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Immigrants face citizenship delays due to Covid-19



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau congratulating 45 new Canadians and welcoming them to the country at a citizenship ceremony in Wolfville, N.S. sometime back - (Picture Credit CBS)

Siva Sivapragasam

Six months after the federal government cancelled citizenship tests due to COVID-19 many immigrants fear a growing backlog in the citizenship queue will delay indefinitely their goal of becoming Canadians.

Before COVID -19, the entire citizenship process took an average

of 12 months. Citizenship tests were cancelled due to the virus and now applicants have no idea when the tests will resume.

It is learnt that the immigration department is reviewing operations and considering options for resumption of services, which could include online citizenship tests.

Tests and interviews must be com-

pleted before someone becomes a Canadian citizen. Citizenship provides voting rights and helps to obtain a Canadian passport and provides a sense of permanency to the individual.

If in-person citizenship tests are to take place, officials would have to take precautions to keep the test-takers and the staff administering the tests safe and comfortable.

Many immigrants are facing delays in becoming Canadian citizens due to the cancellation of citizenship tests due to COVID-19.

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Ontario Takes Extraordinary Steps to Reopen Schools Safely

September 8, 2020

Office of the Premier

TORONTO — As students, teachers and staff return to school, the Ontario government is providing up to \$1.3 billion in critical supports and has delivered more than 37 million pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE) to safely reopen classrooms across the province. These investments are part of Ontario's comprehensive back to school plan which was developed in consultation with medical experts, school boards, and educators.

"Our entire team has been working around the clock over the last few weeks to make sure all of the public health measures are in place to safely welcome back our students and staff," said Premier Ford. "This school year will be unlike any we have ever seen, but by working together, we can all play a part to keep our children, teachers and education workers safe and ensure our students continue to thrive and be inspired to learn during these extraordinary times."

The government has taken the following steps to make schools as safe as possible:

Providing more funding than any jurisdiction in the country to implement physical distancing measures, support hiring of up to 1,300 custodians and adopt enhanced cleaning protocols in schools and on school buses, and hire more teachers to reduce class sizes.

Hiring up to 625 school-focused nurses to provide rapid-response support to schools and boards, and facilitate public health measures, including screening, surveillance testing, tracing and mitigation strategies.

Working in collaboration with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services to ensure that sufficient PPE has been delivered to all 72 school boards and 10 education authorities, including more than 19.5 million masks, 16 million gloves, 317,000 face shields, 320,000 bottles of hand sanitizer, and 218,000 containers of disinfectant, among other critical supplies; and,

Providing students and families

Provincial Back-to-School Plan Includes Substantial Investments in PPE Along with More Teachers, Nurses, and Custodians



with clear and transparent standards for those that choose fully remote virtual learning, which is teacher-led, timetabled, live, synchronous, and on a regular daily schedule.

"Our plan is the most cautious, safe and comprehensive in the country, fully funded and fully informed by leading medical leaders to ensure we reduce the risk, support positive mental health, and improve the safety of all students and staff," said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. "I remain inspired by our students, and we owe it to them to continue to do our part to stop the spread in our communities to ensure schools can remain safe and positive learning spaces."

The following public health protocols and procedures will be implemented to help protect students, teachers, staff and visitors:

Parents must screen their children and all staff must self-screen every day before attending school. Students and staff who are unwell must stay home from school.

Schools must immediately report any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the school to the local public health unit. Every day, school boards must report any staff

or student absences due to confirmed cases of COVID-19 to the ministry.

Students in Grades 4-12 will be required to wear face coverings (non-medical or cloth masks) indoors in school, including in hallways, entrances and during classes. Face coverings are not required but are encouraged for students up to Grade 3. The province is funding each school board to provide PPE to teachers and other school-based staff, including medical masks and eye protection (for example, face shields).

Schools will teach and remind students about appropriate hand hygiene and provide breaks in schedules to

allow students to wash their hands. Teachers and staff are also receiving additional health and safety training.

Each student will be kept with the same group of children and teachers as much as possible throughout the school day.

Schools will significantly limit visitors, including parents.

Schools will keep rigorous daily class attendance records, seating charts, lists of bussed students, and approved daily visitors (e.g. supply and occasional teachers, custodians) for contact-tracing purposes.

"With the new school year beginning, the health and safety of students, teachers and staff is our government's top priority," said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "We have been working closely with our public health experts and making the necessary investments to ensure safety measures and protocols are in place for returning to the classroom."

"Our government's top priority is to ensure students, teachers, and staff have what they need to stay safe when they return to school," said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Government and Consumer Services. "By leveraging our government's collective buying power and introducing new domestic sources of supply, we were able to successfully secure sufficient supplies to support the safe reopening of over 4,800 schools and over 5,000 child care facilities this fall."

Via news.ontario.ca

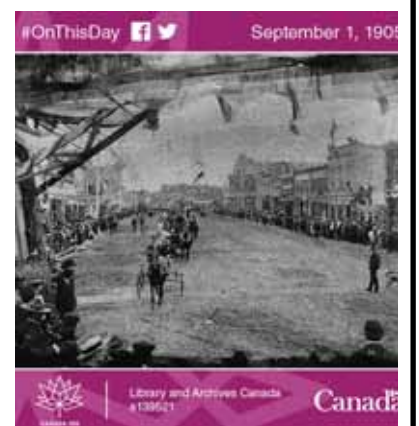
Canada Historical Milestones

September 1, 1905:

Saskatchewan and Alberta join Confederation together as the eighth and ninth Canadian provinces.

By creating these provinces, the Canadian government of Wilfrid Laurier extends and occupies the land to the west of the Great Lakes, to prevent American expansionism.

During negotiations in 1902 and 1905, the plan was to have one large province. But things turned out differently, as Laurier opted for two provinces because they would be easier to administer. 9(via: Library and Archives Canada)



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A Happy Fall 2020 Festive Season

Thanksgiving, Canada: October 12

Navarathri: October 17 - October 25

Deepavali/Diwali: November 14

Thanksgiving, USA: November 26

Help Alleviate the Difficulties of Tenants as well as Landlords in the Face of COVID-19 to Advance a Better Housing Environment in Ontario

By **Harrish Thirukumar**

Since the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic officially begun on March 11, 2020 as announced by the World Health Organization globally including in the Province of Ontario, there have been a number of temporary changes to housing and the legal system around it within the province that can be found on the Government of Ontario website. To start, on March 19, 2020, the Ontario Superior Court issued an Order suspending the eviction of residents from their homes until the end of the calendar month in which the Ontario State of Emergency is terminated.

Accordingly, the Landlord and Tenant Board (the "LTB") in Ontario had announced a suspension of eviction orders and all hearings related to eviction applications unless the matter relates to an urgent issue such as an illegal act or a serious impairment of safety. The LTB subsequently suspended all in-person hearings until further notice due to COVID-19. Regardless of the Eviction Moratorium, landlords were still able to serve eviction notices for non-payment of rent and subsequently file an eviction application if the tenant did not remedy an issue. This issue could relate to a behaviour by a tenant, which is called a tenant's remedy. On March 20, 2020, the LTB established a new process for Request for Urgent Hearings (RUH) for landlords with an urgent eviction request.

From the LTB website, on August 1, 2020, the LTB will:

Begin to issue eviction orders that are pending;

Start to issue consent eviction orders which are based on landlord and tenants settling their dispute through an agreement;

Start to schedule hearings for non-urgent evictions; and

Conduct non-urgent eviction hearings starting in mid-August and into the fall.

During this time, the moratorium that the Province instituted on evictions has been lifted as the province gradually reopens and has discontinued the RUH. It is now in the process of addressing a backlog of thousands of eviction cases that have been piling up during the pandemic-induced moratorium. This includes the more than six-thousand eviction applications that landlords sent out. Delays in the LTB have even been apparent prior to the stoppage of hearings in Spring 2020, which warranted an investigation by the Ontario Ombudsman.

One example of a case affected by the COVID-19 related-issues in the LTB is a report by BlogTO about a Toronto landlord that has been frustrated by their tenant who they claim owes over \$55,000 in unpaid rent from a Bridle Path property for over several months since February

2020. They have been in a legal battle over it based on the tenants' claim of outstanding repairs and COVID-19, which will be decided before the LTB. From the perspective of a tenant, Global News reported about Annex residents in Toronto and their landlord. They both said they were financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but their landlord would not provide any temporary rent relief when they asked for it. These tenants have been served with two eviction letters as they are referred to the LTB.

Tenant groups including the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario have devoted their efforts towards extending a ban like the moratorium back in March on evictions. The government's response to this case backlog at the LTB and other housing issues due to COVID-19 has been Bill 184, Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act, 2020, as a way to make it easier to resolve landlord-tenant disputes as well as strengthen tenant protections. However, it has been criticized by both landlords and tenants, with the former saying it does not go far enough as it disproportionately favours tenants over landlords with a proposed fee structure for unlawful evictions that she says would require landlords to give compensation to tenants. For the latter, they say it speeds up the eviction process with landlords bypassing the LTB to offer repayment plans to their tenants.

Although the stories and struggles of tenants have been well documented during this time, landlords have also struggled with the current state of housing in Ontario. Due to the housing crunch in the last few years, home ownership has increased among the Tamil community and broader South Asian communities like the Monsoon Journal readers in Ontario. Moreover, many members of these communities have rented out their homes to tenants do make their mortgage payments and other essential expenses, effectively making them small landlords. Non-payments of rent as well as these delays in how the LTB processes cases can be burdensome for these small landlords.

Overall, we hope that you research, raise awareness and advocate about the issues around housing in Ontario in relation to the Landlord and Tenant Board that have been occurring both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Contact your local Member of Provincial Parliament to advocate about or call on them for better solutions to be made in finding a balance that satisfies both landlords and tenants in maintaining their housing. In whatever way you think you can, help alleviate the difficulties of tenants as well as landlords in the face of COVID-19 to advance a better housing environment in Ontario.

*We've got to live, no matter how many
skies have fallen*

- D.H. Lawrence

(11 September, 1885 - 2 March, 1930) English Writer



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Province Supports Ontario-Made Face Masks in the Fight Against COVID-19

Lighter, Breathable Masks Will Allow Prolonged Wear for Frontline Workers

September 4, 2020

Office of the Premier

BRACEBRIDGE — The Ontario government is providing \$2 million from the Ontario Together Fund to the Bracebridge-based company, Smart Safe Science, to make lighter, breathable, and more comfortable face masks. This investment will help the company create 50 local jobs and, when at full capacity, produce 200,000 made-in-Ontario masks monthly and build up regional personal protective equipment (PPE) manufacturing capacity to help protect healthcare and frontline workers across the province and ensure they continue their critical work during the outbreak of COVID-19.

Details were provided today by Premier Doug Ford and Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

“I always say we have the best and



brightest minds anywhere in the world right here in Ontario,” said Premier Ford. “We’re proud to support innovative companies like Smart Safe Science who are making better medical-grade masks for frontline workers. Thanks to their efforts, Ontario will reduce and eventually eliminate our reliance on any other country for these critical health supplies because we can make them right here in wonderful communities like Bracebridge.”

With the Ontario government’s support, Smart Safe Science will make a face mask that is lighter and more

breathable to help avoid the common fatigue from wearing other types of masks for a prolonged period of time. The filter used in the mask will be NIOSH 95+ certified, which is used in N95 masks. As part of the development of this mask and other safety products, the company tapped into technical expertise at several Ontario universities, including Lakehead University, Laurentian University, McMaster University and the University of Toronto.

“Face masks have become an essential part of our daily lives during these unprecedented and uncertain times. For our healthcare professionals and frontline workers who are battling COVID-19, prolonged use of face masks can bring fatigue and discomfort,” said Minister Fedeli. “That’s why we are supporting companies like Smart Safe Science so they can provide groundbreaking made-in-Ontario solutions. Through investments

like this, we are strengthening our domestic supply chain for vital personal protective equipment and preparing us for any eventuality in the future.”

The mask comes with attachments that monitor body temperature while the person is wearing the mask. This technology will allow the user to connect a smart device in the mask to their phone using an app that will transmit critical real-time data about the user’s health status. The mask will conform to the wearer’s facial structure, providing greater comfort and protection.

Smart Safe Science further plans to purchase equipment and expand its facilities to reach the targeted end-production capacity. The company is a subsidiary of True North Printed Plastics, a company that makes electronic interfaces for items, including airplanes, military and medical equipment.

Via news.ontario.ca

Ontario Welcomes Post secondary Students Back to School

Fall Re-Opening Plan Prioritizes Health and Safety of Students, Faculty and Staff

September 4, 2020

Colleges and Universities

TORONTO — The Ontario government, in consultation with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, has been working with the postsecondary sector to help ensure the health and safety of students, faculty and staff as institutions re-open for the fall term.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak the government has partnered with postsecondary institutions to help establish best practices for in person teaching. This includes COVID-19 testing for students who are in quarantine as a result of travel outside of Canada immediately before classes start. The province is also helping the postsecondary sector meet federal requirements for international students, including ensuring that quarantine and outbreak management plans are in place.

“Postsecondary institutions have carefully considered and developed plans to welcome students this fall, delivering programs in-class, online, and through hybrid models,” said Ross Romano, Minister of Colleges and Universities. “We have heard from our postsecondary partners about the challenges and opportunities involved with a safe return to campus, and we are building on the experience of the limited in-class summer reopening pilot programs. I want to thank our postsecondary institutions for their efforts to ensure all the necessary health and

safety measures are in place for the fall.”

In addition to working with the postsecondary sector on the safe re-opening of the fall term, the province also conducted extensive consultations throughout the summer on the future of higher education in Ontario. Discussions focused on key initiatives such as digital learning, international students, micro-credentials, research and commercialization and financial sustainability.

“Ontario’s postsecondary sector has bold ideas on how to adapt postsecondary education and training to meet the needs of a rapidly changing job market and economy, and to fuel the future prosperity of the province,” said Minister Romano. “We have strong leaders in our postsecondary system, and I value their insight and perspective as we plan our next steps. We have a shared vision to build on the talent and skills of our students and graduates to drive Ontario’s economic recovery.”

To support postsecondary excellence and accountability, Ontario remains committed to moving ahead with performance-based funding. In response to COVID-19, the government is delaying the activation of performance-based funding for up to two years to provide financial stability and predictability to Ontario’s publicly funded colleges and universities.

Via news.ontario.ca

Prime Minister announces support for a safe return to school



August 26, 2020

Toronto, Ontario

School is critical for kids’ development and future success. The COVID-19 pandemic has been difficult for families, with schools closed and students separated from their classmates and friends. As we gradually and safely restart our economy, parents should be able to return to work and trust that their children are learning in a healthy environment. That is why the Government of Canada is working to support provinces and territories in their efforts to ensure a safe return to school and protect the health of students and staff.

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today announced up to \$2 billion in support for provinces and territories through the Safe Return to Class Fund. This will provide the complementary funding they need, as they work alongside local school boards to ensure the safety of students and staff

members throughout the school year. For example, the Fund will help provinces and territories by supporting adapted learning spaces, improved air ventilation, increased hand sanitation and hygiene, and purchases of personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies.

The Prime Minister also announced an additional \$112 million in funding for First Nations to support community measures to ensure a safe return to school on reserves. The government will continue to work with First Nation partners to help protect the health and safety of students and staff this school year.

As we reopen our schools and restart our economy, we will continue to take leadership and work together with provincial and territorial partners to protect the health and safety of all Canadians.

Via pm.gc.ca



CANADA NEWS

Prime Minister's remarks announcing new agreements to reserve millions of doses of future COVID-19 vaccines

August 31, 2020
Montréal, Quebec
Hello, everyone.

I am delighted to be here, at the National Research Council, with Minister Bains and my fellow members of Parliament from Montréal, Minister Joly, Rachel Bendayan and our local member, Anthony Housefather.

The President of the National Research Council, Iain Stewart, is also with us today.

From the start, our government's fight against COVID-19 has been guided by science.

We have therefore invested over \$1 billion in a COVID-19 strategy that allows for increased screening, and supports vaccine research and clinical trials.

In order to protect Canadians, we must follow the advice of public health experts and support scientific research.

This means we also need to support our researchers as they develop an effective vaccine.

Earlier this month, Minister Bains and Minister Anand announced the names of the members of the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force.

This group includes vaccine and immunology specialists, as well as industry leaders.

And, based on their advice, we have signed agreements with Pfizer and Moderna to reserve millions of doses of a future COVID-19 vaccine.

Today, I can announce that the Government of Canada has signed two new agreements with Novavax, and Johnson & Johnson to reserve millions of doses of the vaccines they're developing.

Their most recent vaccine tests show promising results.

That's why we're making sure that if one of these potential vaccines is successful, Canada and Canadians will have access to the doses they need.

Taken together, our vaccine agree-



ments with Pfizer, Moderna, Novavax, and Johnson & Johnson, will give Canada at least 88 million doses, with options to obtain tens of millions more.

I know that Minister Anand and Minister Hajdu will have more details to share at the noon briefing today.

In the weeks and months ahead, our government will continue to take the steps needed to make sure Canada gets a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible.

Once a vaccine is proven to work, we'll also need to be able to produce and distribute it here at home.

On that front, I can also announce that we're investing over \$126 million to expand the bio-manufacturing facility right here at the Human Health Therapeutics Research Centre in Montréal.

This funding will increase this facility's ability to manufacture vaccines, and will strengthen the NRC's partnerships with vaccine developers.

We expect the facility to be up and running by mid-2021.

I want to end by recognizing that tomorrow is the 40th anniversary of Terry Fox's "Marathon of Hope."

Terry's courage and persistence made him a true Canadian hero, and gave hope to people around the world.

As we honour his legacy, let's continue to support the people and families affected by cancer, and keep working together to find a cure.

Thank you.

