They do not get caught up in "the investment flavour of the moment" and are careful to keep their emotions out of investment choices. All investors love the prospect of a rising stock market; however, once the trend starts downward and prices approach historical lows, many investors feel the need to be defensive and retreat to the security of cash or money market instruments. While no one likes a turbulent market, those investors who can focus on the long-term and stay invested stand to gain.

To control risk and volatility, diversification of your investments across asset classes, investment management styles and geographic regions is crucial.

**In the know** Rational business-owners keep a daily watch on investment news and consider its implications but like rational investors, they also keep their focus on long-term trends not day-to-day fluctuations.

**Seize opportunity** Rational individuals, business-owners and investors alike, trust their intelligence. They actively seek money-making opportunities – especially in a volatile market – by hedging, shorting and using other investment strategies to pick up assets at bargain prices. If an unemotional business-owner approach to investing appeals to you – and it should because it's often a better path to financial success – then talk to your professional advisor about the investment strategies that work best for you.

**Disclaimer:**

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pline to stick to them. Yes, they want to make money but they set their return objectives against clear short- and long term goals. Goals give you direction, a purpose for the way you spend your money and the way you live. Goals motivate and encourage you. They help you use your money to do the things that are important to you. The first step in financial planning is to think about what your goals are and then to

a financial plan, selecting appropriate financial vehicles and products and improving investment decision making.

**Be risk averse** Both rational business-owners and rational investors definitely want to create wealth but they also understand the need for wealth protection. That's why their portfolios are carefully crafted and well-diversified to reduce risk and provide more stable returns over the long-term.

even again. Since the market declines of 2008, many investors look to reduce risk in their investment portfolios, but realize that moving to bonds may not achieve the returns that they desire. A low volatility strategy is designed to participate in stock market growth, but limit the downside risk compared to the broad market

**Just the facts** Rational investors make investment decisions based on





# WILL I LOSE MY REAL ESTATE LICENSE IF I FILE BANKRUPTCY OR CONSUMER PROPOSAL IN ONTARIO?



No, filing a bankruptcy or consumer proposal does not mean that one can lose their real estate license. And it is according to the Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO). RECO doesn't say anything like filing a bankruptcy or consumer proposal means the license will be ceased or something. So, if someone has such questions that they might lose their license or something. Then it is just a piece of false news that someone has spread. And the main government of this thing RECO doesn't say anything like that. So, don't believe in such things.

There will be no termination of license even the person has filed bankruptcy. One can have their real estate license even when they file bankruptcy.

And nothing will happen to their licenses. Neither they will lose their job or something. And it is a government law that prohibits all the government and private companies from terminating their employees. One can continue what they were doing in their life.

## Things to know before filing bankruptcy if someone has a real estate license

If someone is going to file their bankruptcy and if that person owns a real estate license. Then they have to inform the registrar's office within five days of applying for bankruptcy or consumer proposal. And these documents are needed

- Proper reason for filing the bankruptcy with signed and dated

- Form 69: Bankruptcy assignment
- Form 79: Statement of all the possession and liabilities

- Form 65: Monthly expenditure statement

- Form 85: Discharge certificate but only if it is applicable

These are documents that will be needed in the registrar's office.

## A person can apply for real estate license after filing bankruptcy or not

As the RECO says that bankruptcy doesn't prevent anyone from losing their license or registering for a license in RECO. So, a person can apply for the real estate license even that person has filed bankruptcy or not. But the person needs to disclose that they have ap-

plied for bankruptcy. Only after proper checking one can get their license.

## Just disclose each and everything

Before registration, a person needs to disclose the proper reason for filing their bankruptcy, credit score, and a financial image. And the RECO official will take a complete check on those things. So, that they can know the person will be able to perform the job or not.

In case of you have credit or debt issues:

visit [www.gtacredit.com](http://www.gtacredit.com) or call 416 650 1100

Also please see Page 11 for contact info.

## Short Story

## Loner



**By: Kumar Punithavel**

Sundaram was pacing between the front door and the back of the parlour. The previous day when leaving after a brief visit, his friend David had promised to come by the following day morning around ten. Sundaram's wife Shanthi was sick and bedridden. As it was a Wednesday, the government caregiver Christina, had come to help his wife with her daily chore. Shanthi was so sick she needed someone to help her to sit up on the bed. As Christina came thrice a week, Sundaram was able to do the outside errands like shopping etc on those days.

He had taken retirement only a few months ago, and they did not have any children, they were a much attached couple.

As agreed, David rang the door bell exactly at ten. Sundaram who had been waiting for him like a puppy waiting for his master from work, rushed to the door. On his way slowly peeped into the room where Shanthi was resting and said, 'Shanthi, David has come, I will go for a short walk with him and come'.

In spite of the effect of morphine, she meekly responded, 'Be careful dear'. Looking at her he felt very sad. Only recently she was up and running around with full of energy, and today like a fallen tree she was lying on the bed. He felt so sad tears pooled in his eyes. Covering it, he wiped the tears with the back of his palm as he stepped out.

When they got into the parked car David asked him, "Where shall we go?" Without waiting for a reply, David suggested, "At this time of the day Scarborough Mall will not be crowded. Let's go there for a coffee", so saying he drove the car in that direction.

There was an eerie silence in the car for a few moments. David to break the silence asked, "Sundaram, do you still remember we used to throw stone at the Mango tree in Maniam uncle's compound?"

Sundaram replied, "Oh my God, can anyone ever forget the beating we had that day. Those days' elders wait for an opportunity to punch some innocent youngster to show off. Even to this day I have the scar on my shoulder".

Both collected their coffees and sat on a table in the corner facing each other. Both did not know where to start the conversation, pretending focussed on stirring the coffee with bent head stared at their cups

David was first to break the ice again, and started the conversation. "Hey dude how is Shanthi doing today?" Not knowing what to say Sundaram kept quiet looking at his friends face.

Unable to stand the stare David observed, "Sundaram, guess in Canada I have known you and Shanthi the longest. You know that I like and respect you both very much. That is why I wanted to know how Shanthi is doing".

With that blank stare in his face Sundaram replied, "David if I am to reply briefly, we both are

acting a play!".

With a confused look David said, "I don't get it, can you please explain more clearly". Sundaram with the same empty look said, "Dude, she pretends as if everything is fine with her and would be back to normal life, because she thinks if I know the truth I will be sad and worried. But she knows she will never be well again. I too pretend as if I believe her condition is temporary, and she would be normal soon, so that she will not be upset. This kind of denial between us makes me sad and mad". While saying so Sundaram's eyes began to tear. He wiped his eyes with the paper napkin on the table.

"I can understand your predicament, and really empathise with you both. The cross you are carrying is a very heavy one. May the almighty give you the strength to go through this mess" said David.

"I am scared dude. No one will understand my dilemma. Only with you I can share my fears and anxiety, which is why I asked you to come. My worries are hardened in my heart, but my fears bother my heart. If and when she passes, my life will be a loner roaming the streets of Toronto" said Sundaram.

David felt very sorry for his friend. He had known Sundaram from childhood, and was aware when he was courting Shanthi. He was aware how sad Sundaram was when he realized he can't have a child and Shanthi refused to have a donor's sperm. Like these many memories rushed through David's mind.

David slowly recuperated himself and said, "Sundaram, I can empathize with your fears. But you must be strong. You cannot say loneliness is always painful. Like it is a fact that we are all born alone, it is also certain in a couple one will precede the other. I promise you to here will never be a day you will be alone. Shanthi will always fill your heart.

