

MONSOON JOURNAL



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November 11

Monsoon Journal joins in the honouring of Veterans and Active duty service members on this Remembrance Day, November 11



"We pause for a moment of silence to pay tribute to the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice to defend our democracy, rights and freedoms." - Premier Doug Ford



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★★★★★ U.S. Presidential Elections 2020 ★★★★★

Americans vote Joe Biden as their new President Elect

Running mate Kamala Harris of Tamil origin becomes US Vice President Elect

By Siva Sivapragasam

After a historic fierce and belligerent election campaign, Joe Biden the Democratic Party candidate has emerged as the new President Elect of the United States of America with his running mate Kamala Harris of Tamil origin as the new future Vice-President. Joe Biden received over 74 million votes, the highest on record any Presidential candidate received in American history.

After four years of turmoil and controversy surrounding the Trump regime, Joe Biden is becoming the President of a torn nation struggling against the backdrop of a pandemic, economic uncertainty, civil unrest, and divided people.

Joe Biden's main task will be to unite the United States of America which has been made a Divided States of America during the Trump regime.

Biden's running mate Kamala Harris of Tamil origin will become the new American Vice-President. There was jubilation and lighting of crackers in the distant village of Thulasendrapuram in Tamil Nadu, the ancestral abode of Gopalan, the maternal grandfather of Kamala Harris who

"I am a true Democrat, but I will govern as an American President. There will be no red states and blue states when we win. Just the United States of America."
- Joe Biden

had a great impact on her as a mentor. Prayers were also offered at the Hindu Temple for her victory while some of Kamala's favourite Indian dishes were served for those present at the Temple.

Joe Biden along with Kamala Harris have an enormous responsibility to get America back on track by uniting a divided nation, uplifting a sagging economy, and controlling arising pandemic. To achieve this Biden has always repeatedly remarked at election rallies "While I am a true Democrat, I will govern as an American President".



Joe Biden and Kamala Harris



Kamala Harris maternal Family picture

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Ontario Adding Over 760 Hospital Beds Across the Province

October 27, 2020

Office of the Premier

BRAMPTON — The Ontario government is providing \$116.5 million to create up to 766 more beds at 32 hospitals and alternate health facilities across the province. This investment will help reduce surgical backlogs and improve access to care during COVID-19. The funding is in addition to the \$2.8 billion the province is providing in the government's COVID-19 fall preparedness plan.

Details were provided today by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, and Dr. Naveed Mohammad, President and CEO of William Osler Health System.

“Our government made a commitment to end hallway health care, cut hospital wait times, and build a better, more connected health care system that puts patients and their families first,” said Premier Ford. “We are taking another step today to keep that promise by adding hundreds more hospital beds across the province. This will not only ensure we are ready for any surges in COVID-19 cases, but provide patients with the care they need and deserve close to home.”

The new beds announced today are in addition to the \$234.5 million investment for 139 critical care beds and up to 1,349 hospital beds included in Ontario's fall preparedness plan, Keeping Ontarians Safe: Preparing for Future Waves of COVID-19. This brings the total investment to \$351 million for more than 2,250 new beds at 57 hospitals and alternate health facilities across the province. These beds will add more capacity for hospitals in COVID-19 hotspots such as Toronto, Ottawa, Peel and York region. It will also help those facing occupancy pressures and support the continuation of surgeries and procedures.

William Osler Health System will be receiving up to 87 total patient beds to help alleviate hospital capacity pressures and reduce wait times. This includes 41 beds at Osler's Brampton Civic Hospital and 46 beds at Osler's Etobicoke General Hospital.

Province Investing \$116.5 Million More to Increase Hospital Capacity, Reduce Wait Times, and Respond to COVID-19



“Our government is making the necessary investments to quickly and effectively increase hospital capacity and reduce wait times for patients and families across Ontario,” said Minister Elliott. “This additional investment will ensure our health care system is able to respond to future waves of COVID-19 and help patients waiting for surgeries and other procedures get the care they need, faster.”

“We greatly appreciate the government's investment in our hospitals as we work diligently to ensure the patients and communities we serve have access to the care they need,” said Dr. Naveed Mohammad. “As Osler continues to respond to COVID-19 and anticipates higher demands for inpatient care over the coming months, this critical investment in hospital capacity will further strengthen our ability to deliver high-quality, compassionate health care services to our patients.”