Via pm.gc.ca

Ontario Premier Doug Ford meets Ethnic Media and thanks the Tamil community for their support



Ontario Premier Doug Ford met ethnic Media representatives recently and discussed a variety of issues while thanking the Tamil community for their support



Premier Ford with MPP Vijay Thanigasalam and presentation of an Award to Premier by Vijay on behalf of his constituents

Vijay Thanigasalam, Member of Ontario provincial parliament representing Scarborough –Rouge River electorate participated in the press conference along with the Premier.

Addressing the delegates at the conference, the premier commented on various local issues including Health services and transportation as well as the Tamil genocide in Sri Lanka.

Premier Ford talking about transportation pointed out that the infrastructure for transportation within Scarborough had been ignored for over a decade. Adding further Ford stated that it was the reason why he had already taken steps to extend the underground transport system to add three more stops.

When members of the media raised the question of long delays at hospitals, Ford responded that his government had already taken steps to reduce the wait times by revising the health services and had already invested several million dollars to revamp the system. The premier also

said that he believes that a new hospital could be constructed in Scarborough in the future to provide better services for the community.

Talking about the reopening of schools in September, the Premier added that his government is concerned about the safety of school children and is in the process of implementing various preventive measures in this context. He emphasised that if a second wave of Covid attacks the province he will not hesitate to declare lock down once again.

While answering questions posed by the Tamil media representatives regarding the issue of Tamil genocide in Sri Lanka, Premier Ford stated that he was aware of the serious sufferings faced by the Tamil community. While stressing the need for everyone to try and understand the pain and loss of the Tamil community he also acknowledged the dedicated services rendered by the Tamil community for the Ontario province.



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India Now Has 2nd Highest Number of COVID-19 Infections Worldwide

By Anjana Pasricha

Updated September 07, 2020

NEW DELHI - India now has the second-highest number of COVID-19 cases in the world after a week in which it added nearly half a million new infections.

Indian health authorities said Monday the country's coronavirus tally had passed 4.2 million, overtaking Brazil's and putting the populous Asian nation only behind the United States.

"The surge was unavoidable. It was always going to be an avalanche and the avalanche has not hit the ground yet," warns T. Jacob John, a prominent virologist and former professor at the Christian Medical College in Vellore. He says cases will continue to climb for some time in a country of 1.3 billion people and densely packed cities.

India's tally of daily new infections has been the highest in the world in recent days - it reported over 90,000 cases on Monday.

Subways open but few takers

Signaling that the country needs to focus on reviving its battered economy, authorities in several cities including the capital, New Delhi, resumed subway services this week after more than five months off.

But the relentlessly increasing caseload has made people nervous -- not too many commuters found the courage to ride the once-crowded metro trains in New Delhi on Monday, although authorities have announced a series of new safety protocols.

New Delhi's subway used to carry about 2.6 million people daily. It ran only partial services on Monday but authorities hope to have it running fully by the end of the week.

Wearing masks and using smart cards that can be digitally recharged is mandatory. Commuters enter stations after thermal checks, they can only sit on alternate seats, and the trains stop



Workers sanitize Delhi metro coaches after it completes a round in Gurugram on the outskirts of New Delhi, India, Sept. 7, 2020

for longer at stations to avoid jostling in the rush to climb in or out. Security personnel, also wearing masks and face shields, have been deployed at stations to enforce regulations.

Metro officials have said fresh air will be regularly pumped into the coaches to improve air circulation and stations will be disinfected every four hours.

"We are on our way. It's been 169 days since we've seen you!," the official Twitter account of Delhi Metro tweeted. "Travel responsibly and commute if its only necessary."

Bars set to reopen

The subway's opening was yet another signal that India can no longer afford to shutter its cities - New Delhi

is giving the go-ahead to bars to reopen later this week.

Although shops and other business activities have resumed, the lockdown public transport in cities meant that markets have seen few customers.

"While lives are important, livelihoods are equally important," Rajesh Bhushan, the top official of India's federal health ministry said at a news briefing last week.

According to estimates by the Center for Monitoring Indian Economy, some 19 million jobs have been lost in the formal economy since India imposed a stringent lockdown in late March. Worryingly, say economists, younger people have been hit the hardest -- 4 million Indians under the age of 30

have lost jobs, according to a report by the International Labor Organization.

Critics have questioned the economic price that the long shutdown has extracted, saying it delayed but did not stop the spread of the highly contagious virus.

"The peak should be around the corner now. But you cannot breathe easy post peak also because the numbers will only climb down very slowly," according to virologist John.

For India so far, the silver lining has been the relatively fewer fatalities due to the virus -- it has recorded 71,642 deaths, far fewer than in Brazil and the United States.

Via voanews.com

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WORLD NEWS

Former Indian President Mukherjee Dies After COVID-19 Diagnosis

By VOA News
August 31, 2020

India's former President Pranab Mukherjee died Monday following weeks of hospitalization and a COVID-19 diagnosis. He was 84.

Mukherjee was admitted to the Army Research and Referral Hospital in New Delhi on Aug. 10 to remove a blood clot in his brain after he suffered a fall. There, he tested positive for COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus. He announced the diagnosis on Twitter and asked anyone who was in close contact with him to "please self-isolate and get tested."

Mukherjee's brain surgery was reportedly successful, but his condition deteriorated Sunday when he developed a lung infection and went into septic shock. He remained in a coma and on ventilator support after surgery. Mukherjee died of multiple organ failure 21 days after his COVID-19 diagnosis.

The former president's son, Abhijit Mukherjee, confirmed the news in a tweet.

"With a Heavy Heart, this is to inform you that my father Shri Pranab Mukherjee has just passed away in spite (sic) of the best efforts of Doctors of RR Hospital," he wrote.

Mukherjee was president from 2012 to 2017, the capstone to a 51-year political career. The office of the presidency is largely ceremonial in India. The prime minister is the chief



India's former President Pranab Mukherjee, 84, died, Aug. 31, 2020, following weeks of hospitalization and a COVID-19 diagnosis.

executive. Mukherjee was previously finance, foreign and defense minister, and on the boards of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

He entered politics in 1969, when he managed an independent candidate's successful bid for Parliament in a special election. Then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi recruited him to her party, the Indian National Congress.

"His demise is (the) passing of an era," tweeted current Indian President Ram Nath Kovind. "A colossus in public life, he served Mother India with the spirit of a sage. The nation mourns losing one of its worthiest sons."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi of the rival Bharatiya Janata Party wrote that Mukherjee "has left an indelible mark on the development trajectory of our nation." He tweeted an image of himself bowing to touch Mukherjee's feet in a gesture of respect.

Via voanews.com

Sri Lanka Spots Oil Slick from Fire-Stricken Supertanker

By Reuters

September 08, 2020

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA - Sri Lanka's navy said Tuesday that an oil slick had been spotted a kilometer from a loaded supertanker off the country's east coast, as efforts to extinguish a fire on board continued.

Sri Lankan officials are working to assess any damage to the envi-

ronment and marine life from the incident, which began last Thursday, when a fire initially broke out in the engine room of the New Diamond supertanker.

The first fire aboard the ship, which was chartered by Indian Oil Corp to import 2 million barrels of oil from Kuwait, was put out, but a second one broke out Monday.



A Sri Lankan navy boat sprays water on the New Diamond, a very large crude carrier that was carrying about 2 million barrels of oil, after a fire broke out off the east coast of Sri Lanka, September 8, 2020.

Harris: Nationwide Mask Mandate Wouldn't Carry Punishment



FILE - Democratic vice presidential candidate Senator Kamala Harris, then still the nominee, removes her face mask as she prepares to speak at the Hotel DuPont in Wilmington, Delaware, Aug. 13, 2020

By Associated Press
August 28, 2020

WASHINGTON - Democratic vice presidential candidate Sen. Kamala Harris said Friday "nobody's going to be punished" if she and running mate Joe Biden implement the nationwide mask mandate they have called for during the coronavirus pandemic.

"It's really a standard. I mean, nobody's gonna be punished. Come on," the California senator said, laughing off a question about how to enforce such a rule during an interview that aired Friday on NBC's "Today." "Nobody likes to wear a mask. This is a universal feeling. Right? So that's not the point, 'Hey, let's enjoy wearing masks.' No."

Harris suggested that, instead, the rule would be about "what we — as responsible people who love our neighbor — we have to just do that right now." "God willing, it won't be forever," she added.

Biden and Harris have worn protective face masks in public and stayed socially distanced from each other when appearing together at campaign events. Both have said for weeks that a rule requiring all Americans to wear

them could save 40,000 lives in just a three-month period. While such an order may be difficult to impose at the federal level, Biden has called on every governor in the country to order mask-wearing in their states, which would likely achieve the same goal.

President Donald Trump has urged Americans to wear masks but opposes a national requirement and personally declined to do so for months. He has worn a mask occasionally more recently — but may not encourage them much going forward if the final night of this week's Republican National Convention is any guide.

About 1,500 people packed tightly together Thursday on the South Lawn of the White House to hear Trump accept Republican nomination for reelection. Masks were not required and were rarely worn — and the crowd violated District of Columbia guidelines prohibiting large gatherings in an attempt to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

More than 180,000 Americans have died from the coronavirus, far more than in any other country.

Via voanews.ca

"The ship has tilted slightly towards where the fire broke out due to the large amount of water sprayed to douse the fire," Sri Lanka navy spokesman Indika de Silva told Reuters, adding: "Oil in the engine room appears to have leaked out to the sea".

The New Diamond was being held about 40 kilometers (25 miles) east of Sri Lanka, while firefighting boats sprayed it with water, de Silva said.

An Indian air force plane stationed at the international airport in Hambantota dropped a specialized chemical mixture on the slick to control it, the Sri Lankan navy said in a statement.

The latest fire was on the right side of the vessel near the funnel and was not near the tanks holding the crude oil, Silva said earlier, adding it was still burning.

A salvage team was working at the site and "additional assets, salvage personnel and fire fighting equipment" were on the way, he said.

Sri Lanka has deployed scientists and experts from its Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA), with one team examining the area around the ship and another coastal areas for signs of pollution, Jagath Gunasekara, deputy General Manager of MEPA, said.

Via voanews.com



Experts Warn China-India Standoff Risks Unintentional War

By Associated Press

September 07, 2020

SRINAGAR, INDIA - As a months-long military standoff between India and China along their disputed mountain border protracts, experts warn that the nuclear-armed countries — which already have engaged in their bloodiest clash in decades — could unintentionally slide into war.

For 45 years, a series of agreements, written and unwritten, maintained an uneasy truce along the border on the eastern edge of the Himalayan region of Kashmir. But moves and clashes over the past few months have made the situation unpredictable, raising the risk that a miscalculation from either side could have serious consequences that resonate beyond the cold-desert region.

“The situation is very dangerous on the ground and can spiral out of control,” said Lt. Gen. D.S. Hooda, who was head of the Indian military’s Northern Command from 2014 to 2016. “A lot will depend on whether the two sides are able to control the volatile situation and make sure it doesn’t spread to other areas.”

The two Asian giants have held several rounds of talks, mainly involving military commanders, without success. In a sign that the talks are now shifting to the political level, their defense ministers met in the Russian capital on Friday to try end the impasse. It was the first high-level direct contact between the sides since the standoff erupted in the Ladakh region four months ago. Last week, the world’s two most populous nations, which share thousands of kilometers (miles) of disputed border, accused each other of fresh provocations, including allegations of soldiers crossing into each other’s territory.

India said its soldiers thwarted “provocative” movements by China’s military twice last week. In turn, China’s Defense Ministry accused Indian troops of crossing established lines of control and creating provocations along the border.

Tensions first erupted in early May with a brawl between soldiers from the two sides. The situation escalated dramatically in June when they fought with clubs, stones and fists, leaving 20 Indian soldiers dead and dozens wounded. China did not report any casualties.



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (3rd R) and China's President Xi Jinping (3rd L) lead talks in Mamallapuram, on the outskirts of Chennai, India, Oct. 12, 2019

The standoff is over disputed portions of a pristine landscape in a region that boasts the world’s highest landing strip and a glacier that feeds one of the largest irrigation systems in the world.

Hooda said that while he doesn’t think either side is looking for full-scale war, the “real calamity” is the breakdown of existing agreements and protocols. Wang Lian, a professor of international relations at Peking University in Beijing, said the possibility of open warfare is unlikely because both sides have shown restraint in recent encounters. But he also said that New Delhi is under pressure from domestic anti-China sentiment and has been emboldened by tougher U.S. measures against Beijing.

“I don’t think (India) would go so far as to escalate military conflict of a larger scale, but I believe both sides are making some preparations,” Wang said. India and China share a disputed and undermarked 3,500-kilometer (2,175-mile) border, known as the Line of Actual Control, that stretches from the Ladakh region in the north to the Indian state of Sikkim.

The two nations fought a border war in 1962 that also spilled into Ladakh and ended in a fragile truce. Since then, troops from both sides have patrolled and guarded the undefined border area, according to protocols worked out by the two countries that included not using firearms against each other.

But defense analyst Rahul Bedi said that India changed the rules of engagement along the border following the deadly June clash. He said local commanders have been given “freedom to initiate adequate and proportionate responses to any hostile acts” by Chinese troops.

Members of India’s strategic community, including defense analysts and retired generals, say China’s army is opening new fronts, deepening mistrust and delaying immediate disengagement before winter, when temperatures in the region can fall to minus 50 degrees Celsius (minus 58 Fahrenheit). They argue that the cost of deployments through the winter would be punishing for an Indian economy already decimated by the coronavirus pandemic.

Another area of concern for India’s military is the country’s decades-old territorial dispute over Kashmir with archival Pakistan, a key ally of China. Indian military policymakers say that if a full-scale conflict erupts between India and China, Islamabad could throw its support behind Beijing, creating an even more dangerous situation for New Delhi.

Kashmir is divided between India and Pakistan. Its eastern edge, the cold, high-altitude desert region of Ladakh, borders China on one side and Pakistan on the other, and is home to the world’s only three-way nuclear-armed junction. Most Kashmiri Muslims on the Indian side support

an armed movement that demands the territory be united either under Pakistani rule or as an independent country.

Gen. Bipin Rawat, India’s chief of Defense Staff, warned Pakistan last week not to exploit the crisis with China.

“Pakistan could take advantage of any threat developing along northern borders (from China) and create trouble for us,” Rawat said, warning that Islamabad “may suffer heavy losses should they attempt any misadventure.”

India unilaterally declared Ladakh a federal territory and separated it from Kashmir in August 2019, ending its semi-autonomous status and straining the already prickly relationship between New Delhi and Beijing. China was among the countries to strongly condemn the move, raising it at international forums including the U.N. Security Council.

According to some Indian and Chinese strategic experts, India’s move exacerbated existing tensions with China, leading to the June border clash.

“We are entering into a very difficult phase,” said Pravin Sawhney, a defense analyst and China expert. “Disengagement is a criticality to avoid war, which the two nations don’t want. But if any war breaks out, Pakistan will pitch in, and so would Kashmiris. It will be a three-front conflict.”

Via voanews.com



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Sri Lanka govt's proposed 20th Constitution Amendment faces resistance within ruling SLPP: Party members

Colombo, Sep 13 (PTI) The Sri Lankan government's proposed 20th Constitution Amendment has faced internal resistance from within the ruling SLPP parliamentary group members itself, ahead of its inclusion in Parliament's order paper, the party members said on Sunday.

The government on September 2 gazetted the 20th Constitution Amendment draft, the new proposed legislation that would replace the 19th Amendment introduced in 2015 that curtailed the powers of the President and strengthened the role of Parliament.

The 19A was seen as the most progressive pro-democracy reformist move since Sri Lanka came to be governed under the all-powerful executive presidency in 1978. It depoliticised the government administration by ensuring the independence of key pillars such as the judiciary, public service and elections.

The 20th Amendment proposes to restore full legal immunity to the President, removing the provisions made in the 19A to take legal action against the President.

The office of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa in a statement on Saturday night said that a nine-member ministerial committee has been appointed to review the 20A in its present form and, if needed, a fresh gazette will be issued.

Ever since the government gazetted the 20A, some of the ruling SLPP's own parliamentarians and the party's allies have been publicly expressing unhappiness over its certain provisions, the party members said.

If the 20A is implemented in its present form, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa will be the hardest-hit as his current powers as the premier would be diminished with his younger brother and the President, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, assuming full executive power, they said.

Moreover, Mahinda Rajapaksa, who



is also a two-time president, will not be able to contest for the presidential election again as the two term bar has been retained in the 20A draft, the party members said.

The draft legislation was to be placed in Parliament's order book this week for debate and adaptation. However, it faced internal resistance from within the SLPP parliamentary group members. And now with Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, who is also the leader of the Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP), appointing a committee, this process could now be delayed, they said.

The committee is expected to submit its report by September 15.

The 20A has proposed several changes which include the replacement of the vital Constitutional Council (CC) with a new body called the Parliamentary council.

"The PC will consist only of members of parliament with no place for civil society representatives," according to local media reports.

Also, three independent commis-

sions, which include the Election Commission, will be abolished.

According to 20A, the chairpersons and members of the commissions shall be appointed by the president. In making such appointments, the president shall seek the observations of the Parliamentary Council (PC).

Earlier under the 19A, all these appointments were the responsibility of the CC.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa outlined his commitment to abolish the 19th Amendment during his ceremonial address to Parliament last month.

The 19A Amendment adopted in 2015 by the then reformist government was subject to much criticism by the powerful Rajapaksa clan as it prevented dual citizens from contesting elections. At the time, two of the Rajapaksa family members, including the current president, were dual citizens of the US and Sri Lanka.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa had to renounce his US citizenship to contest the presidential election in November last.

His younger brother and SLPP founder and its National Organiser, Basil Rajapaksa, is a dual citizen of the US and Sri Lanka. There are five of them already in the government.

During the August 5 general election, the SLPP sought two thirds parliamentary mandate or 150 seats in the 225-member assembly to effect constitutional changes, the foremost of them was the move to abolish the 19A.