Sundaram stared at David as if stoned. Once again, his eyes turned teary. His stare was like asking 'should David who knows us both say like this. Though the coffee boutique was getting filled up, the corner where the friends were was reasonably quiet and no one noticed the two.

"Come on friend, you are complaining about loneliness, but think when Newton discovered the theory of gravity, he was alone under an apple tree. When Lord Buddha realized theological truth he was alone under a Bo tree. With so many people around you and Shanthi filling your heart how can you talk about loneliness? You have to decide how you want to continue with your life".

Sundaram was confused and sat quietly in deep thoughts for a few moments. He could see the logic of what David said. After all, one will precede the other, unless it is a major accident and both die in it. But his mind was not ready to accept the reality.

"Dude, let me tell you a story I read long ago, then you decide what you want to do. It was about an elderly gentleman, when his wife died, refusing to continue live with the children went to a senior

care home. He happily went to the two-story house to live there the rest of his life.

The superintendent of the care home informed, "Sir there is a small problem. We have a unit only in the second floor". The elder responded, "That is great, my legs needs exercise, and I could climb the stairs. Even last week the doctor suggested that I should exercise my leg muscles".

When they reached the upper floor, the superintendent told him, "Sir, sorry we have only a plywood plank bed with no mattress. But I promise you very soon I will get you a proper mattress". With a smile the elder responded, "Sleeping on a hard mattress is good for health. Don't worry, take your time".

The superintendent went on to make the next negative observation that the new building next door obstructs the lovely view from the window, which was there before the building was erected. But the elder responded saying instead of wasting the time looking outside he can now catch up on his reading. The superintendent was indeed a bit confused.

With all humility he asked the elder, "Sir, whatever unfair situations I mentioned you always saw the positive side in them. Do you never get angry in your life? If it had been another person, he would have retorted and asked me, 'will you agree a lower fee?' I know I am not fair".

The elder smiled at the superintendent and told, "Young man after knowing this is what I get, how I accept it is my right. I will not give up my right to anyone. Instead of spending the rest of my life sulking and moaning for what I missed, I want to live with contentment enjoying what I got".

Sundaram stared back at David. Yes, his situation and that elder's are very similar, except Sundaram is a little younger. David looked into his friend's eyes and said, "I have told what I have to say. You have to decide, not me. You have a choice; either continue groaning and mourning the rest of your life, or accepts what you got and be supportive to Shanthi when she needs you most".

After a few moments of silence, with a resolute tone Sundaram said, "Thank you David. I will do my best. I want to get back home and be with Shanthi as much as I can. I will release the care giver of her duty. Please do me a favour, come by my place whenever you get the time, we can have a chat. It will be a great boon to me. David simply replied, "I will my friend. Please give my regards to Shanthi". With that the friends departed.

# Why a house should be appraised?

**By: S.K. Bales,**  
Home Appraiser, Real Estate Broker

When someone wants to buy a house, the essential thing to do is appraise the value of the house. The sales agent or the mortgage providers do not appraise the house. Only the certified appraiser can do this.

One can reasonably wonder why a house should be appraised. Certainly the person who wishes to sell the house will do the minimum repairs to some extent before putting on sale. Likewise the purchaser must critically examine before purchasing it. Putting it more clearly he must make sure the house he is purchasing is worth for the money he is paying for it.

It has to be appraised to check whether the house has been redone to what percentage the external appearance, internal decoration, kitchen, bath room colour washing, doors and windows, the family room including the heating area, and the quality of the workmanship. This will be done by the appraiser.

The external appearance of a house may look great and fit for immediate occupancy. It is the appraiser's report that can give a clear picture of the true situation. Because of this it becomes essential the house has to be appraised by a certified appraiser.

A person who wants to sell or buy a house

may approach a home appraiser to assess the true market value. Before listing a house it is prudent to get an assessment of the house by a certified appraiser. Even when purchasing without a buying agent, it is important to get an assessment by a certified appraiser.

Another important matter to remember is that when the purchaser applies for loan, the bank or the loaning agency would expect an appraiser's certified report substantiating the purchase value of the building.

The appraisers report should not be biased on the listed price or selling price of the building. The loaning agency approves the loan based on the appraisers report.

I have served since 1999, for the last twenty years as real-estate sales agent. Since 2003 I have got the appraisers licence and serving as a real-estate appraiser. It would be smart and prudent to use my expertise and experience and obtain an appraisal report from me.

Based on such an appraisal report you can obtain the loan easily, and also renegotiate the price you are going to purchase from the seller. By doing so, you can avoid future complications in the purchase of the house you are purchasing. Wish you all the best in your endeavour.

**For more information, Mr. S.K. Bales can be contacted at 416-801-3219**



**SK Bales,**

CRA, DAR, Certified Appraisal Reviewer,  
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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 Mandalia 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.

# Pandan Chicken

Pandan Chicken is an authentic chicken dish that is popular in Malaysia and Indonesia. The fragrant pandan leaf lends an aroma to the chicken, whilst the marinade seals in all the spices making this a simple dish that will wow your friends.

## Ingredients:

- ✓ 500gms chicken, diced (kozhi)
- ✓ 1 inch ginger, minced (inji)
- ✓ 1 onion, diced (vengaayam)
- ✓ 2 cloves garlic, minced (ulli/poondru)
- ✓ 2 tsp oyster sauce
- ✓ 2 tsp soy sauce
- ✓ 2 tsp brown sugar
- ✓ 1 tsp sesame oil (ellu ennai)
- ✓ 2 tsp white pepper (vellai milagu thool)
- ✓ 2 tsp coriander powder (malli thool)
- ✓ 2 tsp coriander stem, chopped (koththamalli)
- ✓ Salt-to taste (uppu)
- ✓ 2 packets pandan leaves (rampe ilai)
- ✓ Oil to fry (ennai)

## Method:

Marinate the chicken in all the ingredients in part 1. Leave overnight or for a minimum of 1 hour. Wrap each diced chicken individually in the pandan leaves (there are YouTube videos to see how to do this) place a toothpick to hold the chicken pieces in place. Steam the chicken for 10 minutes and then deep fry them till golden brown. Pandan chicken is ready.

The Tamilfoodclasses YouTube account and the story highlights on the @Tamil\_food Instagram page also show you exactly how to make this authentic Indonesian/ Malaysian dish.

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



*tamilfood*  
classes

## COOKING CLASSES

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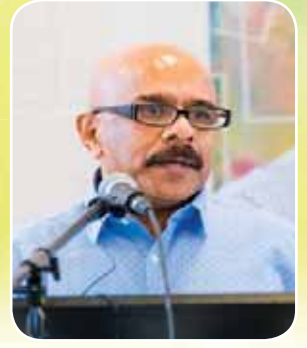
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## கலைஞர் கருணா - உயர்வுள்ளல்



கடந்த ஆண்டு மறைந்த, ஓவியரும் வரைகலைக் கலைஞருமான கருணா வின்சென்ட் அவர்களின் ஓராண்டு நினைவுகூடல் பெப்பிரவரி 23, ஞாயிற்றுக்கிழமை ஊடகர் திரு. விக்கேனஸ்வரன் அவர்களின் தலைமையில் ஸ்காப்பரோவில் நடைபெற்றது. தமிழகத்திலிருந்து வருகை தந்திருந்த ஓவியர் மருது அவர்கள் கருணா குறித்த நினைவுகளைப் பகிர்ந்து கொண்டார்.