Ontario's fall preparedness plan also focuses on addressing surges in COVID-19 cases and reducing health service backlogs by:

- Extending hours for additional priority surgeries and diagnostic imaging;
- Helping up to 850 alternate level of care patients access proper care in a home or community setting to help free up hospital capacity;
- Expanding digital health and virtual services, which provide alternatives to in-person care that limit the transmission of COVID-19, while maintaining access to care;
- Improving access to mental health and addictions services and supports; and
- Increasing home and community care service by adding 484,000 nursing and therapy visits and 1.4 million personal support worker hours.

The province continues to work with its health sector partners and Ontario Health to develop an integrated health system capacity plan in response to COVID-19. This plan will help ensure hospitals can continue to provide care for COVID-19 patients and treat patients who have been waiting for surgeries and tests. The province will

continue to monitor and assess the health system's needs and address any challenges hospitals may face.

“Today's announcement is good news for Brampton residents,” said Patrick

Brown, Mayor of Brampton. “Our City Council declared a health care emergency and the 87 new patient beds at the William Osler Health System will help alleviate capacity pressures. I want to thank Premier Ford for responding to our concerns with a positive step in the right direction.”

With a recent increase in cases of COVID-19, it remains vital for the government to continue to protect vulnerable populations and for each Ontarian to follow public health advice.

Building on Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19, the province's \$30 billion response to the pandemic, the government remains committed to providing necessary resources to protect people's health and support people, families, workers and business owners. Ontario will release its 2020 Budget and the next phase of Ontario's Action Plan on November 5, 2020.

Via news.ontario.ca

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Monsoon Journal wishes everyone
**A Happy Fall 2020
Festive Season**

Deepavali/Diwali: November 14

Kanthalashti: November 15 - 21

Thanksgiving, USA: November 26

World Television Day 2020: Let's Give Recognition to the Role of Good and Factual Information that Television can Provide During Difficult Times As Exemplified by The COVID-19 Pandemic

By **Harrish Thirukumaran**

As we are now two months away from the new year and given the shocking events that have unfolded through 2020, namely the COVID-19 pandemic, we should try to looking at this global event through another perspective with another global event. On November 21, 2020, the world shall come together to observe the significance of World Television Day. In 1996, the United Nations General Assembly established November 21 as World Television Day, recognizing the increasing impact that television has on decision-making processes, drawing the world's attention to conflicts and threats to peace and security, as well as its potential role in focusing attention on other major issues, including economic and social issues. World Television Day is dedicated to the philosophy that television brings to our lives as a symbol of connection and globalization in the 21st century.

Television continues to be the single largest source of video consumption. Though screen sizes have changed, and people create, post, stream and consume content on different platforms, the number of households with television sets around the world continues to rise. The interaction between emerging and traditional forms of broadcast creates a great opportunity to raise awareness about the important issues facing our communities and our planet.

In terms of the United Nations (UN), it provides a suite of multimedia products and services covering the work of the United Nations both at its Headquarters and around the world, to reach audiences and support the work of the international news media. UN Videos are produced for news and social platforms as well as for

broadcast partners in the six official languages of the UN (French, Spanish, English, Chinese, Arabic, Russian), as well as Hindi, Kiswahili, and Portuguese.

UN Video producers report from locations around the globe — from peacekeeping missions such as Mali and South Sudan throughout the UN's vast network of operations worldwide. Highlights include an Oscar-winning short documentary on people with disabilities; a Virtual Reality film featuring young climate activists in the Pacific on the frontlines of the climate crisis and the President of the General Assembly, giving a 360 degree tour of the General Assembly Hall; a story about victims of terrorism in Cameroon and Nigeria, and a video produced for Earth Day as a poignant reminder of the urgent need to protect the planet.

If 2020 is any indication, watching television has become one of the many ways that a majority of us have done with our time as we social distance, stay in our homes, work or learn remotely and so forth due to the large effects of COVID-19 in the Greater Toronto Area and elsewhere in Canada and the world. This is the case considering that many GTA and Ontario households or seem to have at least one television set or screen today. It has been critical for briefings by the Governments of Canada and Ontario on COVID-19, their policy responses and other matters related to the pandemic to help us stay informed on the latest information in order to not only help ourselves, but each other as well. With World Television Day 2020, let's give our recognition to the role of good and factual information that television can provide during difficult times as exemplified by the COVID-19 pandemic.