The SLPP and allies won 150 seats and have a two-third majority to effect the constitutional change they desire.

While Gotabaya Rajapaksa was

elected as the Sri Lankan President in November last year, his eldest brother Mahinda Rajapaksa won the general election and assumed charge as Prime Minister on August 9.

Significantly, under the 20A draft, there is no provision on the Right to Information Commission, which was established by the 19A, while two important commissions -- Audit Service Commission and National Procurement Commission -- established by the 19A have been abolished.

Under the 20A draft, no fundamental rights petition can be filed against the president.

"Article 35 in it says while any person holds office as president, no proceedings shall be instituted or continued against him in any court or tribunal in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by him either in his official or private capacity," according to the draft of 20A.

Also, the president is empowered to dissolve Parliament at his will after one year of a new Parliament is elected, which means the president can remove the prime minister and his cabinet at his will even though a Parliament will be elected for a five-year term.

The 20A draft provisions also do away with the limitation on the number of cabinet ministers.

"The 19A limitations on the number of the cabinet (30) and deputy ministers (45) have been dropped. The president is empowered to appoint any number of ministers," according to the draft.

- PTI



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HEALTH & WELLNESS

An Important Milestone in Effectively Treating Acne: First New Retinoid Molecule Approved in Over 20 Years

Acne is the most common skin condition in Canada, affecting up to 5.6 million Canadians and approximately 80% of teenagers and young adults between the ages of 20 and 40. 52% of patients with facial acne also experience body acne, which refers to acne on the back, shoulders and/or chest. It occurs when pores become clogged by dead skin cells resulting in accumulation of sebum, an oily substance produced by oil glands. Bacteria within pores, called Cut bacterium acnes (*C. acnes*), can contribute to pore blockage and inflammation – visible as redness, swelling and pus that may accompany acne spots.

While acne can be painful and leave physical scars, it affects more than just the skin. Studies show that people with acne can also experience anxiety, low self-esteem, and poor self-image.

Galderma, a global leader focused on meeting the world's increasing skin health needs, announced today that Health Canada approved AKLIEF® trifarotene cream, 50 mcg/g (AKLIEF) for the topical treatment of acne of the face and/or trunk in patients 12 years of age and older. It is the first new retinoid molecule to

receive Health Canada approval for the treatment of acne in more than 20 years. Also, AKLIEF is the first topical treatment specifically studied and proven to treat both facial (forehead, cheeks, nose and chin) and truncal (chest, shoulders and back) acne, offering healthcare professionals and Canadian acne patients another treatment option.

“This new approval marks an important milestone in effectively treating acne in Canada, especially truncal acne,” says Dr. Melinda Gooderham, a dermatologist and Medical Director at the SKiN Centre for Dermatology and the SKiN Research Centre in Peterborough, Ontario. “This next generation retinoid is exciting news for physicians and patients. The clinical evidence demonstrates that AKLIEF reduces inflammatory lesions on the face, back and chest while delivering low systemic levels. This ensures efficacy, safety and tolerability which makes AKLIEF particularly useful for the treatment of acne lesions that appear on large surfaces of the skin, like the back and chest of some acne patients.”



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HEALTH & WELLNESS



HOW A VISIT TO SHN'S POP-UP COVID-19 ASSESSMENT CENTRE LED TO A GENEROUS GIFT



Wilson Cheng has lived in Scarborough since 1998, but thankfully hasn't had much need to use the hospital in that time. However, that changed once the COVID-19 pandemic began back in March.

"I counted myself fortunate to be in good health and had never really needed to visit the Scarborough Health Network," said Wilson. "But in the age of COVID-19, we all still have to do our part and follow Public Health directions to take care of each other. When I discovered that SHN was running COVID-19 Pop-Up Assessment Centres in the community, it seemed to be a very convenient option to get tested, even if just for peace of mind."

Like many people, Wilson wasn't sure what to expect when it came to the COVID-19 testing process.

"Part of me feared the worst when it came to the Pop-Up Centre, particularly the crowds and the long line-ups, but I was pleasantly surprised by what I found," Wilson shared. "The Pop-Up Centre was well laid-out and thus provided a quick and generally safe, painless, and efficient testing process."

What Wilson appreciated most from this experience though was the "human" aspect.

"There were "pauses" throughout the process where staff took the time to explain the procedure, alleviating a lot of anxiety for myself and the

other patients," Wilson continued.

"Having those frontline workers, who are likely tired and exhausted from long hours of treating patients, still take the time to have a quick, calm conversation with me at a time of high uncertainty, that really demonstrated the incredible role that they and our hospitals play in the community."

Thanks to this positive and comforting experience at the COVID-19 Pop-Up Assessment Centre, Wilson was compelled to return the favour and show his support for Scarborough's hospitals by making a generous donation to SHN Foundation and the COVID-19 Emergency Fund.

"Hospitals are one of our most

essential services. We are all in different economic situations, particularly due to COVID-19, but just as we need the hospitals to be there for us, we need to be there for them and support them. I made my donation to SHN to honour those staff that come in day-in and day-out to keep our community safe."

SHN Foundation is incredibly grateful for donors like Wilson Cheng, who have helped keep our frontline heroes equipped with the tools they need to overcome COVID-19. To learn about the many ways you can make a difference at Scarborough's hospitals, visit SHN-Foundation.ca.

• Heartbeat in a Bottle

Losing a family member or loved one is one of the most difficult life experiences – especially if that loss occurs without loved ones present.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many hospitals, including Scarborough Health Network (SHN) reduced the number of visitors in the hospital to protect patients and their families and health care workers. A painful side effect of this meant some family members would watch their loved ones pass from afar.

As a way to help support these families, SHN launched the Heartbeat in a Bottle campaign for the family members of critically ill patients who died in the hospital without visitors by their side.

"It's been heart-breaking to watch families grieve through a window, unable to hold their love ones' hand, stroke their hair, or sit by their side as they pass," noted Linda Taitt, Registered Nurse in the Critical Care Unit. "This initiative is a way for us to provide some comfort and support to those families who weren't able to be physically present."

A team consisting of the COVID-19 task force, social workers, SHN's spiritual care

team Nerissa Solis, Colleen Weaver, Jasmine Tse, and a community liaison, prepares a kit that is mailed to family members and includes an ECG strip, which shows a clipping of their loved one's heartbeat before they died.

"There isn't one person on our team who doesn't see each individual as a person – somebody's father or mother, sister, uncle, grandmother, or friend," shared Dr. Martin Betts, Chief and Medical Director, Critical Care. "We do our absolute best to deliver exceptional care which includes compassion for the patient and essential health partners, no matter what."

Accompanying that heartbeat in a bottle is a note from SHN's critical care team:

Your heartbeat I hold in my hand. A simple strip of paper filled with the essence of you.

The heart is the core of our being; the place we hold our joy and sorrow; our courage and loyalty, our faith.

Holding the image of yours fills me with the special essence that was you.

Though your heart no longer beats, this essence permeates my heart and I carry you with me each day.



Dear Family,

We hope your loved one's heartbeat will bring you comfort as the days go by. The above thoughts are from our Critical Care Team.

For family members gifted with this final keepsake, it offers many ways for them to meaningfully mark the life of those they lost: an engraved necklace with the heartbeat, a custom framed photograph in the home, or even a tattoo.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

SCARBOROUGH FAMILY GRATEFUL AFTER MIRACULOUS RECOVERY OF 82-YEAR-OLD PATIENT WITH COVID-19



A local Scarborough family was fighting back tears as 82-year-old Surujdai Sawh was wheeled out of Scarborough Health Network's Centenary hospital on July 17.

Surujdai was discharged after spending more than two months battling COVID-19.

She was reunited with her family and was welcomed with a celebration at the doors of the hospital entrance alongside staff involved in her care.

"We really thought that would be it," shared her son Terry Sawh of his reaction when he first heard his mother contracted COVID-19. "We knew the odds were against her, but to have her come out and be healthy under the care of the hospital is a godsend."

Surujdai first showed signs of the virus in May, a week after Mother's Day. She was immediately brought to the hospital and within a few days was placed in the ICU. She spent 21 days intubated on a ventilator.

The family says they do not know how she con-

tracted the virus. "The doctors were very direct and confident. They made it very clear – her age and secondary infections presented significant challenges. We were preparing for the worse. They were open and honest about the situation, but they also treated us as part of a caring family," shared Terry.

As COVID-19 cases grew in Scarborough and across the country, strict rules and guidelines were placed on visitors and guests at the SHN hospitals. However, staff made accommodations to make it as comfortable as possible for Surujdai and her family.

"The accommodation was huge. They had a social worker who worked with us and allowed us to continue our prayers through video since nobody could be there," said Hera Ramlakhan, wife of Terry. "We could see her every day. They made time for us and accommodated us to continue our traditions. We even sent in items and they placed it on her bedside."

After two months of battling the virus, Surujdai's health improved immensely and her family was informed that she was ready to be sent home.

"We thought it was a miracle. My mother spent twenty-one days on the ventilator and then had to overcome additional secondary infections. Despite those challenges, she was still able to recover and be mentally smart and alert with no cognitive loss," shares Terry.

To celebrate her discharge, the hospital and Foundation organized a special goodbye walk-through with the three units involved in her recovery.

The family organized a meal donation to provide lunch for every staff member in the three units at Centenary as a way to share their gratitude with hospital and the frontline staff.

"We are forever grateful for the amazing incredible level of care that my mother received. Starting from the doctors to the nurses, the support workers to the rehab staff, and everyone in between," said Terry. "This is just a way for us to show our appreciation for the exceptional care she received at the hospital."

On the day of her discharge, Terry also surprised the staff with a donation of hand sanitizers and masks. He thanked the staff profusely for their incredible care after seeing his mother.

"We not only want to thank the staff, but we want to pray every day going forward for their own safety and protection. I don't think they get the recognition and appreciation they deserve for the work that they do to always go beyond their call of duty."

The family hopes that Surujdai's story inspires others in the Scarborough community to give back to the hospital, especially in such an important time.

"By sharing this story, it should encourage the community to get more involved with the Foundation as it supports the hospital and helps staff to carry on their great work," said Terry. "Scarborough is our home. Scarborough is our community. We will always continue to support any initiative that will make the community stronger and better."



HEALTH & WELLNESS



HOW SCARBOROUGH LONG-TERM CARE HOMES ARE RECOVERING FROM COVID-19

Long-term care (LTC) and retirement communities in Scarborough and across Ontario have weathered quite a storm. Thousands of media stories have recounted the harrowing experiences of residents, their families and caregivers, and staff affected by and with COVID-19. No doubt, the pandemic unleashed a fury of challenging new circumstances upon these individuals.

“With close ties to these residences and unique pandemic expertise, we recognized early on that the LTC community might need our help. They are our neighbours and we are in this together. It’s our privilege to support them,” stated Dr. Bert Lauwers, Acting Chief of Staff and Executive Vice President, Medical and Clinical Programs, Scarborough Health Network (SHN).

In April, SHN formed an incident management system in partnership with 20 of Scarborough’s LTC and retirement homes to support their unique challenges. SHN experts shared guidance, education, resources and staffing to support COVID-19 testing, cleaning, infection prevention and control, resident care, and more, as needed and tailored to the needs of each home. (Special thanks to Carfirst Seniors and Community Services Association for providing transportation for our teams!)

In June, SHN entered into formal management agreements with Altamont Care Community and Extencicare Guildwood to help them restore safe care environments. In addition to providing



on-site leadership, SHN is equipping these residences with the education and tools required to sustain enhanced levels of protection for residents and staff into the future.

As part of this work, SHN shared interim reports outlining a series of recommendations for each organization in July. The reports share early insights into the systemic issues that prevailed at many LTC homes during the pandemic, and at Altamont and Extencicare Guildwood, specifically.

Each residence has already implemented several of the recommendations, and incredible progress is being made. Implementation and sustainability plans – including preparing for a possible second wave of COVID-19 – are underway for the remaining deliverables.

With Scarborough recently entering into Stage 3 of the Ontario government’s gradual reopening plan, along with the meticulous infection prevention and control and environmental services in place, LTC and retirement homes are preparing to safely welcome in nonessential services like hair care providers. Happily, indoor and outdoor family visits, as well as dining room service, have also returned at many homes.

“I am immensely proud of our staff and physicians who have voluntarily dedicated themselves to helping Scarborough’s long-term care community. They are making incredible strides,” said Elizabeth Buller, President and CEO, SHN.

“Not to mention the admirable LTC and retirement home staff across Scarborough who are persevering through vulnerable circumstances to improve resident care and create healthier environments for everyone who lives and works among this community.”

Improving population health, health equity, and system integration in Scarborough is a core element of SHN’s strategic plan. This is critical as the health network works with fellow health service partners to shape the future of care; one in which health care system resilience is built for the 632,000 residents of Scarborough across the continuum of care, whether residents are in hospitals, LTC homes, retirement homes, assisted living, congregate care settings, or in their own homes.

SCARBOROUGH ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM PROCEEDS TO FULL APPLICATION STAGE

Scarborough Ontario Health Team

UPDATE

In an exciting step forward, the group of more than 40 Scarborough health service provider partners is now being invited to move on to the next phase of the readiness assessment process and complete a full application to become the Scarborough Ontario Health Team (OHT). The application will be submitted to the Ministry of Health in September.

If approved, the Scarborough OHT will join the already approved 29 teams supporting the health service needs of Ontarians. When fully mature, it will serve one of the largest populations in the province. In the first year, the group will focus on one of Scarborough’s most vulnerable populations: people with age-related frailty, as well as multiple chronic diseases and mental health concerns. Health equity for Scarborough’s diverse community is a priority for the OHT.

“The Scarborough OHT partners are committed to designing an integrated system of care for Scarborough – one

that puts person - and family-centred care at the forefront and is easy to access and use,” said Lori Berger Heygi, Client Family Advisor.

OHTs are part of the Ontario government’s plan to improve access to quality health care and provide a better patient experience. Health care providers (including hospitals, doctors, and home and community care providers) work as one coordinated team, no matter where they provide care, making it easier for people to navigate the health system and transition between providers. Scarborough’s health care partners have collaborated in many new and creative ways throughout COVID-19. The lessons we have learned from the pandemic will be put to good use as we move forward together.

“Building on our long history of collaboration, together, we can and will transform how care is provided for the people of Scarborough,” said Elizabeth Buller, President and CEO of Scarborough Health Network.

BRINGING YOU HOSPITAL CARE FROM THE COMFORT OF HOME

With COVID-19 being a new illness, a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 can bring about uncertainty for a patient. Similar to any diagnosis, questions may arise from the patient – What will my symptoms be? How long will they last? Will I need hospital care? – and many more.

The good news is that most COVID-19 patients don’t require hospital care, as symptoms are usually relatively mild. But that doesn’t mean that they don’t still need support from their health care provider throughout their illness.

As a way to support patients through a COVID-19 diagnosis, a team from Scarborough Health Network (SHN) and the Central East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) developed the COVID-19 remote monitoring program.

When a patient tests positive at a SHN hospital, they will be contacted by a doctor who will inform them of their results, discuss their next steps, and answer any questions they have. The patient will then be invited to enroll in the optional remote monitoring program.

Upon joining, patients will use an interactive app to track their symptoms twice a day, with all information being transmitted back to the remote monitoring team. The program even goes above and beyond to provide pulse oximeters, which are small, lightweight devices used to monitor the amount of oxygen carried in the body. This provides the nurse further insight into a patient’s breathing at home.

Should symptoms escalate, a nurse from the Central East LHIN will contact the patient for a phone assessment. Based on the follow-up conversation with the patient and the severity of their symptoms, the nurse will then connect with one of

SHN’s doctors (who is part of the escalation support team), to determine the next steps in the patient’s care journey. Nine SHN doctors have volunteered their time to support the escalation support team.

“Patients with COVID-19 symptoms are understandably worried as they don’t know what the future holds after their diagnosis, especially if they have other illnesses,” noted Dr. Larry Nijmeh, Emergency Services. “Being able to offer virtual nursing support and home monitoring with pulse oximetry provides both a safety net and a compassionate voice on the other end of the line.”

The LHIN team also works with patients within the program to connect them with further community supports, if needed. For example, a patient with an underlying health condition may not need to go back to the hospital for further care, but may need further home support or community care.

“The COVID-19 remote monitoring program has been an amazing way to demonstrate the value of collaboration between hospitals and Home and Community Care,” said Cathy Slevin, Senior Manager, Clinical Care Programs, Central East LHIN.

“Anxious patients receive much needed support, nurses express a high degree of satisfaction with the caring for patients remotely, and the physicians from the SHN escalation support team are always available for consultation when needed. I look forward to continuing to find ways to partner with our Ontario Health East hospitals in order to improve safe transitions from hospital to home.”

Thank you to our partners at the Central East LHIN for their support in providing exceptional care across our region.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

TMS Clinics of Canada Opens New Facility to Offer Deep Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (Deep TMS) for Patients with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)

The company is the first clinic to bring this innovative treatment to the Greater Toronto area

VAUGHAN, Ontario, Sept. 10, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- TMS Clinics of Canada, a mental health clinic providing advanced treatments for major depressive disorder (MDD), announced today that it is officially opening its doors and offering BrainsWay's Deep Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (Deep TMS). The opening of the clinic comes at a time where Canadians are experiencing increased levels of depression due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as concern around a projected increase in suicide rates among Canadians.

"We elected to make our announcement on World Suicide Prevention Day as a way to remind those living with a mental illness during these unprecedented times that there is hope," said Dr. Leon Steiner, psychologist at TMS Clinics of Canada. "We have seen the success of Deep TMS across the United States and overseas and wanted to bring the same opportunity to patients in the Greater Toronto Area."

TMS Clinics of Canada is the first facility in the country to provide the TMS Plus System-Advanced Depression Treatment & Relapse Prevention. This evidence-based system combines Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation with potent and efficient components of Behavioural Activation Therapy and Positive Psychology to help clients overcome their mental distress and prevent relapse.