கருணா அவர்களின் ஓவியங்கள் அடங்கிய நூல் Life in Colour என்ற பெயரில் வெளியிடப்பட்டது. இந்த வெளியீட்டின் முதல் படியை திரு. டிராட்ஸ்கி மருது வெளியிட கருணா அவர்களின் தாயார் பெற்றுக்கொண்ட காணொளி காண்பிக்கப்பட்டது.





# TAMILS INFORMATION'S 29TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION - AN OVERVIEW



Award Recipients

By: *Raymond Rajabalan*

Punctuality, Effective coordination of the agenda, Seamless flow of the scheduled events all which had become the trademarks of the Annual Celebration of the prestigious Tamils information Journal was once again clearly evident during this year's event held on February 9th at Toronto City Hall. This unique function which has continuously earned the respect of so many for its perfectness once again proved to be a great success. Having held this event for the past 29 years at the very same location, this prestigious function has effectively evolved to be a flawlessly executed event and this year's function was no exception.

This yearly event whose main aim has always been recognising and awarding those who have excelled in various fields has honoured more than 200 talented personalities from Canada as well as various parts of

the globe since the inception of this unique event 29 years ago.

The event which as usual commenced exactly at 3.00 pm was well attended and the cavernous auditorium of the city Council chamber was packed to capacity with the appreciative audience drawn from all walks of life.

While the program was held according to the usual structured plan, yet as in the past every year this year's event too has succeeded in introducing some novel ideas.

The Annual Magazine was released during session I of the program held in Tamil and chaired by **Ajanthie Mathanakaran**, a Teacher attached to Toronto District School Board while the awards were distributed during Session 2 chaired by **Neethan Shan** (Executive Director of Urban Alliance on Race Relation), with the Chief guest being Hon. **Todd Smith** MPP, Ontario Minister for Children ,Community and Social Services.

The Honourable Minister Todd

Smith was honored with 'History Maker Award' for his outstanding contribution to pass the bill in Ontario Parliament in 2014 to proclaim January as Tamil Heritage month, after which he distributed awards to eight recipients

**Shanmugalingam** (Pioneer Entrepreneur ward), **Saranya Jeyakanthan** (Youth Achievement Award), **Murugesu Packiyathan** (Literary Award), **Vadivelu Poologendran** (Entrepreneurship



Minister Todd Smith being presented with History Maker Award

- **Sinnathamby Sittampalam** (Lifetime Achievement Award), **S. K. Rajen** (Outstanding Media Award), **Saatumathy** (Music Award), **Manokanthan** (Music Award), **Thevathas**

Award) **Sasikala Narenthiran** (Cultural Enrichment Award).

Towards the end of the distribution of the awards Mr. Sittampalam gave an emotional speech on behalf of the Award Recipients.

Overall it was obvious that Thiru Thiruchelvam, the chief editor of Tamils Information journal who had recently completed 50 years of journalistic experience has once again effectively combined his many years of organising ability to stage a great event.

As usual, at the close of the two hour program the audience were invited to participate in the reception during which the eagerly awaited Annual issue of the Journal was distributed bringing the superbly planned function to a perfect finish.



Mr. Sittampalam receiving Award

IBC Broadcaster S. K. Rajen receiving Award

Saranya Jeyakanthan receiving Award



# Canadian journalist Christie Blatchford dead at 68

By: Raymond Rajabalan

Long-time newspaper columnist, author and firebrand Christie Blatchford, a hardnosed scribe known for deep-sourced scoops and biting opinion pieces, passed away last month on Feb. 12. She was 68.

Blatchford had been undergoing treatment for lung cancer at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre in Toronto.

The cancer had metastasized to bones in the spine and hip by the time it was detected late last year, according to a profile her newspaper the National Post published in November.

"We'll miss her always," her brother, Les Blatchford, said Wednesday morning. "She was a great gal."

Known as a tenacious reporter and

She was a model for knowing how to put your faith in your truths and not worry about the backlash, not worry about how people respond.

Jen Gerson, former National Post correspondent

Ghomeshi's defence lawyer, a trial that Blatchford covered extensively.

"While lawyers and judges may rail against what she writes sometimes — here's our dirty little secret, I'm going to share it with you: They all get nervous when she walks into court. We know she is there and everyone — every single one of them, every judge and every lawyer — reads her first. And they do it for one reason: Her opinion matters, her per-

1951 in Rouyn-Noranda, Que., where she was born to Kay Lytle and Ross Thomas Blatchford, a navigator and flight lieutenant during the Second World War.

She joined the **Globe and Mail** in 1972 while studying journalism at Ryerson University in Toronto, and spent the first four of those six years as a sports columnist. A natural storyteller, Blatchford was captivated by both professional and amateur sports

When the National Post was created in 1998, Blatchford was one of the first writers hired, and the following year she won a **National Newspaper Award** for her column writing.

She returned to the **Globe & Mail** in 2003 to write columns and cover the courts, but in 2011 was drawn back to Postmedia News, which she called her "natural home."

Postmedia president and CEO Paul Godfrey admits his "immediate goal was to get Christie back" when he took over Postmedia in 2010.

"She was a jewel to have in your stable of journalists because she could write about anything. If you asked her to cover politics, sports, crime, anything like that, ask her to become a columnist and do a feature story on someone, she got to the bottom of it. Nothing fazed her," Godfrey says of Blatchford, also a mainstay on local radio through regular appearances on Toronto's

NewsTalk1010.

She was competitive to be sure, but Blatchford could also be incredibly sentimental and deeply moved by the tragedy she often encountered, says Godfrey, recalling the 2005 Boxing Day shooting that killed 15-year-old Jane Creba as especially hard.

"The tears that covered her computer on the night of the shooting outside the Eaton Centre at Christmas time, she was a total mess on that. She had trouble writing the story because she was crying so much."

Blatchford was inducted into the Canadian News Hall of Fame last November but was too unwell to attend.

She was also the author of several non-fiction books, including "Fifteen Days: Stories of Bravery, Friendship, Life and Death from Inside the New Canadian Army," based on her experiences during four trips to Afghanistan in 2006 and 2007. It won the **2008 Governor-General's Literary Award** in non-fiction.

Toronto Mayor John Tory called Blatchford a "giant in Canadian journalism" in a statement released Wednesday, shortly after he learnt of her passing away...

"Christie set the stage for women in journalism by first tackling the sports world and went on to tackle several other important beats," Tory said.

"Christie was a tough, fair journalist who was strongly committed to print journalism — she worked at all four Toronto newspapers — and on the radio. She was courageous — never afraid to tell it as she saw it — and leaves behind a legacy of fearlessness that will hopefully inspire journalists for generations to come."

Source:

The Canadian Press/  
National Post



unflinching social critic, Blatchford leaves behind a large body of work that was often bracingly frank, charged with emotion, and cut with humour.

A five-decade career cemented Blatchford as one of the country's most enduring voices on the courts and crime beat, and her willingness to critique controversial social issues earned her a reputation for uncompromising, and often polarizing, viewpoints, most recently on the metoo movement.

For the candid and notoriously ribald "Blatch," this was all in service of her mission to speak truth to power.

Criminal defence lawyer Marie Henein spoke of this as she presented Blatchford with the **George Jonas Freedom Award** at a gala in Toronto last June, describing an unapologetic, tough-as-nails writer whose pieces captured the "humanity" of a courtroom.