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*Gold is good in its place, but living, brave, patriotic
men are better than gold.*

- Abraham Lincoln (Feb 12, 1809 Apr 15, 1865) 16th President of the USA



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CANADA**Gary Anandasangaree**Member of Parliament
Scarborough—Rouge Park

Statement issued by Gary Anandasangaree, Member of Parliament for Scarborough Rouge Park on the United States of America 2020 Elections

November 7, 2020
Scarborough, Ontario

"I extend my congratulations to President Elect Joe Biden and Vice President elect Kamala Devi Harris on their historic victory. Canada and the United States of America have been close allies and I look forward to working with our governments to strengthen the relationship between our countries.

Today's victory is historic for many reasons - Kamala Harris has been elected as the first ever woman, black woman and Tamil woman to hold this position. As a Tamil community we take great pride in her achievement. We recognize and are inspired by this child of a Tamil immigrant whose life and experience mirrors so much of our own.

I know that as a community the sky is the limit for what we, and our children can achieve. I particularly want to recognize the leadership, knowledge, experience and expertise women and Tamil women bring to the table. We celebrate Kamala Harris' victory today and the barriers she has overcome to come so far. However, many Tamil women continue to face barriers to claim their place in leadership and decision-making roles whether in community organizations, elected offices or workplaces. As a community we must continue to remove obstacles for women and girls so that they too can take their rightful places of leadership. Kamala Harris' victory will serve as an inspiration and a guide for generations to come.

Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada on the result of the U.S. presidential election



November 7, 2020
Ottawa, Ontario

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement on the result of the U.S. presidential election:

"On behalf of the Government of Canada, I congratulate Joe Biden and Kamala Harris on their election as the next President and Vice President of the United States of America.

"Canada and the United States enjoy an extraordinary relationship – one that is unique on the world stage. Our shared geography, common interests, deep personal connections, and strong economic ties make us close friends, partners, and allies. We will further build on this foundation as we continue to keep our people safe and healthy from the impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and work to advance peace and inclusion, economic prosperity, and climate action around the world.

"I look forward to working with President-elect Biden, Vice President-elect Harris, their administration, and the United States Congress as we tackle the world's greatest challenges together."





CANADA NEWS

Ontario is Investing in Building and Upgrading Schools

October 30, 2020

Via news.ontario.ca

Education

The Ontario government is investing \$550 million to build 20 new schools and add permanent additions to eight existing facilities across the province. This funding is provided through the Capital Priorities Program. These infrastructure projects will lead to the creation of nearly 16,000 new student learning spaces and 870 new licensed child care spaces.

To find out more about projects across Ontario, visit the Ontario Builds map. The new projects are:

Location	School board	Project name	Project type
Kincardine	Bluewater DSB	Kincardine District Senior School	New School
London	Thames Valley DSB	Unnamed Elementary School - Northwest London	New School with 88 child care spaces
Scarborough	Toronto DSB	David Lewis Public School Addition	Permanent Addition with 40 child care spaces
Oshawa	Durham DSB	Unnamed Elementary School - North Oshawa	New School with 73 child care spaces
Sharon /East Gwillimbury	York Region DSB	Sharon Public School	New School with 39 child care spaces
Whitchurch-Stouffville, York	York Region DSB	Unnamed Elementary School - Stouffville	New School
Vaughan	York Region DSB	Unnamed Elementary School - Kleinburg Nashville	New School with 39 child care spaces
Innisfil	Simcoe County DSB	Lake Simcoe Public School	Permanent Addition with 39 child care spaces
Brampton	Peel DSB	Unnamed Elementary School - Mount Pleasant #9	New School with 73 child care spaces
Grimsby	DSB of Niagara	Smith Public School	Permanent Addition with 49 child care spaces
Fort Erie	DSB of Niagara	Peace Bridge Public School	Permanent Addition
Brantford	Grand Erie DSB	Unnamed Elementary School - South West Brantford	New School with 64 child care spaces
Waterloo	Waterloo Region DSB	Laurelwood Public School	Permanent Addition
Ottawa	Ottawa-Carleton DSB	Unnamed 7-12 School - Riverside South	New School with 39 child care spaces
Owen Sound	Bruce-Grey Catholic DSB	St. Mary's High School	Permanent Addition
Etobicoke	Toronto Catholic DSB	Unnamed Secondary School - Etobicoke	New School
Etobicoke	Toronto Catholic DSB	Bishop Allen Academy	New School
Toronto	Toronto Catholic DSB	Loretto Abbey Catholic Secondary School	Permanent Addition
Oakville	Halton Catholic DSB	Unnamed Elementary School - North Oakville#4	New School
Waterloo	Waterloo Catholic DSB	St. Agnes Catholic Elementary School	Permanent Addition
Ottawa	Ottawa Catholic DSB	Unnamed Elementary School - Fernbank	New School with 39 child care spaces
Nepean	Ottawa Catholic DSB	Unnamed Elementary School - Barrhaven	New School with 39 child care spaces
Amherstview	Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic DSB	Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Elementary School	New School with 49 child care spaces
North York	Conseil Scolaire Viamonde	ÉÉP Paul-Demers	New School with 73 child care spaces
Ottawa	CSD des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario	ÉÉP BarrhavenSud	New School with 49 child care spaces
Nepean	CSD des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario	ÉÉP Ottawa Ouest	New School
Ottawa	CSD catholique du Centre-Est de l'Ontario	ÉÉC Au Cœur d'Ottawa	New School with 39 child care spaces
Ottawa	CSD catholique du Centre-Est de l'Ontario	ÉÉC Avalon III	New School with 39 child care spaces