BrainsWay's Deep TMS device non-invasively administers magnetic waves through a cushioned helmet to target deep structures of the brain that impact depression symptoms. The treatment offers a medication-free solution, and patients can return to normal activities, such as driving, immediately following the 20-minute session. Because Deep TMS penetrates deeper and broader in the brain than traditional TMS, there is evidence that response rates are higher than traditional TMS.

TMS Clinics of Canada is open on Sunday through Friday and is located at 7250 Keele St, Vaughan, ON L4K 1Z8. Patients can visit tmsofcanada.com or call (905) 897-9699 to learn more.

About TMS Clinics of Canada

Established in 2020 by Dr. Leon Steiner, who brings more than three decades of practice in helping people suffering from treatment resistant depression and anxiety, TMS Clinics of Canada takes pride in mental health care and understands how integral it can be in one's overall life experience. The team at TMS Clinics of Canada is well trained, knowledgeable and



Dr. L. Steiner, Registered Psychologist



TMS CLINICS OF CANADA
LOVE LIFE AGAIN



shares the mission of giving their patients the best chance at remission.

About BrainsWay

BrainsWay is a commercial stage medical device company focused on the development and sale of non-invasive neurostimulation products using the Company's proprietary Deep Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (Deep TMS) platform technology. The Company received marketing authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for its products for a variety of patient populations, including in 2013 for patients with major depressive disorder (MDD), in 2018 for patients with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and in 2020 for patients with smoking addiction. BrainsWay is currently conducting clinical trials of Deep TMS in various psychiatric, neurological, and addiction disorders. To learn more, please visit www.brainsway.com.



BrainsWay DTMS device



Covid-19 Pandemic and vaccine to combat the disease

By: **Kanangasabai Theivendirarajah**, Ph.D. (London)

World Health Organization (WHO) announced covid-19 viral infection as a global health crisis and declared as a pandemic on March 11th 2020. Since then the virus has spread all over the globe and as of today September 6th 2020, 27 million people have been infected and 887,040 people have died of the disease. This number may increase and a million may die by the end of this year. The elderly population who had pre-existing health issues accounts for a large percentage of the dead. In a recent report from Australia, 23 people have died in the state of Melbourne and out of this 22 were elderly people living in long term

spectrum inhibitor of RNA viruses); interferon-1-beta, a drug that stimulates an antiviral immune response and dexamethasone, a corticosteroid used as an anti-inflammatory and immunosuppressant. Most recently convalescent plasma collected from patients recovered from the covid-19 illness is being used as a therapeutic method. Patients recovered from the disease will have antibodies in their blood capable of tackling new infections effectively. President Trump recently announced authorization of convalescent plasma for covid-19 patients as a therapeutic in the USA. The controversial use of hydroxychloroquine in USA is still considered in India as a prophylaxis among those who have come in contact with people who



health care homes.

Up to now containment is the only means available to stop the spread of covid-19 virus. Several means such as social distancing, wearing protective masks, isolating the infected persons and community testing for covid-19 are in practise in most countries to keep the infections as low as possible in the community. Patients with severe symptoms are given anti-viral medications or therapeutics to reduce the severity and to shorten the recovery period. Some of these drugs are Remdesivir, an analogue of adenosine nucleotide; lapinavir and ritonavir (anti-HIV drugs); ribavirin (a broad

have tested positive for covid-19. In the densely populated slums of Bombay, in India, covid-19 infections and mortality were greatly reduced by the use of a combination of hydroxychloroquine, vitamin D and zinc tablets along with homeopathic medicine.

Governments and people all over the world are eagerly awaiting for a vaccine or vaccines to combat this viral infection. A vaccine is the only option that is capable of prevention and spread of covid-19 virus. Russia was the first country to announce a vaccine named Sputnik-V and the Russian President Putin boasted

that he had tested it on his daughter. Many have concerns about the safety and efficacy of this vaccine. President Trump at his recent Republican Convention speech mentioned that he is very hopeful that a vaccine will be produced before the end of the year or even earlier by November. Many pharmaceutical giants in America are in their phase 3 trials with regard to vaccine development. Pharma companies like Sinopharm (China), Sinovac (China), Moderna (Boston, USA) and CanSinoBiologics (China) are in the final phase 3 trials. Once these are approved by their respective drug agencies, mass production will begin and vaccine treatment starts, first for the

elderly and vulnerable people. Some other great pharma giants such as AstraZeneca are in collaboration with university of Oxford; Pfizer –BioNTec with study sites in Europe and North America; Johnson & Johnson with study sites in Spain, Netherland and Germany are in phase 2/3 (mid phase trials). Canadian universities were conducting trials with CanSinoBiologics, a China based company. Unfortunately these trials have been halted due to political concerns between the two countries. Canada is now conducting trials with US based pharma companies such as Johnson & Johnson and Novavax. Vaccine business in the world is dominated by Pfizer, Merck, GlaxoSmithKline and Sanofi. These giants are also involved in the covid-19 vaccine production. 40 or more companies are in clinical trials. Hopefully by the end of this year as President Trump predicts or by the beginning of 2021 a vaccine or vaccines will come into operation. Why vaccine or vaccines because different platforms are used by the researchers to come up with a vaccine. Researchers make vaccines using inactivated viruses or coronavirus proteins to provoke immune response in the body to fight covid-19. Some others use viral vectors that cannot replicate but contain covid-19 gene to provoke immune response. Some others like Moderna employ messenger RNA in their vaccines. For mass production of vaccines, companies use different methods such as the use of Bacteria, yeasts, animal cell lines and plants like tobacco. We shall soon see an end to this pandemic which has caused untold miseries to many and severely affected global economies

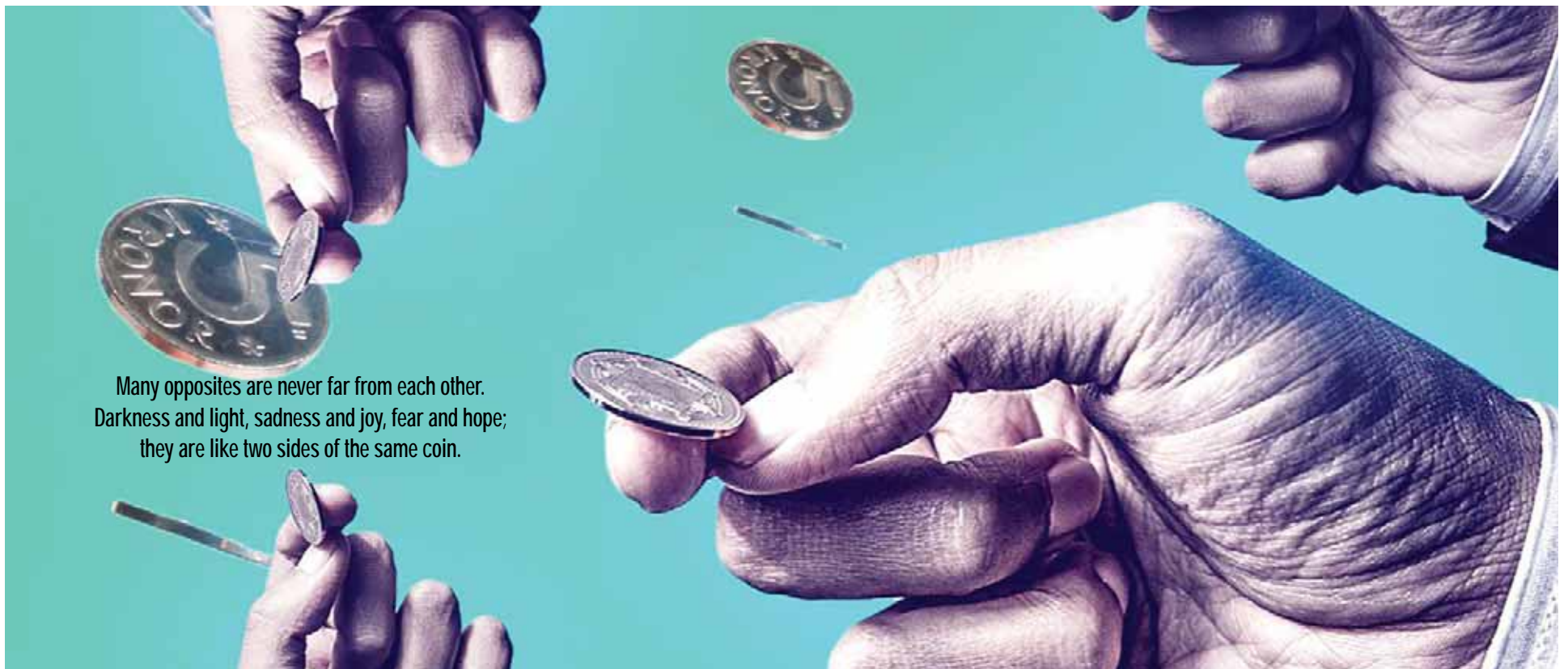


SPECIAL FEATURE

Finding Yourself

Flip the coin

If you have only experienced your ugliness, then you haven't flipped the coin



Many opposites are never far from each other. Darkness and light, sadness and joy, fear and hope; they are like two sides of the same coin.

“How can you love yourself when you’ve started to believe that you’re ugly and a failure?”

Well, fortunately it is not a fact; it’s only your belief. Beliefs can change.

Belief is like this—and I used to give this analogy. If I’m sitting with somebody, I can say, “Make believe there is a cow here. No harm done; just make believe there’s a cow here—and this cow gives a lot of milk. Just believe that, okay?”

No harm, right But if I’m having tea, real tea, and I want some milk, rest assured this make-believe cow cannot give to my real tea. Now if I’m having make-believe tea, this make-believe cow can give a little bit of its milk for my make-believe tea. But if I’m having real tea, it doesn’t work.

There is another phase after “believing,” and that phase is called “knowing.” It’s living in reality, not just—because a lot of people say to me, when I talk about what I talk about, “Oh, come on; be real.” And the thing is, with all their fear, they’re actually the ones

living in fiction.

You can believe anything you want, but what is the reality? The reality is that darkness is never far from light.

Last time you flipped on a switch and turned on a light in a dark room, how long did it take for that darkness to disappear? You turned on the light bulb, and it’s just like, , you know, a drain? Or like a toilet flushing? No! Voom? Boomf.

Darkness is never far away from light; light is never far away from darkness. Joy is never far away from sadness, and sadness is never far away from joy. They ride together.

When you go into a bathroom and you lock the door for privacy, do you think it’s private? No, your anger, your fear, your doubt have come with you. Even though you book only one seat for yourself on a bus or an airplane, your anger, your fear, your doubt, they’re always there. Always, always!

But, so is kindness, so is understanding, so is gratitude. These things are also there, because they are the other side of the coin.

And you need to know this—that if you have only experienced your ugliness, then you haven’t flipped the coin. You need to flip the coin. Because the other side of that coin is incredible beauty.

And what is the beauty? What is the beauty? Somebody who is symmetrically shaped? A movie star? What is the beauty? Because, you know the reality of it is, how many movie stars that are drop-dead gorgeous, spend hours sometimes looking at themselves in the mirror, going, “Oh my God. Am I? Am I?”

You are the beholder. If you feel in you—and see, — that’s why you need to know yourself!

Socrates said, “Know thyself.” You need to know yourself. Why do you need to know yourself? Because that is when you will be able to experience the true beauty that you are. That’s why you need to know yourself.

There’s a billion reasons, I think, 7.5 billion reasons on the face of this earth of why you should know yourself. Because if each one did, I think we would have a very different

situation in this world; if the beauty that you conceive in your mind is beauty, that is different than you truly are.

See with the eyes. See the wonderment. The children—and, gorgeous! They look at something incredible, and they’re in awe! In awe!

And of course, the stupid parent going, “That’s the moon.” They could care less. They fell in love with the moon before the stupid dad said—or stupid mom said—“That’s the moon.” They saw the moon that doesn’t have a name, and they loved it. That’s beauty—and you have that beauty.

Whatever other people tell you, you are worse than them, because you constantly sit there and tell yourself, “I’m not beautiful; I’m not beautiful; I’m not....”

This beauty will be gone one day. The same thing that people come and kiss, they will be like, “Huh-huh, no way.”

So, it’s not here—this is not the “beauty” part. The beauty part is here, in your heart, in yourself.

- Prem Rawat

www.timelesstoday.com

SPECIAL FEATURE



Multicultural Canadians the future of generosity: *Survey*



Toronto, September 1, 2020 – Newcomers to Canada and second-generation Canadians are highly motivated to support charitable causes, according to a new survey from Imagine Canada, Ethnicity Matters and a coalition of charities and nonprofits.

The 2020 study, titled the Multicultural and Newcomer Charitable Giving Study, is one of the first in Canada to explore the influence of ethnicity on supporting charities. The study’s conclusion: the communities surveyed – South Asian, Chinese, Filipino, Black (Afro-Caribbean/African), Arab and Iranian – share a strong willingness to embrace community service.

The study shows that newcomers to Canada and second-generation citizens are driven to give and volunteer out of a sense of duty to advance the well-being of their communities and Canadian society generally. Empathy for those in need is deeply rooted in strong family and religious values.

Three quarters of those surveyed say giving is the right thing to do, while seven-in-ten believe it is very

The study also underscores the enormous potential for charities and nonprofits to engage multicultural Canadians in their respective causes that would include participation as donors. The survey found, for example, that six-in-ten donors (58 per cent) believe they can give more and only a third are happy with the amount they give.

Findings related to the willingness and ability to give, coupled with census data, indicate that the newcomer groups surveyed have the financial capacity to provide charities with nearly \$1.7 billion in new funding annually.

Key Findings

- ✓ On average, newcomers and second-generation Canadians give \$857 per year in donations
- ✓ 82 per cent have either donated or volunteered in the past year (74 per cent have donated and 54 per cent have volunteered)
- ✓ 75 per cent support charities because “It’s the right thing to do”
- ✓ 70 per cent believe it is very important for today’s parents to teach

the original study. This research found that 30 per cent of those surveyed intended to increase their donations in response to the pandemic.

“The face of Canada is changing, and we are entering a transformational period,” says Bobby Sahni, Partner & Co-founder of Ethnicity Matters. “This study should serve as a call to action for all Canadian CEOs and stakeholders of the sector to understand and capitalize on the importance and generosity of ethnic communities.”

The study was sponsored by Blackbaud, a cloud computing provider that serves the social good community.

“In order to best serve, we must first listen and learn. The insights elevated within this study will allow for a better understanding and corresponding response to the unique values that

lingual charitable organization whose cause is Canada’s charities. Through our advocacy efforts, research and social enterprises, we help strengthen charities, nonprofits and social entrepreneurs so they can better fulfill their missions. Our vision is of a strong Canada where charities work together alongside business and government to build resilient and vibrant communities.

Ethnicity Matters

Ethnicity Matters is Canada’s leading authority in multicultural marketing and communications. We are a full-service business solutions company, dedicated to driving sales and growth for clients by connecting them to flourishing ethnic and new immigrant communities both at home and around the world.

Blackbaud

Leading uniquely at the intersection



important to pass on these values by teaching their children about the importance of charitable giving.

“The good news emerging from this research is that generosity is thriving in multicultural communities across Canada”, says Bruce MacDonald, President & CEO of Imagine Canada. “The experience of settling in a new country has given newcomers and second-generation Canadians a highly compassionate perspective on taking care of others. Charities and nonprofits are on the frontline of providing services when people arrive in this country, so their first experiences reflect a caring society. These groups are highly aware of the goodness created when people help each other.”

their children about charitable giving

- ✓ 70 per cent believe even helping a little bit is always worthwhile
 - ✓ 59 per cent have a higher regard for businesses that donate to charitable causes compared to those who do not
 - ✓ 54 per cent would like to do more for charities by volunteering more of their time
 - ✓ 39 per cent would support more charities if they were asked more often
 - ✓ 39 per cent would like to support more charities but do not know how
- The influence of COVID-19 on attitudes towards giving among these Canadians was partially measured by a follow-up survey of two of the groups – Chinese and South Asian – in

exist within our powerful Canadian giving community,” says Allan Hoffmann, President & General Manager, Blackbaud – Canada.

The full study is available online at: <https://www.imaginecanada.ca/en/360/new-report-multicultural-canadians-future-giving>

Methodology

The Multicultural and Newcomer Charitable Giving study was conducted by Ethnicity Matters’ partner agency Cultural IQ - using its CulturaPanel™ - between February 3 and March 2, 2020, with a stratified sample of 3,130 Canadian residents aged 18 years and over.

Imagine Canada

Imagine Canada is a national, bi-

of technology and social good, Blackbaud provides cloud software, services, expertise, and data intelligence that empower and connect people to drive impact for social good. We serve the entire social good community, which includes nonprofits, foundations, companies, education institutions, healthcare organizations, and the individual change agents who support them.

imaginecanada.ca | Twitter: @ImagineCanada | Facebook: [facebook.com/ImagineCanada](https://www.facebook.com/ImagineCanada)

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SPECIAL FEATURE

Unwanted Child



You, unwanted child of China
Killing thousands of people there,
Unsatisfied with carnage in China
Moved to Europe to slaughter there.

You migrated to Europe; first Italy:
Devastate and add to your tally.
Tried tormenting His Holiness the Pope,
His divine power shattered your hope.

Worried the Prince & Primer of England,
Succeeded in diminishing population there
Causing deaths of innocents unplanned
You moved to countries near there.

You terrified powerful Trump & Trudeau:
And continued your massacre there too
Then marched to India & Sri Lanka,
Unable to move freely in Lanka.

You shook the world unaware
And caused havoc in the world.
Now we are arming, beware
Will be wiped out from the world. -

We adore spiritual and medical teams
Burning the midnight oil to tame
And remove your might & name
From the world once and for al

- Kingsley -

Quotable Quotes - 2020 They said it ...