"None of it is sugar-coated and why should it be? In these times more than ever don't we need a good dose of unvarnished truth? Don't we need a good dose of Christie?" said Henein, who rose to national prominence as Jian

spective matters."

Blatchford's recent reports for the Post and Postmedia chain of newspapers ranged from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's blackface and SNC-Lavalin scandals to the death of her beloved white bull terrier, Obie, in September.

In one of her final columns in October, she wrote about nagging muscle pain that forced her to leave the Liberals' federal election tour only six days in — a mysterious ache that kept her from logging her daily 10-to-15-kilometre runs and instead led to a devastating diagnosis.

In many ways, journalism ran through Blatchford's blood.

Although she never met her grandfather, Andy Lytle was a prominent sports writer and editor for the Vancouver Sun in the '20s and '50s, and a sports editor at the Toronto Star in the '30s and '40s. Her uncle, Tommy Lytle, was a long time Toronto Star editor who retired in '74, and for whom she wrote a touching tribute in the **Globe and Mail** in June 2005.

Blatchford's story began May 20,

and served as the marquee Olympics columnist for various papers that followed.

She quit the **Globe** "in a snit" when the sports department "began messing with my copy," Blatchford says in her 2016 book "Life Sentence," heading to the **Toronto Star** for the next four years.

It was during her second year there, on Jan. 16, 1978, that she covered her first criminal trial at the age of 26: "I had no idea I was beginning to serve a self-imposed life sentence," she writes.

Blatchford next headed to the **Toronto Sun** as a columnist, and her 15 years at the city tabloid firmly established her dynamic flair for inspiring water-cooler rants among readers, whether they loved her or hated her.

Such was the vitriol she generated with divisive hot-takes that her work later inspired a website and Facebook page dubbed "Fire Christie Blatchford" — essentially a repository for like-minded readers to quote vivid prose they most despised while calling for her ouster.



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](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka)

## “THE MEDIA NEEDS TO BE BETTER AROUND HERE”

I was discussing the recent Jaffna university ragging incident with my mother yesterday, March 2nd.

Am researching for an article on it.

If any of you have any insights on exactly what went down at that faculty in Kilinochchi, please do share.

At the moment, the University officials have refused to speak to the media - citing irresponsible actions by the media - but have released a press release stating that their own investigations do not bear out the media accusations of what went down.

They have also said that the Tamil websites and newspapers which released the alleged perpetrators' faces and names had released innocent students' details - they had had nothing to do with ragging apparently but were now facing threats from society due to local media's irresponsibility.

My mother was scoffing at the notion that no sexual ragging happened as the University maintains. I am inclined to scoff at that too - but I also told her it was very likely that Innocent students' faces could have been published as well.

Despite being from the local media myself, I have to admit that my brethren are not particularly skilled in their investigative journalistic abilities or their sense of journalistic ethics.

They are perfectly capable of having published innocent students' faces as sexual pervert ragers without bothering to verify if those allegations were true.

At least in one of those cases, a student's house was broken into and his family terrorised by the so called Ava group in revenge. The Ava group in addition to terrorising people by robbing them at night have also become self appointed moral vigilantes now apparently.

Many of the students named as perpetrators are in hiding and do not dare resurface again due to these media allegations.

Anyway, my mother after blindly accepting all the salacious newspaper articles she had read, became worried when I said that the media was capable of naming and shaming people without verifying facts.

“Oh dear, you better be careful then. If what you say is true, we might be minding our own business one minute and then find ourselves the target of societal vigilante justice the next, just because some jobless media goons published our faces alongside erroneous accusations.”

Me: Yes, true.

Mother: Isn't there anything the wrongly accused families can do for recourse in these cases?

Me: Well, the media here does act with impunity. There is a press complaints commission but it has no teeth. They can try complaining to the police but you know how that goes down - the police rarely act on these complaints.

They can try legal recourse through the law - but again court cases here are a convoluted mess - and the media will have access to better lawyers than individual families - in the meantime, those families reputation

tarnished in society, will never recover...

Not much one can do about it - bleak I know.

Mother: Dear God. Well you be careful, you hear? This is why I keep telling you to never put a foot wrong but you never listen.

Me: Where am I putting my foot wrong?

Mother: Just don't do anything they can run with.

I already warned the electrician and the plumber not to stop by your house at night even if you call them.

Me: I work in the daytime so night time is the only time I can call the electrician and the plumber.

Also, don't worry, I doubt the local media will be interested in what time the electrician and plumber stop by at my house.

Mother: You haven't a clue. They will publish your picture alongside salacious news that you are running a brothel.

Just don't - that's all.

Sigh! I wish I could say she is paranoid - but the local media have in years past accused entire villages of prostitution just because womenfolk were going out to work - due to the men being dead, disabled or descending to substance abuse.

The media needs to be better around here. That's for sure.

But in the meantime, I'll continue telling workmen to drop by at 7.00 pm - so sorry if that scandalizes any of you.

This is the reality of living in so sexually controlling an environment as Jaffna.

It is precisely this kind of sexual repression that gives rise to overt sexual ragging at Universities when the fetters are let loose - but the solutions remain worryingly brushing sexual harassment under the carpet, and policing the women for the most innocuous of actions. We need to collectively get a grip.

These old methods are not working. They never have.

What new solutions can we come up with to combat this problem?

## “MEN AND WOMEN ARE NOT FROM JUST MARS AND VENUS, WE ARE FROM DIFFERENT GALAXIES HERE.”

“You girls chattering there! Solve this riddle.”

“Ok, what's the riddle?”

We were a group of young women accounts clerks with one lone male who worked in the department as a storekeeper.

Jaffna's work ethic dictated we kept to a large table away from him on his lone desk — mixing of the sexes was not to be thought of.

The poor man often racked his brains to throw conversational gambits our way, as we largely ignored him to chatter only among ourselves — as properly brought up Jaffna young ladies should.

He was young and shy himself, so when he spoke up at

all, it was with such rather odd conversational gambits.

“OK, here's the riddle:

Once upon a time, an elephant and an ant fell in love. It was a very sincere love and they were hell-bent on getting married-except predictably neither of their families would condone the match.

The elephant mother trumpeted her outrage.

“We the elephants! Would we ever marry into that puny ant colony?”

I'll never forgive you son, if you do.”

The ant mother was equally outraged.

“We have been proud ants for generations. Would we ever marry into that brash elephant herd?”

Don't you even think of it young lady. I'll commit suicide if you do.”

With both sets of parents thus alternately threatening suicide and filicide, it looked as if the heartbroken couple might have to break up.

Then something happened. The ant whispered something into her mother's ear. And the ant mother fainted. It looked as if the marriage was going to go through after all. Can you guess what happened?” As everyone blinked, I was the first to come up with an answer.

“The ant was pregnant?”

And was immediately greeted by gasps of horror and outrage by the rest of the young women at the table.

“What a dirty mind you have Thulasi. They wouldn't do anything like that before marriage.”

“Anyway, it's physically impossible for an ant to get pregnant by an elephant.”

“The ant must have threatened to elope with her boyfriend-is that right, storekeeper anna?”

“Or she might have threatened suicide herself. Her mother is not the only one who can pull that stunt after all.”

“Or she threatened to never marry anyone else if this wedding didn't go through.”

And on and on went the speculations. The storekeeper rejected all of them.