"It's time for us, for we the people, to come together. Make no mistake, united we can, and will, overcome this season of darkness in America. Our current president has failed in his most basic duty to the nation: he's failed to protect us, My fellow Americans, that is unforgivable."

- **Joe Biden, U.S. Presidential Candidate**



"Despite all of our greatness as a nation, everything we ever achieved is now in danger. This election will decide whether we save the American dream, or whether we allow a socialist agenda to demolish our cherished destiny."

- **Donald Trump, U.S. President at the Republic Party Convention**



"My walks on the beach in Besant Nagar in Chennai with my grandfather had a profound impact on me for what I am today. "Oh, how I wish she (Her mother) were here tonight, "But I know she's looking down on me from above."

- **Kamala Harris, U.S. Vice-Presidential candidate at the Democratic Party Convention**



"It's about time we broke that glass ceiling. And I like to say to all the Canadian women across our amazing country who are out there breaking glass ceilings, keep going"

- **Christiya Freeland on her appointment as Canada's Finance Minister**



"A moment of pride for Tamil Nadu"
- **O. Panneerselvam, Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister, describing the nomination of Kamala Harris as U.S. Vice Presidential candidate.**



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SPECIAL FEATURE



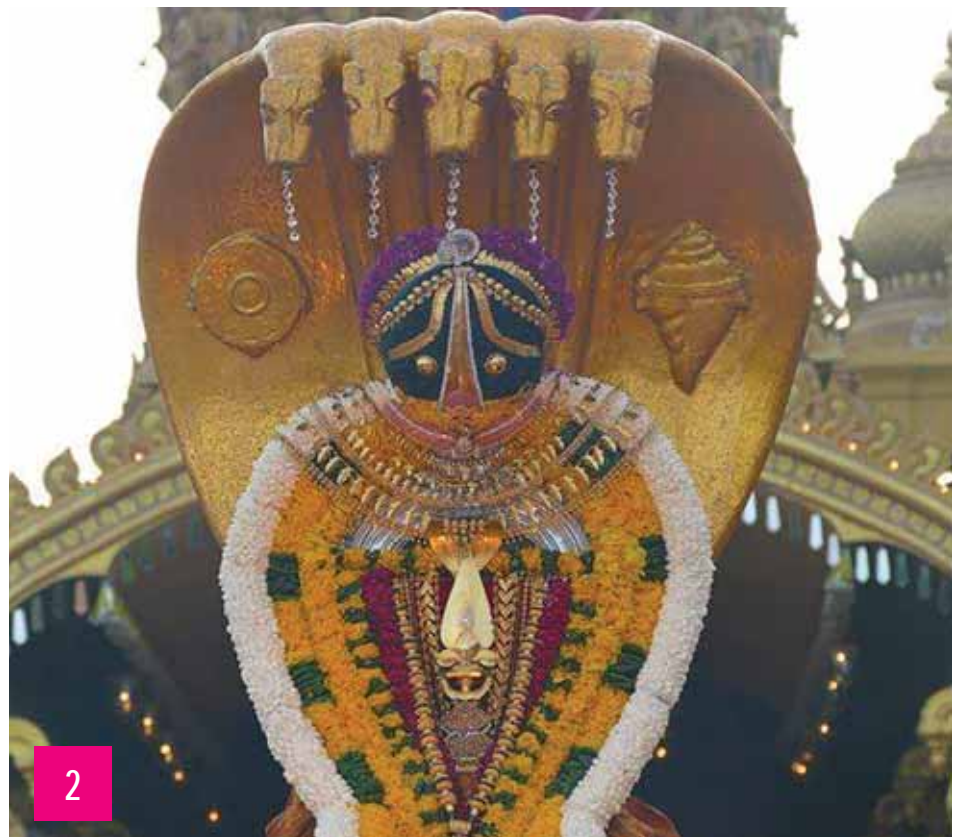
Annual Murugan Festivals of Northern Sri Lanka

The trinity of Murugan temples from Northern Sri Lanka, in benevolence to devotees at Maviddapuram, Nallur and Thondaimanaru held annual festivals over the past several weeks. The three special places hold the Murugan devotees of Sri Lanka in a grip of devotion, especially during the time of festivals that resonates wherever they live now.

The three widely revered Murugan Temples of Jaffna peninsula were well attended by ardent devotees even amidst this time of global pandemic during the festivals. There has been no reported cases of illnesses in the aftermath of the conclusion of the festivities.

Here is a pictorial collection of this year's festivals:

- 1. Maviddapuram Kandaswamy Temple:
- 2. Nallur Kandaswamy Temple:
- 3. Selva Sannidhi Murugan Temple:





SPECIAL FEATURE

FREE PARADISE RESORT FOR COMFORT AND COURTESY

A wayside restaurant to break journey and dine

C. Kamalaharan

It was our first visit to the Free Paradise Resort at Hurigahamula Horampella during our trip from Colombo to Batticaloa last February. The resort is a popular wayside restaurant on the highway between Minuwangoda and Divilupitiya. For us it was an entirely new experience as we spent our morning there while having breakfast. What impressed us most was the way the staff and waitresses treated us with the utmost courtesy throughout our stay there. They were kind polite and friendly besides being at our beck and call. Another feature that impressed us was that it caters to everyone without any unfairness. All nationals Sri Lankan Indian Westerner Chinese and Thai are treated alike.

The food items are arranged in the buffet in such a way that the vegetarian food and the non-vegetarian food are placed separately. Accordingly beginning with the vegetarian food the first item was vegetable soup. For us being vegetarians it was our favourite dish. We served ourselves vegetable soup in bowls and moved on to the next item which was our traditional vegetarian food; rice and vegetable curry string hoppers noodles kiribath pol sambol and 'rotti'. We relished consuming those items as they were so delicious and satisfying. There were a variety of food items to cater for non-vegetarians.

At the resort buffet meal is available during breakfast and lunch. Takeaway facilities are also available. Furthermore door to door delivery within 3km from 7.00 am to 10.00 pm is provided. As the name denotes in this Free Paradise Resort one is free to have any food and any amount as one wishes and no one observes you at the buffet. For dessert 'watalappam' curd honey and fruits are obtainable.

Another noteworthy aspect is cleanliness; there wasn't any trace of littering on the table or on the floor. The resort is kept spick and span right throughout the whole day. The washrooms too are neat and tidy.

For visitors arriving in vehicles parking slots are available with kids playing area. Air conditioned banquet hall for hoisting birthday parties engagements and other similar functions are also available.

I had a friendly chat with the manager Mr. Ruwan Nayananda who briefed me about the functioning of the resort. He was a simple kind hearted soft spoken gentleman. The way he and the other employees treated us most cordially was comforting and gratifying. They received us warmly treated us friendly and gave a warm send off as we left the resort to continue our journey.



SPECIAL FEATURE

OVER 500 DEVOTEES GATHER FOR THE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF KAYTS ST. ANTONY'S CHURCH



Facade of St. Antony's church



Statue of St. Antony



By: Raymond Rajabalan

It was a joyous day for the parishioners of Kayts since not everyone is blessed to be able to attend the Bicentennial celebration of their parish church. The morning of Sunday, August 16th dawned as usual and the gloriously orange ball of the rising sun slowly began ascending in the distant horizon with its dazzling golden rays illuminating the imposing dome and façade of the historic church of Kayts St. Antony's, providing a spectacular sight. It was a unique event since it was the day of the Bicentennial celebration of this historic shrine of the saint of Antony of Padua.

At the crack of dawn, dozens of devotees from the town of Kayts and surrounding areas began arriving at the recently restored shrine. The usual silence of the area around the shrine was soon punctured by the pealing of the church bells as a prelude to the great events that were to unfold within the next short while.

Just a few minutes before seven on that hot summer morning there was a sudden flurry of activity and devotional songs in praise of the miraculous saint began to fill the air. Within minutes a bevy of students from the neighboring St. Mary's convent in bright yellow and Crimson uniform arrived and began to stage a perfectly coordinated spectacular traditional dance, setting the stage for a great religious event.

With the dance troupe leading the procession, religious dignitaries led by the Bishop of Jaffna Diocese Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin Bernard Gnanapragasam and the Emeritus Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Savundranayagam accompanied by a number of priests including the parish priest of Kayts Rev. Fr. Mac Mayooran, Rev. Fr. Anton Amalathas, the Rector of St. Antony's College, Rev. Fr. M. David (Parish Priest of Mandaithivu, Dean of the Islands Deanery and member of Jaffna Diocese Bishop Council), Rev. Fr. Sebamalai Perera (Preacher OMI) and Rev. Fr. Terrence R.O (Secretary to the Bishop) began to arrive at the church entrance. After the Bishops were provided the traditional welcome

Emeritus Bishop Thomas Savundranayagam cut the ribbon to officially declare open the restored shrine, to the accompaniment of rounds of applause from the grateful devotees. Bishop Justin Gnanapragasam then blessed the church.

When the religious service led by Bishop Gnanapragasam commenced, devotional songs by church Choir began pervading and be reverberating throughout the shrine, with the church filled to capacity, the usual order of the festive mass followed in quick succession.

Meanwhile teams of volunteers spread

throughout the precincts of the church ensured that at all times effective safety measures were implemented as per government regulations. At the close of the mass several speeches were made by some of the parishioners as well as priests.

Mr. Eymard Julian, President, Kayts St. Antony's Church Welfare Society, Colombo offered the vote of Thanks acknowledging the assistance provided by the parishioners who ensured the success of this memorable event.

Rev. Fr. A. Mac Mayooran, the energetic parish priest of Kayts who effectively coordinated the entire restoration work as well as the centennial celebration profusely thanked everyone who provided financial contribution for this noble project.

Rev. Fr. Anton Amalathas, the Rector of the neighboring St. Antony's College in his emotional speech pinpointed the significance of the link between the college and the church.

Rev. Fr. M. David speaking at the occasion appealed to the parishioners living abroad for continued help to develop the schools and churches in Kayts Island.

The day's events were brought to a close with the entire congregation feeling immensely satisfied by the staging of a once in a lifetime memorable religious event.



Emeritus Bishop Thomas cutting open the ribbon



Bishop of Jaffna blessing the church

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SPECIAL FEATURE



The dusk

By: Kumar Punithavel

I was leafing through a book of poetry and came across a poem by Mathew Arnold titled 'Growing old':

**It is to spend long days
And not once feel that we were ever young.
It is to add, immured
In the hot prison of the present, month
To month with weary pain.**

As one in the same boat, living month by month, though without pain, I was reminded of many who came to Canada fleeing the violence of the eighties in Ceylon, like me. I was searching for "book of tips on growing old" to share with my fellow Tamil seniors when I came to the realisation that there was none. So, to fill the gap, I thought of writing a brief guideline.

Firstly, it's important to note that when you get old, you will find your number of friends receding slowly. Your previous generation have probably already exited, and while only your siblings, relatives and friends remain, they too will be struggling to cope. You will find that they are more and more self-focused, and unfortunately their numbers too will slowly decline.

On your wedding day you would have taken a vow to not separate until death. But the death rarely happens together. So be prepared mentally to spend your final days alone. The probability is fifty/ fifty you will be left to tender your thoughts during your last days alone.

Once you reach the age of three score and ten years, which happens to be the biblical landmark for living, society will slowly loose interest in you. In the past you might have held a high positioned job, but today you are only an average old person. You are neither hero nor heroine in the drama happening around you. The limelight no longer shines on you – but learn to enjoy the play unfolding around you.

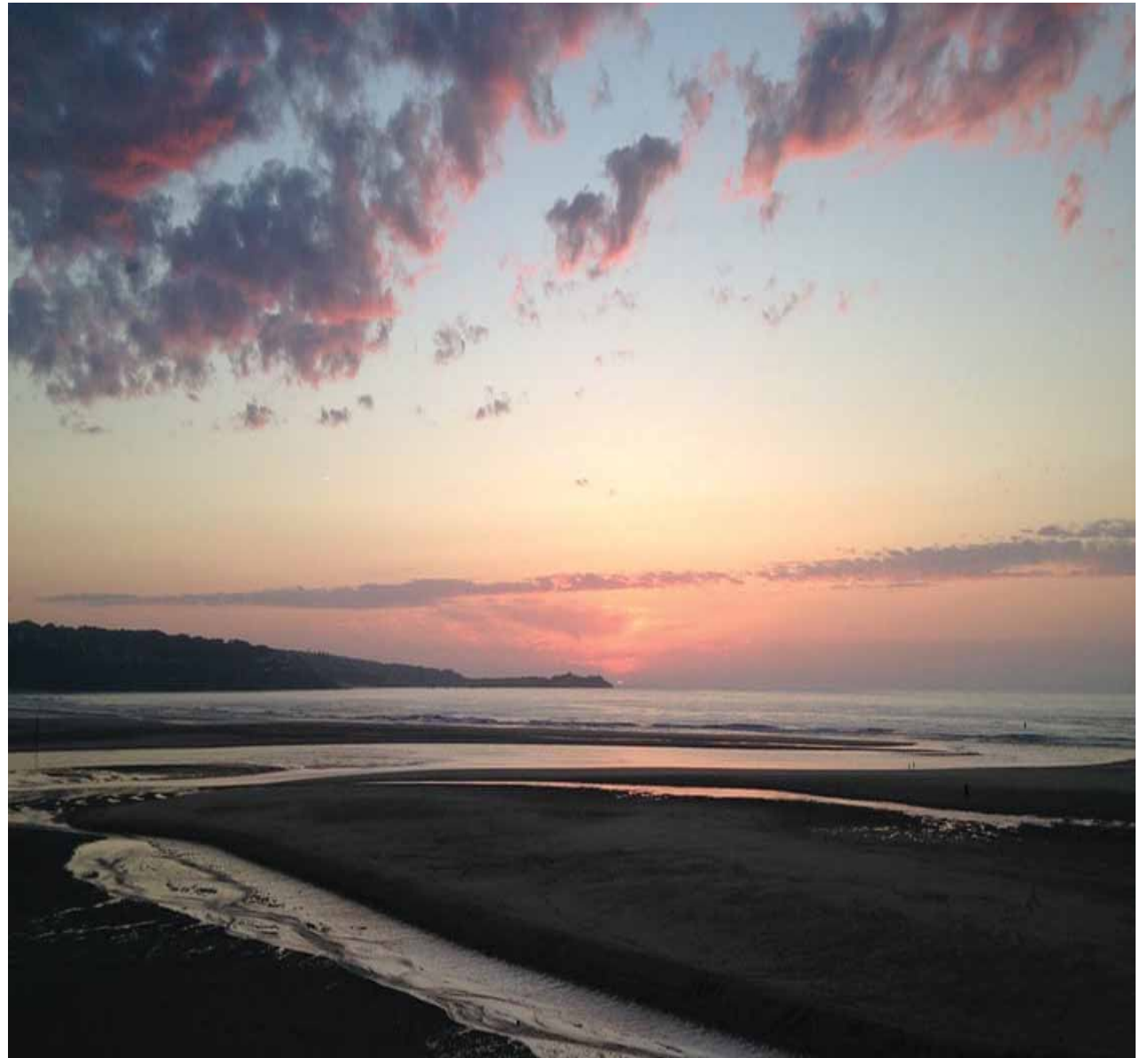
Don't forget that if you live with others, you are only a guest in the house. The guest who comes and goes, should not topple the stability and balance of the house. The household must continue even after you are gone.

Be mindful that your future journey is through a rugged path. Broken bones, blood clots, breathing difficulties, and various other guests are awaiting to come into your body to stay permanently. You can't even refuse their arrival. Learn to live with them. Don't assume vainly that you will be healthy to the last. Think positively and learn to accept reality.

Your body needs exercise. If you put on a cast around your elbow for six months, when you remove the cast you won't be able to bend your elbow! The cardinal rule of life is "if you don't use it, you will lose it". So even if there is no need to work, there is a need for exercise until your last day of life.

Never forget to exercise your brain too. As mentioned earlier if you don't use your brain you will lose it! To exercise your brain you can read, learn a new language or musical instrument, do crosswords and puzzles. Libraries are there in every corner of most cities in the world. Most carry more than just books these days.

The next factor I would like to observe is bit troublesome, but I cannot exclude it from this guideline for elders. When the wheel of time rolls on you will



once again come to the point where you started. The immortal bard William Shakespeare in his famous sonnet 'Seven stages of man' calls the seventh stage a second childhood:

**Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste,
sans everything**

Yes, you started this life on a bed, now you may be confined to a bed again. Please remember you are more blessed than many of your friends and consider the fact that you are doing the full cycle. After all the turns and turnarounds of life coming back to the starting point can be a bit painful. When you come the second time round your mother will not be there to lift you up as at the beginning. There will be none to lift you. A paid employee may be there. They will not come to anywhere close to the care your mother provided, but be thankful nonetheless. Nothing replaces your Mother and the umbilical cord connection that you had with her – it is the most powerful in this world.

In the dusk of your life I want to warn you that there are hungry hawks hovering around to grab whatever wealth you have saved. They will reach out to you by phone and internet, talking to you, acting very concerned for you, and end up by robbing you. It is worthwhile to share a scam that is very common these days. It will be a telephone call from your friends or close relatives phone informing you that the person is in deep trouble and needs some

money to get out of it. Of course, being the kind and benevolent person, you are, you will try to help. Hold on and think back. Call some one you mutually know and verify. The great Tamil poet Awaiair said 'Know the urn before dropping charity in it' (Paathiram arinthu Pichai podu). If the message is unbelievable then don't believe. It is the smartest thing to do. It is said that 'A fool and his money are soon parted'. Be smart.

Dusk comes in slowly. The last stages will be like the dusk, the darkness will creep in slowly. Once you reach seventy enjoy what you have. Whether it is a social problem, or a family problem, stand aside and enjoy watching it. Let them live their lives. Allow them to solve and you be quiet. Kill your ego and talk to everyone without hurting their feelings.