“OK then storekeeper anna. We give up. What did the young ant tell her mother?” “Thulasi was right. I didn't negate what she said if you noticed.

The ant was indeed pregnant.”

Huh? The young women gaped at him, shocked.

He had run out of things to say though. He didn't know how to continue the conversation after that. So he promptly turned his back on us to face his computer again-to ruminate once more on how to get the girls to talk to him.

Because nothing about his upbringing in Jaffna had geared him to talk to the opposite sex — and he approached it like a minefield. The girls on the other end treated his conversational forays the same way too.

Its being Jaffna, he never managed to touch so much as our fingertips, much less risk any of our getting pregnant with those forays. Men and women are not from just Mars and Venus, we are from different galaxies here.

Girls who could readily believe that elephant mothers and ant mothers would rather commit suicide than have their offspring intermarry were not going to lightly risk anything of the sort themselves.

Since males and females even talking to each other is frowned upon, the storekeeper anna continued to remain largely ignored by all the young women surrounding him, poor fellow.



## “DICKENSIAN VILLAINS OF JAFFNA”

I studied English Literature at school.

I have had an everlasting distaste for Charles Dickens ever since.

As a young teen forced to plod through his morose, misanthropic texts at school, I thought the man was dreaming up his extreme, sadistic characters — surely people in real life couldn't be that bad?

Then, I was unfortunate enough to end up living with a particularly psychotic family in Jaffna. The family patriarch was (still is) a raging psychopath. And his wife and children living for years with him as co-dependants had imbibed some of his psychopathy. Over the one year I was unfortunate enough to live with them, I came to learn that Dickensian villains are not all that fantastical after all. The realization didn't endear Dickens to me any further but I did stop assuming he had just had a particularly crazy imagination about what the human psyche could descend to. I was unfortunate enough to encounter some of these walking horrors in real life.

Victorian villains appeared to have leapt out of pages to walk all around me — and at times it all felt so surreal, I wondered if I had conjured their antics up.

Especially as they had the neat trick of immediately subsiding into smiling pleasantry whenever any visitors walked in.

Had I just imagined the snarling, unprovoked viciousness directed at me just moments before?

But no, as the visitors smilingly enquired about the new arrival (me), they took care to smilingly tell them what a handful I was. I was a 'disobedient child'.

“A nice child of course, but soo disobedient,” as my aunt would coo in her ever so sweet manner.

My uncle was less tactful. “She has picked up dirty habits having lived abroad,” he would pronounce with disgust.

The visitors would look at me thereupon with trepidation.

Children who grew up abroad were a handful, they all knew that.

Not like “our culturally well brought up” kids here. What on earth was I indulging in?

My relatives left that unspoken for their imaginations to take flight — and I, cringing in a corner, could see those imaginations shoot off straight into the stratosphere. Was I indulging in drugs, sex or alcohol? That's what kids brought up outside were famous for unlike their own carefully curtailed children. How horrible to be in my tainted presence.

Cue neighbourly sympathetic tut-tuts about “kids these days,” and “It's a good thing ours are so well brought up. They wouldn't dare.” Then they would turn to stare daggers at me and take it upon themselves to admonish in stern tones, “Here, you are in Jaffna now. Mind your manners.” All while I kept cowering in the corner without uttering a word.

As to why I didn't speak up in my own defence, it was because I had been brought up by my mother to never, ever speak unless spoken to by adults and to never “speak back” to them by counteracting anything they said. So that was out. It took me years to get out of that conditioning — it was a physical as well as mental impossibility for me to stand up for myself.

As to what these “very bad habits” were that I was indulging in — there was only one.

I was addicted to ... \*gasp\*.. \* Oh the horror\*.. \*wait for it\*... .. What the devil were my parents even thinking of when exposing me to the revolting habit?... didn't they know it would be the ruination of me?... a girl child indulging in it, no less, the very idea is obscene ... I was... \*gulp\*

... reading books.

English story books at that. The ruination of our culture.

So decreed my uncle and aunt who ordered me to stop reading books. But I couldn't. They were right in only one thing. It was an addiction. But in their view, other than for textbooks, I ought not to be reading anything at all. Only “bad, disobedient, children” would read storybooks. And as a young, impressionable ‘girl’ I ought not to be filling my head with ‘nonsense’.

My young cousins had their own grievances to add to that list. Apparently I was reading English story books in front of them to “show off” my English skills to them and to rub it into their faces that they couldn't. Yeah, that's exactly why someone would sneak away for hours to read a book — to “show off” their English reading skills. The whole situation was bizarre and I couldn't cope — and the more I felt unable to cope, the more I needed books to sustain my mental health — which led to even more vicious bullying because I was being ‘disobedient.’

Every time I write about an issue such as this, I run the risk of being told, “Well that's just your crazy family. It's not really a community problem, so stop tarring Jaffna with it.”

Well in this case, yes, the family was crazy and not everyone in Jaffna believed that reading books is bad. Nevertheless I was genuinely shocked to realize that many people actually do think reading works of fiction is a bad habit — I am not entirely sure why. My preconception of Jaffna was that they are all scholarly people who give high regard to bookish learning — but that stereotype is not necessarily true either. They give high regard to prescribed textbookish learning but anything other than that is seen as a bad habit — and

I have come across this repeatedly from others too, in more muted forms.

So watch out for me — the bad influence from abroad. I have filled my head with a lot of books, and might influence your kids with my “western ways.”



Rangan

## “FRIEND WITH A FUR COAT”

Classes have started. I teach English, for those who don't know.

Anyway, one of the things I do to introduce myself to students is write cryptic words or dates on the board and have them guess what it means in my life. It's a good way to get them talking instead of zoning out while someone else is doing the talking.

One of the words I wrote down was “Rangan”.

My students are all from Jaffna so they all knew it's a male name.

They came up with predictable guesses.

Your husband? (ans: No)

Your boyfriend? (ans: No)

Your lover? No again < I would dearly love to ask these Jaffna teenagers what they mean by lover when I said No to boyfriend?

Father/brother/cousin??? No, no and no.

Miss, give us a clue?

Well OK, My Rangan has a lovely brown coat.

He's your foreign friend?

No, but he's definitely very handsome.

He's your foreign lover?

Let me put it this way. Another word for his coat is fur.

What is fur?

Look that up in the dictionary.

~

And so, yet another batch of students learn who is all-important in my life.

I severely miss this fellow.

- continue from page 31...

## Science & Technology

## LIGHT AND DARKNESS...

9. eliminate light and block out all distracting noise  
10. Reserve bed for sleep and avoid use for work or general recreation.

### TECHNOLOGY AND SLEEP

The fascinating relationship between the light from the mobile devices, computer, television and night sleep. Many surveys have focused on the negative impact on sleep by light. The global factors impacting people's sleep are much more varied and complex,” said Dr. Teofilo Lee-Chiong, M.D., Chief Medical Liaison, Philips. According to a survey

around the world, about 67 percent of people sleep with a mobile phone within reach, only 21 percent said technology was a sleep disruptor.

Jeff Chapin, Chief Product Officer at Casper, says, “Light controls our sleep-wake cycles, impacts the mood and energy to relax. Most lights keep us active, and the Glow of light during the day helps us later for a better, deeper sleep.” Exposure to light at night can suppress melatonin production and heighten alertness and makes it more difficult to fall back asleep. To ensure the best sleep, keep away electronics about an hour before bed and to

be mindful of turning off the light in your room. You need to know light as the most critical outside factor that directly impacts your sleep pattern. We have light-sensitive rods, cones, and intrinsic photosensitive ganglion cells in our retina, which sends the signal to the brain, whether this is daytime, or it is night time, making it something that influences our internal clock. Our sleep patterns are set based on what these cells convey. Studies indicate that exposure to light during sleep makes it next to impossible to sleep well. Turn off your light before you hit the bed.



# SIGNIFICANCE FOR WHAT HINDUS BELIEVE IN AND DO

## Why is Ganesha offered Puja first in any Hindu ritual and venture?

Lord Ganesha is known as **Vignaharta** meaning **Remover of obstacles** and it is said that before undertaking any kind of important task helps achieve all success.

According to the legend, once Ganesha was brought back to life with elephant's head, all the Gods blessed Ganesha and wished Him power and prosperity. Lord Vishnu blessed Ganesha thus, **O excellent God! O dear one!**

*May your prayer be performed before that of any other God. May you be situated in all venerable beings and may you be the best among yogis. This is my boon to you.*

Ganesha is a Hindu God with an elephant head and a human body. Many people worship Him because they believe His benevolence will help improve their physical position in the world. He is widely revered as the remover of obstacles, the patron of arts and sciences and the deva of intellect and wisdom. As the God of beginnings, He is honoured at the start of rites and ceremonies.

According to mythological stories, there are many stories as to when a particular God or Goddess went to worshipping Ganesha. It is said that there is profound reason behind that custom. We are aware of the fact that our body has **seven chakras** (rings) which signify the energy centres of the human being having specific characteristics. The lowest of these chakras is the **Muladhara** chakra and the top most chakra is **Sahasraara**. There is a continuous flow of energy in the upward direction from the **Muladhara Chakra**, situated at the end of cerebrospinal column to the **Sahasraara Chakra** called the **Kundalini** energy. So, the Muladhara chakra is the base/foundation for the energy transfer and is important for the well being of an individual as it acts as nodal point for the transfer of energy in our body.

The energy associated with the Muladhara chakra is the same energy that is associated with Lord Ganesha. A reference to this can be found in Saint Muthuswamy Dikshitar's music composition, **Vatapi Ganapatim Bhaje**, where he praises Lord Ganesha as **Muladhara Kshetra Sthitam**. A building is only as strong as its foundation. Worshipping of Lord



Aarti- pinterest

Ganesha, strengthens/energises the Muladhara chakra before we take up other mantra/tantra practices to achieve our spiritual goals.

## Why do we offer Coconut?

Coconut symbolizes the inherent philosophies and practices in Hinduism. It is a fruit fit to be used in prayers and that is why it is considered auspicious. Hindus start all new ventures by breaking a coconut in front of an idol. Whether it is a wedding, a festival or an important puja ritual, a coconut is always a must-have on the list.

In Sanskrit, a coconut tree is called a **Kalpa Vriksha**, one which satisfies many needs in life. It is this utility that is bestowed on the coconut tree and fruit because of which it is called **Sripalam** or **God's fruit** in Sanskrit. It is considered prime among fruits. It is regularly used in various rituals as it signifies wholeness.

Coconut is the only fruit that is used to symbolize God. In Hindu religion, the coconut is one of the most common offerings in a temple and also plays an essential role in all pujas. The coconut is a **sattvic** fruit, i.e. it is sacred, pure and health-giving. It is also endowed with several properties. It is also offered in the sacrificial fire whilst performing **homam**. The coconut is broken and offered to God and is later distributed as **Prasadam**.

There are several reasons for Coconut being considered as signifying

wholeness and a utility for which every human should aspire:

Coconut water is untouched by hand and pure since it gets formed and preserved inside the shell. Its purity is considered equal to water from the holy river Ganga. Coconut water is used for Abhishekham of Deities, since it is considered the purest liquid one can use.

Coconut has **three eyes** representing Lord Siva. The two eyes are on the same level while the third one is above, hence symbolizing **turiya** or the fourth state of supreme consciousness. So, the fruit depicts samadhi, or yogic perfection.

Like a Conch, coconut too has omkar **vaas** (the sound of Om resides in it. Just like you hear the sound of Om when you blow a conch shell, you hear Om when you break a coconut by hitting the ground). It is said that the coconut should be broken with its eyes facing the deity.

The coconut is dark and hard. It represents perfection of character, just like that of Lord Krishna. A dark colour is free of spot, you cannot create a mark on black. It is only white that gets dirty. Likewise, that which is hard cannot be broken by outside impact. It has integrity and perseverance. Being hard and dark on the outside, it symbolizes the outer character of a religious man, firm, steadfast, undeviating and not perturbed by turmoil.

On the inside, the coconut is white and tender. When protected, there is nothing as pure as white. Impurities are hidden in black, but they do not even exist in white in the first place. White is so pure that even the slightest hint of impurity is seen on it. It shines distinguished from all that is impure.

The hard outside and the soft inside represents the combination of practical and spiritual perfection. A soft heart must have a hard sword or it would get crushed. A tender smile must have a strong character or it would be wiped off.

In Hinduism, religious rituals have a lot symbolic import. **Breaking a coconut** represents the **breaking of ego**, which is a prerequisite for the attainment of wisdom. Breaking of the ego results in your mind becoming as white as the inside of broken coconut and the water within the coconut is the nectar of Divine knowledge.

## WHY DO WE DO AARTI?

The concept of offering Aarti is said to have originated from the fire rituals or Homa of Vedic period in India. Aarti is mainly offered for deities where wicks are kept soaked in purified butter and then lighted. The custom of Aarti is not only performed to God and other forms of life but also to other inanimate forms like vehicles or electronic gadgets, so that they excel in their performance and help

# THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA

## Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple



Community Watch

by Kidambi Raj



Coconut - rgyan.com

the performer to do his best. This is another way of worshipping and respecting the object. It can be noticed that when aarti is offered to God, at the end, it is waved to all the viewers present there which is mainly to show that each one belongs to God and they are an indispensable part of God and thus they show their respect by taking the aarti and bowing down to it. According to Sanskrit, *Aa* stands for complete and *rati* means love, thus Aarti means complete love. Thus, Aarti is defined more precisely as a steady and a complete love of a person extended to God. The term Aarti also means the devotional Hindu songs that are sung during the performance of Aarti to God.

Aarti is usually performed at the end of a puja or a bhajan session. Almost all the Hindu ceremonies and occasions are accompanied by the performance of Aarti. Aarti is offered with the help of a plate made of metal, which may be either silver, bronze or copper on top of which a mud or a metal lamp filled with oil or ghee and a thick wick is placed. Sometimes instead of a lamp, Aarti is also offered by burning camphor. The plate in which Aarti is done also may have items like flowers, incense and *akshata*. Sometimes the plate is also replaced by a ghee lamp and aarti is offered. Aarti is offered to a person or a deity by moving the plate in a circular motion and thus by doing so it is believed that the plate or the lamp absorbs the power of the Lord. Once Aarti is done to the deity, then the priest offers it to the public and then the people turn their hands only to cup over the flames or the plate and then take it to their forehead thereby getting the blessings which has been passed down from God to the flames or the Aarti.

As and when Aarti is performed it is customary practice of singing hymns and songs in praise of the particular deity. In case of a person, songs are sung in praise of that particular individual. When Aarti is offered to

the deity, the flame illuminates the different parts of the God or Goddess only to give the viewers a better sight of the Deity.