It is Thiruvalluvar who says in couplet 341:
**From what, from what a man is free
From that, from that his torments flee.**

Realize the truth of the above couplet and make yourself free of all desire. It is said in the Mahabharata that the greatest wonder in the world is, after seeing so many deaths every day, man still believes he will be there tomorrow. So do not postpone any thing and live for the day. Your dusk will be bright sunny and good.

You were more fortunate than many. Be thankful and happy. Everything will pass on; nothing is permanent inclusive your self. Wish you a bright beautiful dusk in this life.



SPECIAL FEATURE

Paths of Goodness - 5

Awwiyar

By: J. A. Rajah



‘Punniyamam pavampol ponnana cheythuva,
Manil pirantharkku vaitha porul- ennungal
Eethozhila verillai ecchamayuthalo sollu,
Theethozhliya nanmai cheyal’.

- *Nazhlvazhli-1.*

‘The merits and sins committed in past life,
Are all that are left to those born on earth,
This is what every religion says and nothing else,
It is best to avoid evil and do the deeds of merit.’

When a man dies all that goes along with are his good and bad deeds and nothing else. Every religion say that we should not do evil but do good deeds to whatever extent we can. General definition of good or bad deed is defined in terms of the sum total of impact that it creates. If large number of people are benefited by an action, we call it a good deed and if a set of people are hurt by an action, we call it a bad deed. The hurting or benefitting can be physical, mental, intellectual, egoistic or spiritual. Good deeds are powerful. That is why every religion and culture values and rewards the performance of good deeds. Besides doing good warms your own heart and makes you feel good. Helping others gives you a new perspective and keeps you from focusing on your own problems. Awwaiyar’s philosophic words are universally applicable.

SPECIAL FEATURE



CLASSICAL DEVOTIONAL SONGS WITH A HIGH DEGREE OF PIETY



By: J A Rajah

There are a large number of devotional songs in Tamil giving the appropriate incentive to engage in worship. They are written in fine classical language and have very attractive and devotional tunes. They express the mighty deeds of God in a very attractive manner. God is the very embodiment of perfection. Man seeks refuge in the mercy of God due to his inadequacies.

He lives in eternal quest for security and help in all sorts of situations. Tamil Hindu devotional songs are written in excellent Tamil words. It is only a person with dedication to the almighty God and talent in music can sing such songs of depth and heartwarming music. In the Sangamaruvia (Post sangha) period of Tamil literature Nayanmars and Alvars sang thevarams and thirupathigarams, which are reputed to be devotional literature. Appar, Sunderar, Thirunavukarasar and Manicavasagar sang thevarams which were noted for their content and attractive music. Thevaram and thirupathikarams are masterpieces of 'kthi geethas.' Alvars are those who found great joys in immersing in the glories of God. Namalzhlar exhorted 'enrum maranthariyen enenjethe vaithu, ninrum azhunthum nedumalai' (I will never forget Lord Vishnu, whom I keep in my heart).

Bhakthi is a way of life. This sense of devotion is so dominant in Tamil literature and the ecstatic hymns of the Nayanmars, Azhvars and other saints are real treasures of Tamil literature. When a person loses himself for the Almighty, his love and devotion serves as vibrant tools to pass on the experience to others and the Tamil language is such a wonderful tool. They are the hymns of Karaikal Ammaiyar, Thirumoolar and the first three Azhvars known as 'Mudhalalwarhal'.

Thirumantram is a combination of philosophy, spiritual sciences, such as tantra, mantra, yantra, yoga and bhakti and it is one of the first works that equate God to love. Thirumoolar equated body to a temple of God in his various hymns. He says that heart is sanctum sanctorum, body is the temple and soul is the spirit of God. Similarly, hymns of Azhvars too spread the fragrance of God. Here are some samples of excellent Tamil Hindu devotional songs which substantiate my assessment of the features of these memorable works of art.

1. 'Arulpurivaukkarunak kadale'

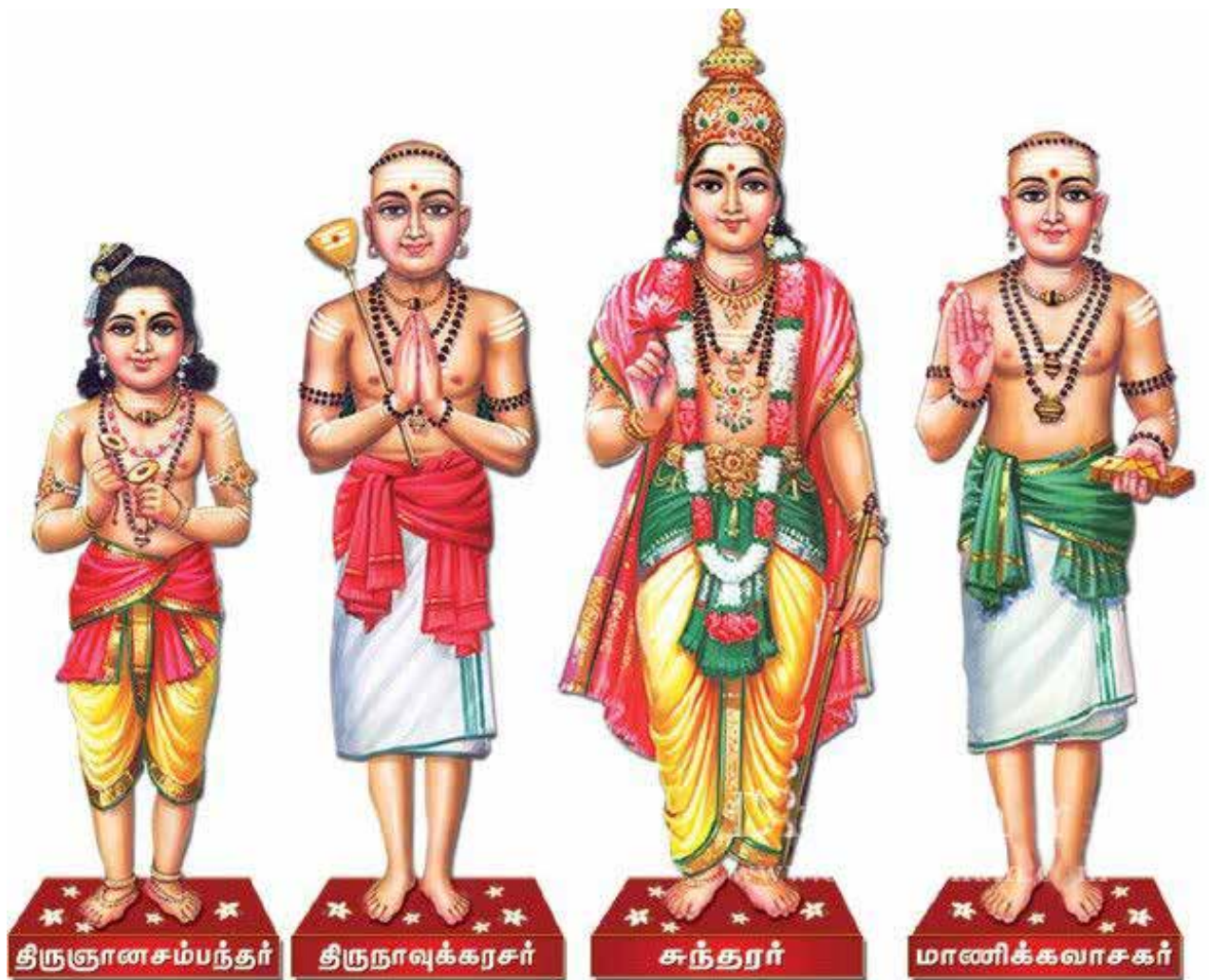
It is a devotional song written by Suddhanantha Bharathi and was sung by M.S. Subuluxumi. It refers to God as the embodiment of all mercies and invokes his blessings.

2. 'Aruljothi theivam ennai aanukonda thivam'

It was written by M.S. Visvanathan and sung by Balamuralikrishnan. It is a mesmerizing highly devotional song. It highly praises the mighty dance of Lord Siva and the goodness that results from it.

3. 'Eppadi paadinaro'

It was composed by D.K. Pattammal and sung by Unnikrishnan. The song is soulful, refreshing and marvelous. It can attract any mind. Nayan-



mar and Alvars were attracted by the mighty deeds of God and sang thevarams and pirapanthankal. Eppadi paadinaro is one of the best praise songs.

4. 'Katpanai enralum katchillai enralum'

This is a devotional masterpiece. It was sung by T.M. Soundararajan. The song sounds as if it is mixed with honey. It brings perfection and solace to the mind as one listens to the heart melting voice of TMS. The powerful electrifying expressions of this magnificent song provide moral support and inner peace. Such astounding expressions of grace and devotion energize our minds to revel in 'bhakthi'. Some of them are - "atputhamaahiya arumperum sudare" (Light), arumarai thedidum karunaik kadale (Grace), "Nirpathum nadappathum nin cheyalale" (Guide), "Kaanpathellam unthan kavvizhliyal" (Focus). The sheer tone and brilliant voice of TMS make it a remarkable and memorable devotional song. This profound devotional song with its heart melting expressions and soul touching tune is very, very appealing to devotees of all lands.

5. 'Vel Muruga, vel muruga vel'

This is a very popular prayer type song. When sung, it provides the feeling of 'kaavadi' dance around. It is broadcast from several Hindu temples in the Jaffna peninsula in Sri Lanka.

6. 'Thirumuruga enr orutharam sonnal'

It was sung by V. Nagaiah in his melodious voice. It is essentially a prayer song appreciative of the multifarious glories of Lord Murugah.

7. 'Chinthanai sei maname'

The song was sung by T.M. Soundarajan in the film Ambikapathy.

It is beautiful song that speak of the glories of the Almighty God in a superlative manner. God is the refuge for humans who are always confronted with deep feelings of fear and anxiety. It is through God's help that man can do away with evil and its varied manifestations.

8. 'Pazhlam nee appah, gnanap pazhlam nee appah'

It is one of the Muruga songs sung by K.P. Sunderambal. It could be sung only by a person who is an adept in music and the love of God.

9. 'Maruthamalai mamaniye murugayya'

It is from the film 'Theivam', sung by Madurai Somu. It was sung in excellent Tamil words expressing the grace of God in a superlative manner. It exhorts the glories of Lord Muruga who abides in the Maruthamalai Hills.

10. 'Ullam uruguthaya Muruga, unnaik kankaiyile'

It was sung by T.M. Soundararajan. It grants solace to the troubled mind. One can get a vision of God by listening to this song. It gives eternal peace of mind as it is like ambrosia to the soul. There are many Murugah songs in the Tamil which speak of Lord Murugah as the very embodiment of beauty, love and joy. They are well sung and they inspire devotees in a very spectacular and mesmerizing manner.



EDUCATION & CAREER

Free Healthcare is a necessity in our society

By: Vaarunan Srikumaraguru
(Gr. 11)

A very controversial debate that has been discussed in every country is free healthcare. Some believe that with free healthcare, the benefits it provides will lead to a better society. On the other hand however, free health care may also prove fatal for certain citizens in that specific community. I believe that providing free health care has a more positive, beneficial effect on society than negative. Free healthcare should therefore be provided in all countries.

To outline the positive factors of providing free healthcare, many benefit from this free system. It will have a major impact on those who are unable to afford health care. Many who cannot afford to have the basic medical check-ups done are those who usually contract infectious diseases and have very bad lifestyles. If these people continue to receive no medical attention, it would have a very serious effect on society. The diseases they contract and the illness they develop can easily be transferred to others in the community. A big and recent example of this is the Ebola outbreak in Western Africa. Ebola originated in 1971 when a poor man in Africa, who was living under horrible conditions contracted it. If that society had free healthcare, the current outbreak would have been prevented. Although diseases can be passed on even with proper medical attention, the chances are much smaller. In fact, Canadians who have free healthcare, have a 3 percent longer life expectancy than their neighbours. The point is, if universal healthcare was provided to every citizen, there would be a smaller chance in the spread of infectious diseases and infections.

Looking at free healthcare in the world's perspective, countries that provide this service are better off than countries that do not. Many countries that don't provide this system are third- world countries. Although these countries are poor, free healthcare should be one of its higher priorities. Most infectious diseases originate from third world states and start spreading outwards. If the diseases were prevented, then there would be no spread of diseases, heavily reducing the panic it could cause around the world. The biggest solution to the prevention of diseases is healthcare. Providing these countries with at least the basic medical needs with no charge would lead to a safer world.

Another reason why we should have universal healthcare is to eliminate private sectors that provide medical treatment. Privatized companies do not benefit the government



Vaarunan receiving award from Toronto City Councillor Jim Karygiannis
(Former Member of Parliament for Scarborough-Agincourt)

and is also not subsidized/funded by the government. This leads to very expensive treatments that are barely affordable by the average person. The elimination of the private sector and its cost would allow citizens to get the necessary medical attention they need without paying big, unnecessary bills.

Although free healthcare will benefit the society, it also has its drawbacks. A major con to this is doctors – both specialized and regular – will not be performing at their best. There is no incentive for doctors to do their best because they are working on a fixed salary. Doctors are not considered as surgeons, specialist or any other specific occupations, but regular doctors in the eyes of the government. All doctors have a fixed salary based on the hours they work and with no change in salary based on the job they perform. The incentive is gone for them to acquire more knowledge and to enhance their skills. The opportunity cost in this situation is heavy. If free healthcare is provided to everyone, the quality of the job would not be amazing, but if no free healthcare was provided, the quality of the job would be better in comparison.

With free healthcare, there would be a lot of errors in the system. The fact that this luxury is provided for free would lead to certain people abusing the system. Hospitals in general have long lined for patients to be checked, and some of these patients only have the sniffles or something very minor. By making health care free, more people will begin to take advantage of it and the line ups will increase. This is very negative because there will be people that have severe diseases or other problems that require immediate medical attention, but are restricted by the long line-up caused by those in line for minor problems.

For free healthcare to be provided, there will usually be an increase in the tax rates. The problem with this is the citizens who do not use free medical treatment will not benefit from this increase in tax rates. A

suggestion would be to start using this system regularly, but the problem with long lines comes up again. An increased tax rate would also affect the poor. Paying these increased rates would be difficult and can lead to more external problems. Another party that is affected by the increased tax rates are the wealthy with high incomes. The tax imposed would be on Ad-Velrom tax, which is dependent on one's incomes. The wealthy would be contributing a

greater percentage than the rest. They would then be paying a portion of everyone's healthcare, including their own, rather than paying a lower rate for themselves only.

This topic is really a debate on what's ethically right or what provides more profit. Looking at the large scope of things, privatized healthcare with no subsidized funding from the government is more profitable for the society. It allows for more economic development and growth, benefiting the economy and its citizens. It also leads to better quality in treatment, for the most part. On the ethical side of things, however, more people are worst off in terms of health with no healthcare. Many people can be heavily affected by various diseases and infections and can spread it if no free healthcare is provided. Both sides of this argument have valid points. I personally believe that the ethical way is the right way. More people benefit from free healthcare than those who profit from privatized healthcare. Therefore, free healthcare should be a necessity provided to all.



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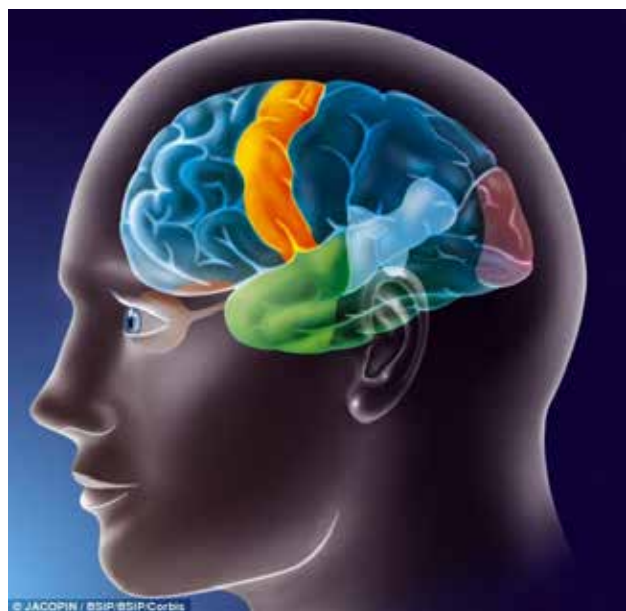


LIGHTING INFLUENCES OUR EMOTIONS

Well-Designed Lighting Impacts Our Minds and Stimulates Our Emotions

By: O.U.E. Research Institute

Light has physiological effects on the human body, and the patterns of light in a space can have psychological consequences. Ever notice that

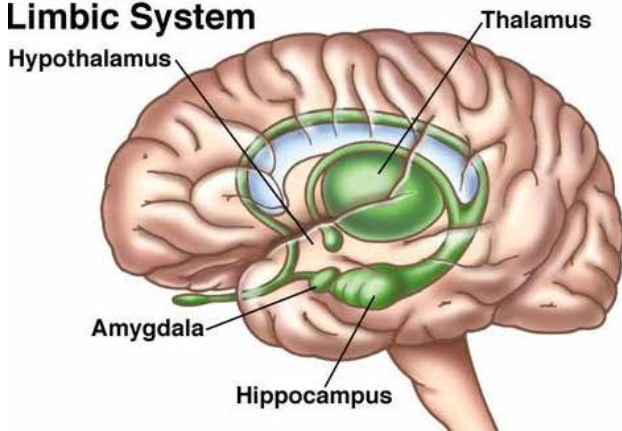


a brightly lit room feels broader and more public. The dinner with a loved one in a darker candlelit room feels intimate. A bright space with cool color tones makes us feel more energetic, while a dim space with warmer tones helps us relax. Now we are not talking so much about light as lighting how light is applied to the area. The fact is lighting impacts our minds and stimulates our emotions. Lighting can do this by itself with a visible and beautiful pendant light. But often, it is the patterns of light and dark that make an emotional impact. What light reveals, what darkness conceals, and the contrasts they create can stimulate an environment's emotional responses.