### The meaning behind doing Aarti:

Aarti also represents that all of us come only under the divine control of God, which helps in maintaining one's ego down and keep up humility in spite of how high he or she is placed. The custom of Aarti acts as a reminder to be alert so that no worldly pleasure and wishes can overcome the person. This is highlighted by the lighted wicks or the flames during Aarti which removes darkness and keep the person in bright real world. The principle behind this is, the flames from Aarti removes darkness brings the light. **Darkness symbolizes Ignorance and light symbolizes Knowledge and wisdom.**

Aarti brings us in communion with God. Also, the camphor sacrifices itself completely but it still keeps emanating a pleasant fragrance so is our spiritual knowledge where it should be ready to sacrifice ourselves willingly spreading the love to all. Without our knowledge, at the time of Aarti, we get closer to the Lord on His beauty. Aarti can be an expression of many things including love, benevolence, gratitude, prayers or desires depending on the object it is done to/for. For example, it can be a form of respect when performed to elders. It is also believed that goodwill and luck can be taken through symbolic hand movements over the flame. The lamp is invoked as *Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya*, meaning, the lamp leads us from darkness towards light. It burns only to give message of peace and light to the man. This is its greatness. The actions of singing, clapping and ringing the bell express our joy and auspiciousness to the Almighty.

### Why are incense sticks burnt during puja rituals?

The ritual of burning incense is

incredibly symbolic in Hinduism. Incense sticks burn completely into ashes and yet their impact is the pleasant aromas that fill the room. This ritual represents the human sacrifice to society. In addition, the aroma that spreads to the air creates a calm and soothing atmosphere, helping us concentrate and pray to the Lord.

### Incense and Spirituality:

Incense can be burnt during times of meditation, prayer, general reflection or to help cleanse the air and make a space sacred. Native Americans burn bundles of sage, known as smudge sticks to help clear the air of negative energy.

In India, the main method of burning incense is with **Agarbatti**, commonly known as incense stick. Incense sticks are thin bamboo sticks with a paste of perfumed ingredients made up of a mixture of ground ingredients. Some incense makers use Ayurvedic principle.

The burning of incense is not unique just to Hindus. The smoke of burning incense is interpreted by both the **Western Catholic and Eastern Christian Churches as a symbol of the prayer** of the faithful rising to heaven. This symbolism is seen in Psalm 141(140), verse 2: **"Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight: the lifting up of my hands, as evening sacrifice"**.

**What is Dhoop?:** Dhoops are an extruded incense, lacking a core bamboo stick. Many dhoops have very concentrated scents and emits a lot of smoke when burned. The most well-

gains. According to the scriptures, fasting helps create an attunement with Absolute by establishing a harmonious relationship between the body and the soul. This is thought to be imperative for the well-being of a human being as it nourishes both his/her physical and spiritual demands.

Hindus believe it is not easy to unceasingly pursue the path of spirituality in one's daily life. We are told by a lot of considerations, and worldly indulgences do not allow us to concentrate on spiritual attainment. Therefore, a worshipper must strive to impose restraints on himself/herself to get the mind focused. One form of restraint in fasting.

However, fasting is not only a part of worship but a great instrument for self-discipline too. According to Hindu philosophy, food means gratification of the senses and to starve the senses is to elevate them to contemplation. As a wiseman once said, When the stomach is full, the intellect begins to sleep. Wisdom becomes mute and the parts of the body restrain form acts of righteousness.

The underlying principle behind fasting is to be found in Ayurveda. This ancient Indian medical system sees the basic cause of many diseases as the accumulation of toxic materials in the digestive system. Regular cleansing of toxic materials keeps one healthy. By fasting, the digestive organs get rest and all body mechanisms are cleansed and corrected. A complete fast is good for health, and the occasional intake of warm lemon juice during the period of



Incense sticks - makeinbusiness

known dhoop is probably Chandan Dhoop. It contains a high percentage of Sandalwood.

### Why do we fast?

As in many religions, fasting is also practiced in Hinduism. In the Hindu religion, fasting is not an obligation, but a moral and spiritual act where the aim is purifying the body and mind and acquire divine grace.

Fasting in Hinduism indicates the denial of the physical needs of the body for the sake of spiritual

fasting prevents flatulence.

Since the human body, as explained by Ayurveda, is composed of 80 percent liquid and 20 percent solid like the earth, the gravitational force of the moon affects the fluid contents of the body. It causes emotional imbalances in the body, making some people tense, irritable, and violent. Fasting acts as an antidote, for it lowers the acid content in the body which helps people to retain their sanity.



# Durham Tamil Association (DTA) Events

**The Youth leadership Program** hosted by DTA offers a youth leadership program free of charge. The program is designed to empower the youth and help them on their journey to becoming future leaders. This month they did several different activities including Public speaking contest with the Royal Canadian Legion and Fire station tour and in-class fire safety presentation. DTA thanks its volunteers and youth facilitators who run the club in order to make it a success.

**DTA Seniors Monthly Meeting** - The Seniors' monthly meeting went very well with Karaoke music provide for their entertainment. DTA found talent among the senior super singers. The meeting takes place every last Sunday from 4.30 pm. Professional speakers and discussions, Birthday ceremony, short eats and dinner is provided.

**Town of Ajax- Winterfest** - DTA had a booth at the Winterfest. DTA is very proud to be part of it. DTA thanks all the volunteers who helped at the DTA Booth.

**Upcoming Event** - DTA is excited to announce that planning is underway for the upcoming Career fair event titled "A Toast to Success". DTA is taking leadership roles with support from the City of Ajax and other local community groups to make this event DTA's broader community reach out event ever. The career fair will be opened to University and College students who are graduating and for anyone who is looking to change their career path or looking to talk to potential employers about their current skill sets and education to align themselves with career development and career growth opportunities. An organizing subcommittee has already been formed with DTA's young professional individuals and is already being noticed by employers and all levels of government. The date has been set for Sept 24th and the location will be Audrey Banquet facility. DTA will be sharing more information as more details come from the organizing subcommittee. Those interested in being part of the subcommittee, can still contact [info@durhamtamis.com](mailto:info@durhamtamis.com) / 905-428-7007.



SENIORS MONTHLY MEETING



TOWN OF AJAX - WINTERFEST



SENIORS MONTHLY MEETING



TOWN OF AJAX - WINTERFEST



SENIORS MONTHLY MEETING



TOWN OF AJAX - WINTERFEST



FIRE STATION TRIP



FIRE STATION TRIP



PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST



# THE 7TH ANNUAL Vivekananda Public Speaking Competition



The Vedanta Society of Toronto is organizing a public speaking competition to celebrate Vivekananda's legacy.