How We Interpret Light

Environmental psychologists Kaplan conducted research and discovered that a primary motivator for a person entering a space is to make sense of it. When we see the familiar, it is pleasant, as it feels comfortable. But it can also be boring. When we see the unfamiliar, it is unpleasant, as it is strange. But it can also be exciting, noting that while exciting is good, it can also be fatiguing over time.

Limbic System



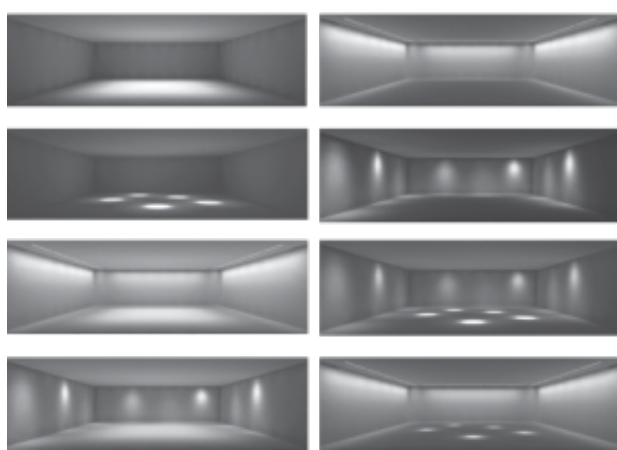
The eye is drawn to the brightest point in the field of view. Research by John Flynn at Kent State found that people like to sit in a dimmer area of a room but orient themselves toward the brightest spot. Another study by Sucov-Taylor found that when faced with a barrier, people would have to go around to enter a room, tended to go right—until brightness was increased on the left, in which case they managed to go left.

Lighting can draw attention to interesting objects in the room, such as artwork and photos, by increasing their relative brightness. The resulting visual hierarchy creates a narrative for the room. Distribution of light across space also affects

general impressions. Based on a set of lighting criteria, such as ceiling/wall emphasis, bright/dim, etc., people were asked to evaluate various lighting conditions using scaled impressions such as pleasant/unpleasant, relaxed/tense, etc.

He found that low overhead lighting, coupled with some lighting on walls, fostered a relaxed atmosphere. Bright light with lighting on walls and possibly the ceiling, associated with uniform distribution, can create a spaciousness. Low light levels at the activity space and a little perimeter lighting, coupled with non-uniform distribution, can create an intimate atmosphere.

Lighting Choices For Home



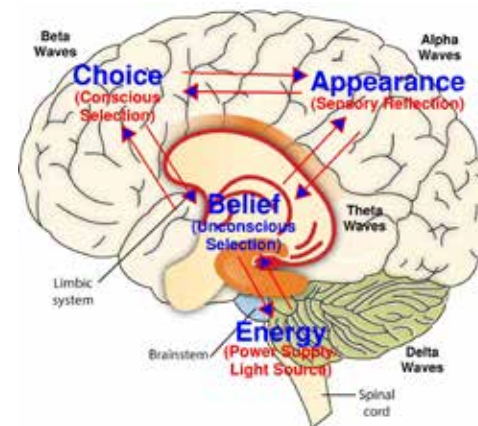
It is essential to understand that lighting choices affect us emotionally. Lighting can make space exciting or relaxed, spacious, or intimate. Lighting can also draw attention in the area. The first question is, what do you want to see when you enter the room? It entails creating a visual authority based on what is in the area. The second question is, how do you want to feel? Typically, at home, the answer is "safe and relaxed." A lighting plan is so important. It involves three discrete lighting elements in the space:

- General area lighting (typically uniform)
- Task lighting (focused on task areas)
- Accent lighting (focused on objects of interest)

Each layer is separately controlled, providing a variety of scenes. By dimming each layer, a greater variety of settings can be created, allowing different spaces uses multiple narratives for space. For example, a living room could have cove lighting, which draws the eye to the architecture and makes the area feel more grand, tense, and public. By dimming the cove lighting and turning on task lighting and accent lighting, the eye is drawn down to objects of interest, making it feel smaller and more relaxing and intimate.

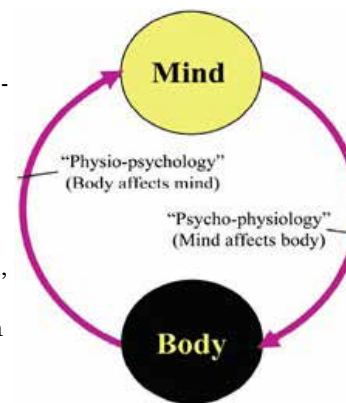
Light may reveal the world around us, but it is lighting that shapes our perception of that world. By understanding the subjective impressions that can be created by different lighting approaches, and by layering lighting that is controlled in detail, a lighting plan can produce a variety of emotional responses to a room.

Space lighting defines its personality and how people perceive it. It affects how they feel about being there. For example, an expensive restaurant



has low-level cozy lighting, which emphasizes stay longer, relax, and eat. A fast-food restaurant has a very bright light to encourage the buyer to hurry up and buy food quickly and run away. Below are various lighting effects that can take the same space and transform it into different environments.

Dr. John Flynn's research indicated that people from subjective impressions of a space based on the overall, central, or perimeter emphasis. There are eight renderings of a room, developed based on Flynn's studies, with prominent, perimeter, and combined lighting, bright illumination as a constant (compared to dim), and uniform and non-uniform light patterns on surfaces. At a glance, one can see how different lighting configurations produce other space appearances with different resulting subjective impressions.



UT Method

UT Limbic Model approach (LMA) method of lighting system is developed to satisfy the NEED of the user(s). The acronym NEED is defined as Normal, Even, Exciting, and Dominant Seekers. Ordinary Seekers are Conservatives who like the traditional lighting approach and do not like to see any changes. Even Seekers are looking for uniform balance lighting to create harmony and relaxation. The Exciting Seekers are adventurers or explorers who want unconventional lighting to create stimulation or excitement. The dominant Seekers are performers or artists who would like to control the Light for dominance.

UT's ABC (Appearance, Belief, and Choice) Brain Method was used to target group light preferences. You can match the lighting Appearance based on the target group. The Choices (conscious) are based on belief (subconscious) and the appearance of the space. It would be best if you found out who is the target group and design accordingly. From the currently available technology, we can create so many scenes to accommodate various target groups. Finally, seeing is believing, and well-designed lighting impacts our mind and stimulates emotions.

Psychological impact	Lighting effect	Light distribution
Spaciousness/Openness	Bright light with lighting on walls and possibly ceiling	Uniform
Privacy/Intimacy	Low light level at activity space with a little perimeter lighting and dark areas in rest of space	Non-uniform
Action/Visual Clarity/Work	Bright light on work plane with less light at the perimeter, wall lighting, cooler color tones	Uniform
Calm/Relaxed/Cozy	Lower overhead lighting with some lighting at room perimeter, warm color tones	Non-uniform
Engaged/Tense/Busy/Active	Intense direct light from above	Non-uniform



Understanding Mortgage Insurance

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

Buying a home? Renewing an existing mortgage? In either case, there's something you need to consider. What happens to your home if you should become incapacitated or die? Would your family be able to stay in their home?

Mortgage financing is probably one of the largest financial commitments you will make in your life. Safeguarding that commitment from the curves life may put in your path, means having the right kind of risk protection. Most lending institutions offer mortgage insurance when you arrange a mortgage with them and it's the "easy" way to get coverage. But before you say yes, here are a few things to think about. The lender's representative who arranges your mortgage is usually not licensed to sell insurance products and cannot provide you with advice or guidance with respect to the insurance or provide guidance in answering the questions on the enrollment form for mortgage insurance. Here's what can happen and has been documented in some cases: On the mortgage insurance form, you are asked to answer some general questions about your

health and you do so to the best of your ability without realizing that your answers may not provide full disclosure the insurance company needs. For mortgage insurance, the underwriting (the process of choosing who and what the insurance will insure) is done at the time of claim-so while you may believe you are covered, at the worst possible time , the coverage can be uncertain.

A policy obtained through a lending institution has no cash value and benefits are paid directly to the lender not to your beneficiaries at a time when the money may be required the most. Your lender is the owner and the beneficiary of the policy so if you decide to move to another lender for a better interest rate or for a new mortgage on a new home, you would have to re-qualify medically for coverage, maybe for higher premiums, or you may no longer be eligible for coverage. Another important feature to consider is that your mortgage insurance pays out only the amount owing on the mortgage at the time of claim. Your coverage decreases as the mortgage is paid down but your premiums remain



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the same so the cost of your insurance actually increases as your coverage decreases. There is absolutely no coverage when the mortgage is paid off.

There is no doubt insurance is necessary protection for your home and family. But before making the decision, look at other options like getting the coverage you need with a personally owned life insurance policy. Protecting your mortgage with a personal insurance plan can offer you and your loved ones better guarantees, greater choice and more flexibility-and in most cases at a lower cost.

With the personal insurance plan, you own the policy and designate the beneficiary. It pays benefits to your designated beneficiary. The personal

insurance plan pays the total value of insurance you purchased. The total value of coverage remains stable for the life of the plan. Premiums are guaranteed for the life of the plan. The plan goes with you from one home to another-one mortgage to the next. The coverage continues even after mortgage is paid depending on the life of the plan.

Disclaimer:

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

How Job Loss Leads to Insolvency and What You Need to Do



Losing one's job is among the popular reasons people wind up needing debt relief such as bankruptcy or consumer proposals in Canada. Whether you were in debt before you lost your job or had no option but to cover your expenses with credit, job loss can quickly lead to winding or increasing debt and an inability to pay it back.

However, before getting to point about dealing with this rising issue attached to job loss let us view some common reasons which mostly lead to job loss.

Downsizing – a leading issue especially in places where the companies are not performing well

Poor performance – it tops the list of course because that is what your job

ultimately depends upon

Misconduct – it comes up next as indeed there are consequences when you disrespect the rules set up for you

These are a few very general and common reasons to name that can cost anyone their job. However, once you have suffered your loss there is a whole list of problems to face.

One of the major effects of job loss is insolvency. It is the state of being unable to pay the money owed, by a person or company, on time. When one loses a job that means a cut of a regular supply of income from your finances which can definitely lead to that individual to become insolvent.

What are you required to do?

Being jobless and becoming insolvent is one thing, but dealing

with it must be your top priority as you have to get rid of all the pending debts. The following points highlight and discuss what is needed to be done.

Avoid Further Debt

Do not, in any case, get yourself into a new debt in this situation. That is a no go for you whatsoever. Do whatever little jobs you have to for making it work the routine, but in no case borrow more money. It will worsen the situation and make insolvency an inescapable trap for you.

Evaluate Your Assets

When it comes to finances and that too of an unemployed person, you must take your current assets into consideration in order to be very much aware of your current financial condition. Understand your assets and

look into the details of the ones which can help you particularly with paying off your debts.

Contact the Creditors

In this view, what is vital to be taken into consideration is to contact your creditors. Contact them and explain your current status to them. Once you make your financial conditions and worth clear to your creditors, you can request for modifications in your agreement. This can be in the form of lower interest rates or amounts or even an extended time for the payment of the debts.

In case of you have credit or debt issues visit

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


COMMUNITY WATCH

Ontario Family Court Rules Against Divorced Father Seeking to Keep Child from In-Person Schooling

Divorce Lawyer Russell Alexander weighs in on first major case testing Covid safety protocols

September 10, 2020, LINDSAY, Ontario - The Superior Court of Justice has ruled against a divorced father seeking to keep his child from attending school in person, in a major test of a custody issue coming up during the coronavirus pandemic.

In a case watched closely by Russell Alexander Collaborative Family Lawyers, the court granted a temporary order that the child should be registered to attend school in-person starting in September, reviewing the issue at Thanksgiving or later, or considering a compromise in which the student would attend school part of the day and be remote at another time.

“The pandemic has changed the calculus for many parents about decisions on everything from schooling to family visits,” said Russell Alexander, the law firm’s founder. “We have been watching closely to see how the courts respond to these new concerns, and now we have a partial answer.”

In *Chase v. Chase*, the court found that the decision to move ahead with in-person schooling was made by the education system in accordance with medical experts, and that it fell within the Ontario government’s purview.

While the father had raised concerns that reopening schools might be premature, requesting that the child be taught at home until the safety protocols were proven successful, the court decided that the school system was balancing those risks against students’ mental health, psychological, academic and social interests, as well as parents’ need for childcare.

“In this case, the court didn’t side with either parent as much as it sided with the school system,” added Alexander. “Since no one in the family had any underlying health conditions that made it uniquely vulnerable, it seemed that the court was unwilling to override the school’s decision based on the concerns of a single parent.”

Russell Alexander Collaborative Family Lawyers

Russell Alexander Collaborative Family Lawyers is committed to practicing exclusively in the area of family law in Ontario dealing with all aspects, including separation and divorce, child custody and access, spousal support, child support, and division of family property. A team of lawyers provide guidance from start to finish, helping clients identify and understand the legal issues as well as the options and opportunities available through the transition. The firm has offices in Lindsay, Whitby, Oshawa, Markham, Peterborough and Toronto, Ontario.





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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.

NO SUGAR BANANA AND BLUEBERRY MUFFINS

Toronto produces really good honey which works as an excellent alternative in this no sugar banana and blueberry muffin recipe. Bake and freeze for the perfect afternoon snack, or pack in lunchboxes, however you decide to enjoy them- you'll definitely not be disappointed.



Ingredients:

Dry Ingredients:

- ✓ 1.5 cups of plain flour
- ✓ 1tsp baking soda
- ✓ 1 tsp baking powder
- ✓ ½ tsp salt

Wet Ingredients:

- ✓ 3 ripe bananas, mashed
- ✓ 1 egg, slightly beaten
- ✓ 6 tbsp of honey
- ✓ 1 cup of blueberries, washed
- ✓ Splash of vanilla essence (optional)

Method:

Preheat the oven to 350F/ 175C. Mix all the wet ingredients together in the order listed above and add the dry ingredients. Combine well together. Divide into a greased muffin tray (this recipe should make 12 muffins) and bake for 15-20 mins.

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



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Virtual Tamil Fest 2020 Creates an Online Sensation During COVID-19



The Sixth Annual Tamil Fest hosted by the Canadian Tamil Congress was celebrated virtually this year on August 29th and 30, 2020 with a two-day event featuring live performances from popular local and international Tamil artistes.

The free event was streamed live on multiple platforms including YouTube Live, Facebook Live and ATN TV channel. The event was viewed by tens of thousands of people around the world and provided an opportunity for numbers of Canadian artistes to showcase their talents internationally.

This year's Tamil Fest featured playback singers Mano and Haricharan from India and popular singers Jeyanthan Kanthappu and Piratha Kanthappu from Sri Lanka. North America's popular Tamil bands Mega Tuners and Agni performed one day each with several Canadian singers including Super singers Jessica Judes and Sinmaye. The event also featured Sruthi Bala-

murali's instrumental music, comedy performance from the duo Aadavan and Sandya, dance performances by students of Niro Dance Creations, Shilompoli Shethra Dance Academy and Prima Dance School. World renowned speakers Kambavarathi Ilangkai Jeyaraj and Rev. Gaspar Raj also delivered speeches.

Tamil Fest 2020 also supported two key initiatives this year paramount to the Tamil Canadian Community, namely the Toronto Tamil Chair initiative at the University of Toronto and re-settlement / economic empowerment projects in war affected Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. The Tamil Fest 2020 opening ceremony kicked off the event on the morning of August 29th at the ATN studio premises with welcome address by the Canadian Tamil Congress, President Sivan Ilangko and appearances from some local elected officials including Minister Mary Ng, MPP Logan Kanapathi, Toronto Councillor

Cynthia Lai, Toronto Councillor Jennifer McKelvie and Chair for the York Regional District School Board, Juanita Nathan. Toronto Mayor John Tory provided video greetings.

Tamil Fest was one of the firsts events to reflect the new way of hosting events that celebrate arts and culture in the COVID-19 environment.



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COMMUNITY WATCH



Appointments

Professor Srisatkunarajah appointed Vice Chancellor of the Jaffna University

Professor Sivakolunthu Srisatkunarajah has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Jaffna University. He was Professor in Mathematics at the University of Jaffna.

He was educated at Hartley College, Jaffna and joined the University of Jaffna in 1979, graduating in 1983 with a B.Sc. honours degree in mathematics. He received his Ph.D. from the Heriot-Watt University and also a postgraduate diploma in education from the Open University of Sri Lanka (2004).



Professor S. Srisatkunarajah

Dr. A. Sarveswaran appointed to the Expert Committee to prepare changes to Sri Lanka's constitution

Dr. A. Sarveswaran, a Senior lecturer in the Faculty of Law at the University of Colombo, has been appointed to the Expert Committee to prepare a draft for changes in the Constitution for Sri Lanka.

The Cabinet decided to appoint an Expert Committee headed by Romesh de Silva PC to prepare the preliminary drafts for a new Constitution. The committee is headed by Romesh De Silva, PC.

Mr. A. Sarveswaran, is a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo. In addition, he functions as the Director of the Legal Research Unit, Faculty of Law, University of Colombo. He teaches Environmental Law at undergraduate level for the Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Program and at postgraduate level for the LLM Program at the Faculty of Law.



Dr. A. Sarveswaran

Senarath Bandara succeeds Rajendra Thiagarajah as Managing Director of Cargills Bank

Veteran banker Senarath Bandara has been appointed as the Managing Director/CEO designate of Cargills Bank Limited and commenced his new role with effect from September 8, 2020. Bandara will take over as MD/CEO of the Bank with effect from October 1, 2020, from Rajendra Theagarajah who is due to step down on September 30, 2020.

Prior to his appointment, Bandara served as the General Manager/CEO of Bank of Ceylon (BOC), retiring from BOC after a service of 30 years. During this period, he gained substantial experience in areas such as general banking, retail banking, retail credit, development banking, corporate lending, investment and treasury management and international banking operations.



Mr. Senarath Bandara



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A poem re Lockdown

*We fell asleep in one world
Woke up in another
Suddenly Disney is out of magic
Paris is no longer romantic
New York doesn't stand up anymore
The Chinese Wall is no longer a fortress
And Mecca is empty
Hugs & Kisses
Suddenly becomes weapons
Not visiting parents & friends
Becomes an act of Love
Suddenly you realise That power,
Beauty & money are worthless
And can't get you the oxygen you are fighting for
The world continues its life
And it is beautiful
It only puts humans in cages
The Air, Earth, Water, and Sky
Without you are fine
I think it's sending us a message
You are not necessary
When you come back
Remember you are my guests,
Not my Masters*

Unknown Author



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A writer learns to Speak

I am a good writer, even if I do say so myself. Yes, I know that sounds immodest. Yet I don't believe in false modesty. So there it is.

It's the one skill I appear to have been born with. I don't have any others to boast of.

Problem is, many people who see my writing assume I am a good communicator and frequently invite me to 'give talks'.

Eh? I can communicate, yes. In writing. Speaking? Not so much. I could barely connect two sentences coherently together. No, I am not exaggerating.

A number of people have been surprised when they thrust a mic in my hand suddenly at gatherings and then found I was not at all eloquent in expressing my thoughts. On a side note, I HATE people's propensity to do that. Please don't do it to me if you see me sitting somewhere minding my own business. Even after years of practice to develop a coherent speaking style, I still need ample time in advance to grab that bull... er ... mic by the horns.

Many people who read my writing think I am forward and confident, if not downright pushy and obnoxious. I might be - but behind a computer. I am usually at sea in social gatherings and have a hard time finding my feet. Being made to express my thoughts verbally which I am not good at doing, makes my anxiety spike.

It's a common problem among writers. Very few of us are both good writers and speakers. It's usually one or the other. For a long time, I used to claim that my brain was wired to my hand, not my tongue. Why else could I write so effortlessly when I wanted to, but could not for the life of me express the same thoughts verbally?

Writing has always been easy and effortless but speaking, I've had to learn. It has not been easy. I was the kid who did detours around school corridors rather than say 'good morning' to teachers coming down the corridor - even favourite teachers. No wonder I earned the label of 'snob' early on. Wonder why the adults around me never understood a thing called 'social anxiety'?

Be that as it may - I eventually made it to adulthood and my dream job of journalism - which I thought I'd be good at only because I could write. I had forgotten you needed to speak to people first to gather the material for writing. My first editors at the Sri Lankan Sunday Times took me on after giving me a writing test - and nearly fired me soon after when they discovered I was terrible at interviewing people. Fortunately the features editors after pointing out to me that I was not gathering enough relevant material from my interviewees, paired me up with a fellow worker who was good at interviews. So for nearly a year, I worked alongside her - she would interview people, I would take down notes and eventually write the articles. On the rare occasions I had to go interview people on my own, I had panic attacks. Eventually though, I got over it and even got quite good at interviewing people. So much so that some would call back later and say, "I forgot I was talking to a journalist. You made me feel too comfortable and chatty. Please take x, y and z out of that interview." I always acceded to their requests. My journal-

ism is not built on hurting people. I've had to shelve quite a lot of juicy information because of it.

Thus, while still not good at small talk at social gatherings, I became an expert at drawing people out on their inmost thoughts and experiences as a journalist over the years. Only problem was, when the mics were reversed and I eventually became the interviewee instead of the interviewer, I stuttered and stammered. It was significantly worse, if that happened to be on a stage with all eyes on me, and the mic to myself. My apologies to all those who came to the Mongage Awards in 2017. As you saw then, speaking certainly is not my core strength.

Unfortunately though, even though I did everything I could to avoid it, I found myself more and more on the wrong end of the mic. To some people that might seem like the right end, but for people like me, it's like staring down the barrel of a gun. So I finally decided to do something about it. I joined the Jaffna chapter of an international franchise of clubs that promised to improve my public speaking skills.

The Toastmasters

To those who don't know, the Toastmasters Clubs, now found all over the world, was started in 1924 by Ralph C. Smedley in Illinois, America. He saw that quite a few young men whom he was mentoring at the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) were nervous about public speaking - and since they were often required to make public toasts at weddings and functions which they grappled with - he founded the first toastmasters club, which quickly went international.

I myself first came across the Toastmasters on one of my first journalism assignments at the Sunday Times in Colombo - we had to interview the Sri Lankan national winner and runners up in 2009.

I was impressed with the competition, the

speakers, and all that they had to say in the interviews we did with them - but when my colleague, the one who usually did the interviews excitedly said we should join too - my only thought was "No way." In terms of tummy heaving activities, I'd rather have parachuted out of a plane.

Seemed far more achievable and less risky.

In other words, while certainly admiring the Toastmasters, I had no intention of joining them, ever. I didn't think I had it in me.

Well, the best laid plans of mice and men... and all that. I eventually felt myself forced to join around 2016. At the time, I had no idea that Jaffna has a club. Jaffna, still a post-war struggling region does not boast of many social clubs. So I thought I

might have to travel to Kandy to get to the nearest club. I was shocked when I googled to find the club nearest to me and found one operating in Nallur, Jaffna. Even more surprisingly the given contact number was immediately answered - by the then president of the club Godwin Sebaratnadas. He cordially invited me to their next meeting the following Sunday. Everyone there was welcoming and kind but it took me quite a few more meetings to open my mouth at all - and quite a lot more to make it to the end of a speech without freezing. I have been there five years and counting. This year, I am also the president of the Jaffna Toastmasters Club.

I still have a lot to learn when it comes to speaking on a public stage comfortably but I have certainly come a long way. The long dormant neural pathways connecting my brain and tongue are finally getting some exercise - and so I have definitely gotten better at speaking along the way.

If you fear public speaking too - I understand it's quite a common fear - do search out the local chapter of Toastmasters near you. They do work wonders. All that said, don't thrust a microphone in my hand if you see me anywhere. I'd still rather disappear.



Thulasi Muttulingam



Jaffna Toastmasters club 12th anniversary celebrations - August 2020.



BHOOMI POOJA & GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR THE NEW SRI RAMA TEMPLE IN AYODHYA

Compiled by Kidambi Raj

Bhoomi Pooja & Ground breaking Ceremony:

On Wednesday, August 5th, 2020, India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, performed Bhoomi Pooja followed by Ground breaking in *Ayodhya*, Uttar Pradesh, the Janmabhoomi (Birthplace) of Lord Rama. Three days prior to this, elaborate Vedic rituals were performed to invoke the presence of all the Hindu Deities to get their blessings. Before starting the Bhoomi Pooja, Prime Minister Modi, first visited Hanuman Garhi temple to seek permission of Hanuman for His Blessings for the events to follow. As is always done this day (August 5th) was chosen as the most auspicious day based on astrology.

be used in the Bhoomi Pooja for Lord Rama temple. The soil specially obtained from the temples like Ekambarathanathar Swamy, Kamakshi temple and other Vishnu temples in the town were sent by flight to Ayodhya ahead of the Bhoomi Pooja, said Sri Vijayendra Saraswathi Swamy, the 70th Acharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam.

Details of the event:

During the ceremony, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid a symbolic "Silver Brick" in the sanctum sanctorum of the proposed Lord Rama temple. On the occasion of the Bhoomi Pooja, soil and holy water from several religious places all across the country, like, Triveni Sangam of rivers, Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati at Prayag, Kaveri



Model of Proposed Sri Ram Temple



PM Modi doing Bhumi Puja

It also marked exactly a year since Prime Minister Modi's government revoked the semi-autonomous status of the Indian-administered Kashmir, the country's only Muslim-majority region. The symbolism was impossible to miss, since the BJP had long pledged in its manifesto to strip the disputed region of Kashmir of its autonomy and to build a temple to the Hindu God, Lord Rama, where the Mughal-era mosque once stood. Prime Minister Modi laid a 40Kg. silver brick at the site, culminating a decades long wrangle over the fate of the former Babri mosque site. Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam in Kancheepuram in Tamil Nadu, sent Gold and Silver coins, holy soil collected from the Kamakshi temple and the mutt, besides Vasthu (traditional Indian system of architecture) materials to

river at Talaikaveri, Kamakhya temple in Assam and many others were collected. In all close to 2,000 earthen pots of water from various rivers sent by temples, Gurudwaras and Jain temples from around the country. Soil was also sent from various Hindu temples, Gurudwaras and Jain temples across the country. Interestingly, among the many was Sharada Peetam located in Pakistan.

Prime Minister Modi offered prayers to nine stone blocks with "Lord Rama" inscribed on them, amid chanting Hindu religious hymns to symbolize the start of the construction of the temple which is expected to take three to three and a half years to complete.

Media reports say that devotees from across the country have been

sending gold and silver in the form of coins, bricks and bars to use in the construction of the temple. Also, as many as 200,000 bricks with the inscription "Shri Ram" (Lord Rama) that have been collected from devotees over the years will be used to build the foundation of the temple.

Because of the COVID pandemic only 175 religious saints, priests and Hindu and Muslim community representatives were invited to this ceremony. As can be seen from the pictures, it is heartening to see that those assembled were wearing masks and maintained safe distancing. Of those invited to the ground breaking ceremony included Iqbal Ansari, the main Muslim litigant in the Supreme Court case, who now supports building the temple in Ayodhya.

It was reported that hailing Lord Rama as "Imam-e-Hind" (prelate of India), some Muslim devotees of Lord Rama watched the entire Bhoomi pooja ceremony in Ayodhya live on their TV sets as they could not go there due to the COVID health protocols. Underlining the country's tradition of syncretic co-existence, they said once the COVID situation improves they would visit the temple site and offer their services in the construction.

"It is a moment of joy for us. We are "kar sevaks" and consider Lord Rama as "Imam-e-Hind", said Mr. Raja Raees, the President of Sunni Social Forum (an organization working for the Muslims), according to Press Trust of India. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi performed the Bhoomi Pooja at Ayodhya, Mr. Raja Raees said, "We celebrated the occasion by beating the drums and playing harmoniums. Shri Ram is our Paigambar (Prophet). There is a feeling of happiness among the Muslims in the country. Members of our organization watched the event live on TV."

How the events unfolded for Lord Rama Temple in Ayodhya:

1528 – A mosque was built on the site by *Mughal Emperor Babar* which Hindus claim to be the birth place of Lord Rama and where a temple earlier existed.

1853-1949 – Communal violence erupted at that site and the British gave the inner court

COMMUNITY WATCH



PM Modi prostrating before Lord Rama



Sheet of Rs. 5 Stamps of Ayodhya temple

for Muslims, and the outer court for Hindus.

1949 – Idol of Lord Rama surfaces inside the mosque. Muslims protest: Govt. proclaims premises a disputed area and locks the gates.

1950 – Two suits filed in Faizabad civil court for rights to perform pooja for Lord Rama and keep the idol in the structure. Nirmohi Akhara files third suit in 1959.

1961 – UP Sunni Central Waqf Board files a suit demanding possession of site and removal of the idols.

1986 – District Judge orders locks to be removed and the site opened for Hindu worshippers.

Dec. 6, 1992 – Babri Masjid demolished by *kar sevaks* and Hindu-Muslim violence erupts and over 2,000 dead.

2001 – Special judge drops charge against 13 accused, including LK Advani and Kalyan Singh.

2002 – Trains carrying Hindu activists set on fire in Godhra killing 58 and riot ensues leaving over 2,000 dead.

2010 – Allahabad High Court awards two thirds of Ayodhya site to Hindus and one third to Waqf Board.

2011 – Supreme Court stays Allahabad High Court's verdict on Ayodhya dispute.

2017 - Supreme Court calls for out of court settlement and restores criminal conspiracy charge against top BJP leaders.

2018 – Supreme Court refuses to refer to a bench the reconsideration of observations in 1994 judgement that mosque was not integral to Islam.

March 8, 2019 – Supreme Court refers Ayodhya land dispute case for mediation and asks panel to complete proceedings within 8 weeks.

Nov. 9, 2019 – Supreme Court grants disputed land to Deity Ram Lalla and also directs Centre and UP Govts. to allot 5 acres land to Muslim for building mosque.

Feb. 5, 2020 – Govt. forms the 15-member trust to oversee the construction of Lord Rama temple.

Aug. 5, 2020 – Prime Minister Narendra Modi lays the foundation stone for the Lord Rama temple.

visitor's residences and a museum. This will be almost double the size of what was originally planned as its design and was later modified.

The *Sompura* family from Palitana town in Gujarat who have built numerous grand temples around the country and elsewhere including the grand Somnath Temple that was opened in 1951, the Akshardham temples and Krishna Janmasthan in Mathura was selected as Architects for the New Lord Rama Temple. The Somnath temple is closest to their heart according to the patriarch of the family. The Sompuras believe that their ancestors were taught the art of temple building by the divine architect Vishwakarma himself. The Sompuras who come from Palitana town of Bhavnagar, consider themselves to be "residents of the moon" (**Som** means moon and **pura** means city). This family has built the Akshardham temples in the country, as well as Bochaswanwasi Akshar Purshotham Swaminarayan (BAPS) Sanstha temple in Neasden, United Kingdom.

Sri Rama, Jeya Rama, Jeya Jeya Rama.

Let us all Pray to Lord Rama and get His Blessings !!!



Front side of 2-Anna coin issued in 1818 by East India Co.



Rear side of 2-Anna coin issued in 1818 by East India Co.



A set of 11 Rs.5/- stamps depicting Ramayana released on Sept. 22, 2017

Sheet of Stamps about Ramayana released on Sept 22, 2017

About the proposed new Lord Rama Temple in Ayodhya and its Architects:

The new temple according to the reports will be about 72 metres (235 feet) wide, 91.5 metres (300 feet) long and 49 metres (161 feet) high with five domes with a total area of about 7,804 square metres (84,000 square feet). The complex will also have a prayer hall, a lecture hall,

COMMUNITY WATCH

Durham Tamil Association Celebrates 20th Anniversary

Since the Association was founded, it has grown into a bigger and better non-profitable organization that has been achieving many of its goals since its formation. DTA has been primarily engaged in many volunteers and charitable work such as fundraising for the cancer society, food banks, and many more.

The Association has been organizing more free classes and programs available to all ages (from kids to seniors). Throughout the years, it has been helping people in Sri Lanka, and their efforts to help them have increased as the years have gone by. More people have been contributing to their efforts and this has been an incentive to increase their activities.

When the Association was started many kids participated in the programs and classes. As they have grown up, they have become volunteers in DTA and have been teaching kids as well as helping with the programs. The Association has made it a point to make sure the Tamil language and culture are spotlighted through the children and youth and it has been successful, with many young people embracing their language and culture.

DTA has proudly done a lot of

volunteering for the seniors and their classes and programs such as different kinds of yoga classes, computer class, health, and medical seminars. DTA conducts monthly seniors' meetings with celebrations. Interesting trips have been organized for the seniors. Even during the pandemic time, DTA has helped in organizing alternative measures for seniors in different ways. DTA provided many seniors with supplies such as masks, gloves, and hand sanitizers and have kept them occupied while staying at home through online programs and classes such as virtual yoga classes, singing competitions, and many more.

DTA takes this opportunity to thank the volunteers for their hard work and dedication. Special thanks are due to the annual sponsors Nava Wilson Law, Computek, TSN Express, Chapel Ridge Funeral Home, Showtha Thushijantha – RE/MAX, Ajax Crematorium, Visitation Ctr, Threat IQ, Elankeeran-DF Credit Solutions, and all other sponsors for their continued support throughout the year.

For more information on all DTA Community Support Programs and Sponsor contacts please visit www.DurhamTamils.Org Tel 905.428.7007

Durham tamil association is a place to increase your confidence to me. For example my confidence increased by going to durham tamil association classes, dances and meeting new and becoming friends. I was really shy before joining durham tamil association but then I had an opportunity given by them and did a speech about my family and became 3rd place. I kept on increasing my confidence and i started to do dances in front of a big audience and be brave.

*Happy 20th Anniversary
Durham Tamil Association!*

-Jeshani Konesapillai




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Durham Tamil Association Celebrates 20th Anniversary




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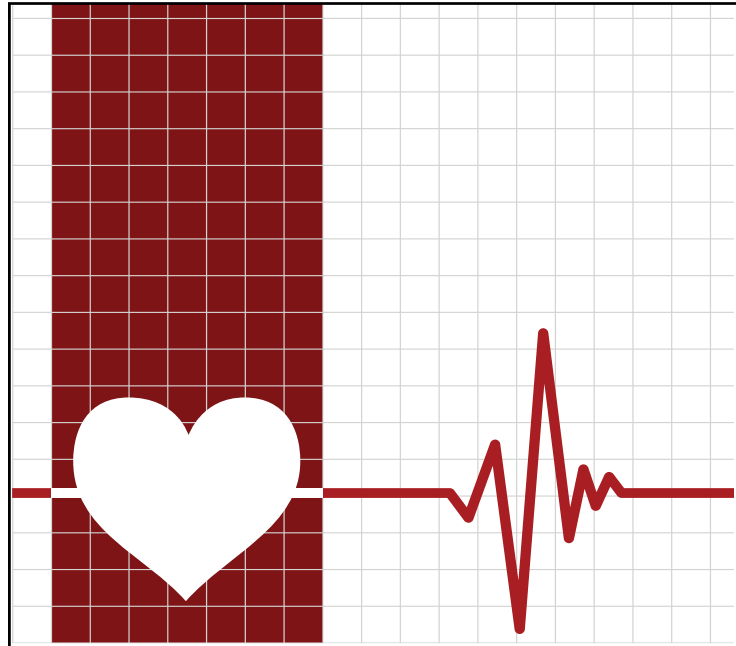


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