**Sunday, May 3, 2020 at 11 a.m.**  
Vedanta Society of Toronto, 120 Emmett Avenue, Toronto

"The man is simply a marvel of oratorical power." — William James

## COMPETITION RULES AND DETAILS

The competition will have two parts:

- A prepared speech for 7–8 minutes (see topics below)
- An impromptu speech for 2–3 minutes (topics to be given during competition)

The competition is open to high school students in three groups:

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Junior (Grades 7 &amp; 8)</b><br>Topic: Be Fit | <b>Intermediate (Grade 9 &amp; 10)</b><br>Topic: Helping Others, helping yourself | <b>Senior (Grade 11 &amp; 12)</b><br>Topic: Can we save our world? |
|---|---|--|

Please note:

- Speeches must have a special reference to Vivekananda's life and work
- No notes are allowed during speeches

Participants will be judged on:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content (60%)</li> <li>• Delivery (30%)</li> <li>• Language and Grammar (10%)</li> </ul> | <p>Awards in each of the Junior, Intermediate and Senior categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Prize: \$100</li> <li>• Second Prize: \$75</li> <li>• Third Prize: \$50</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

Light lunch will be provided for participants. **Parents are welcome to attend the event.**

Registration is required. There is a fee of \$10 to register. Deadline: April 15, 2020

To register, or for more information, please contact Shukla Datta at [shukladatta53@yahoo.com](mailto:shukladatta53@yahoo.com)

# தாய்விடு - சுயாதீன கலை, திரைப்பட மையம், ரொறூன்ரோ 14th International Tamil Film Festival

## 14th ITaFF 2020

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தாய்விடு



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# Health Tips against Corona Virus

## Using hand sanitizer

It works. Use it often. Make sure it's alcohol-based. There are some "natural" products designed to be less drying to your hands. These do not work.

## Washing hands

This is always important, but especially now. Wash your hands for 20 seconds, regularly. Note that soap works ideally in combination with scrubbing and heat, but cold water works far better than nothing. You do not need antibacterial soap; the coronavirus is a virus, not a bacterium.

## Cleaning hand towels

Wash them often, too.

## Shaking hands

It's not a clearly threatening practice, and physical touch has its own value to consider, as do gestures of respect. But I've been an advocate of alternative forms of greetings such as fist bumps for years, and this outbreak doesn't change that.

## Touching your face

Avoiding touching your face is a nice idea and would be very effective, but no one is going to stop touching their face.

## Using bathrooms

Here's an unproven suggestion from me that transcends this particular outbreak: All business and public spaces should turn their bathrooms' doors around, so you push on the way out rather than the way in. If building codes or

other safety codes prohibit this, install a foot pull. If none of this is possible, at least put the trash can for paper towels outside the door so everyone can use a paper towel to touch the handle.

## Disinfecting common surfaces

The crux of all the focus on hand-washing is that you're unlikely to get the virus from someone coughing or sneezing directly into your face. You are much more likely to catch the virus by touching something that someone else touched after coughing into their hand. This can partly be prevented by disinfecting surfaces.

## Wearing masks

Masks seem logical as preventive measures because the disease is spread by respiratory droplets, which can travel simply by breathing but mostly distribute in plumes from coughs or sneezes. If you were sick and had to leave home for some reason, ideally you would wear a surgical mask. But even this precaution is far from perfect—the wearable equivalent of sneezing into your elbow instead of right in someone's face. You're still infectious and should behave accordingly.

## Stockpiling prescription medications

As with food, though, anyone who has a vital prescription and lives in a place where access would be affected by the single shutdown of a local pharmacy or

a public-transit system, for example, should always have a small supply for emergencies. Health-care providers should help ensure this.

## Traveling

It's always advisable to avoid travel if you're sick. But no stay home directive is sustainable for long periods, and urgent life events will overlap with this outbreak. So guidance about this will be targeted, and ideally informed by easy screening and testing that can advise people with the sniffles whether they are fine to get on a plane or should urgently self-quarantine.

## Staying home

This is an extremely imperfect directive, as so many people's jobs and other obligations make it impossible. But no single recommendation is perfect or universally applicable. And Americans have proved, flu season after flu season, that many workplaces are not accommodating enough of staying home. If workplaces are not accommodating, business may suffer even more in the long run, if more shutdown measures are taken.

## Seeking medical care

This may be the most crucial question: When do mild symptoms warrant attention? Most people are not accustomed to seeking care or testing when they have a mild cough or runny nose. My hope is that, in the coming days and weeks, lo-

cal and federal officials share clear guidelines for exactly how and when to seek medical attention early in the disease's course. China's containment measures depended on early detection that isolated people at the beginning of their infectious stage. Then again, we can't have everyone with a cough and sniffles rushing to doctors' offices.

South Korea, which has now identified some 5,000 cases, is pioneering drive-through screening clinics. The idea seems smart: There are no doorknobs to touch, no crowded waiting rooms with magazines that have been coughed on for months. Maybe most important, there is no paperwork to fill out and no cost. If an outbreak hits a major city, clinics and hospitals will likely be overrun with people who have cold and flu symptoms. Some of those people will need reassurance that they can go home and will be fine; others will need admission to a hospital; others may need an intermediate level of care, monitoring, and quarantine.

## Being conscientious

No matter your position, there are people who stand to lose much more than you do if they get sick. No matter how worried you are, there are people who are more worried. Look out for them, and help make sure everyone takes these basic measures and doesn't panic. Societies break down when people fear one another as simply bipedal distributors of infectious agents. See people as allies in this unique moment of uncertainty.



## RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

### Law Office of Yaso Sinnadurai Yaso Sinnadurai Professional Corporation

It has been my pleasure to serve the community since 1993 and after twenty-six years, the time has come for me to retire, and pleased to announce that my retirement is effective December 31, 2019.

I take this opportunity to convey my sincere thanks to all my clientele for the trust and confidence that you had in me and it has indeed been my pleasure to represent your interests.

I thank the community, the media and the community organizations for your support during the growing phase of the community. I am privileged to have been part of it.

Best Wishes to all for the New Year and the years ahead.

Sincerely,  
Yaso Sinnadurai, Barrister & Solicitor  
Email: info@yasolaw.com

## சேவையிலிருந்து ஓய்வுபெறும் அறிவித்தல்

### யசோ சின்னத்துரை சட்ட அலுவலகம்

1993ம் ஆண்டு முதல் கடந்த இருபத்தியாறு ஆண்டுகள் சமூகத்துக்கு சட்டரீதியான சேவைகளை வழங்கக் கிடைத்த சந்தர்ப்பத்தையிட்டு மனநிறைவு அடைவதுடன் 2019 டிசம்பர் 31ம் திகதியுடன் இச்சேவையிலிருந்து ஓய்வு பெறுகிறோம் என்பதை அனைவருக்கும் அறியத் தருகிறோம்.

என்மீது நம்பிக்கை வைத்து சட்டரீதியான சேவை வழங்க சந்தர்ப்பம் அளித்த அனைவருக்கும் எனது மனம் நிறைந்த நன்றியை இவ்வேளையில் தெரிவிக்க விரும்புகிறேன்.

சமூகம் வளர்ச்சியடைந்து வந்த வேளையில் அதற்குப் பங்களிக்க எனக்கு ஆதரவு வழங்கிய சமூகம், ஊடகங்கள், சமூக அமைப்புகள் அனைத்துக்கும் இச்சந்தர்ப்பத்தில் நன்றி கூறுவது எனது கடமையாகும்.

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## EXPO

A unique event for Tamils across the GTA that brings together different Tamil-owned or operated educational providers, businesses, and non-profits from our community who share a common goal: to provide the platform, tools, skills, and resources to lift and propel the Tamil-speaking diaspora in Canada, of all ages, into positions of power, influence, and success! Exhibitors, speaker line-up, ticket sales, and more details to follow shortly.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**



# IMG

CONFERENCE



A conference/tradeshow for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) specifically targeted at addressing issues around medical licensing examinations, residency training, pathways to licensure, clinical clerkships (for medical students), observerships (for foreign graduates), research opportunities, and more. Exhibitors, speaker line-up, ticket sales, and more details to follow shortly.

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