Prime Minister announces funding to advance the development of Canadian COVID 19 vaccine technologies

October 23, 2020

Ottawa, Ontario

As we continue to address the health, social, and economic impacts of COVID-19, the Government of Canada is actively pursuing the purchase and development of vaccines, treatments, and related supplies to protect Canadians from the virus and support our recovery from the pandemic. This includes investing in Canadian projects, and strengthening our country's biomanufacturing sector and capabilities to fight future pandemics through leading-edge vaccine technology.

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today announced an investment of up to \$173 million through the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) in Quebec City-based Medicago to support Canada's response to COVID-19 and future preparedness. The project, valued at a total of \$428 million, will advance Medicago's virus-like particle vaccine, developed on the company's unique plant-based production platform, through clinical trials. It will also establish a large-scale vaccine and antibody production facility to increase Canada's domestic biomanufacturing capacity.

The government has signed an agreement with Medicago to secure up to 76 million doses of their COVID-19 vaccine candidate, enough to vaccinate 38 million people. This is the first domestically developed vaccine candidate the Government of Canada has secured.



The government will also invest up to \$18.2 million in Vancouver-based biotechnology company Precision NanoSystems Incorporated (PNI) through the SIF. This investment will support a \$24.27-million project to help advance the development of a COVID-19 vaccine candidate through pre-clinical studies and clinical trials. The government is also providing up to \$23.2 million in funding through the National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program to advance six COVID-19 vaccine candidates in various stages of clinical trials.

The Government of Canada has now signed agreements with Medicago, AstraZeneca, Sanofi and GlaxoSmith-Kline, Johnson & Johnson, Novavax, Pfizer, and Moderna. Agreements signed to date will secure access to up to 358 million doses of their different COVID-19 vaccine candidates. At this time, there are three vaccine candidates currently under review and many others in clinical trials and in development.

Via pm.gc.ca

Historic Milestones

November 7, 1885

The dream of a railway linking Canada from coast to coast becomes a reality as the last spike is driven in at Craigellachie, British Columbia.

Started 15 years earlier, construction of the Canadian Pacific transcontinental railway cost the lives of hundreds of workers and disrupted the way of life of many Indigenous communities.



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What Newcomers Need to Know About Healthcare in Canada

If you're new to Canada and you have questions like — “Are all medical services free here?” or, “Is it safe to see a doctor right now?” — here are some answers to help you navigate.

When I migrated to Canada in 2014, I had to have medical coverage as part of the travel insurance required to live in the country. When I happily became a permanent resident a few years later, it was a relief to learn I could now get Canadian healthcare like any citizen.

Thankfully, applying for a health card was easy enough. And since then, the medical system has been easier to

ically covered by public health plans, so you might consider taking out a private health insurance plan. Many employers offer private health insurance — check your employee contract to see if that's the case for you.

How do I apply for public health insurance remotely?

You need a health insurance card to get your health care services covered by public health plans. Application forms for your health card can be found at provincial registry offices — here's a full guide on how to apply for your health card, visit <https://discover.rbcroyalbank.com/>

What can I do while I wait for public health insurance?

If you've applied for public health insurance but haven't received your health card, here are ways to manage your health care needs in the interim visit <https://discover.rbcroyalbank.com/navigating-canadas-healthcare-system-while-you-wait-for-your-health-card/>.

If you take out private health insurance, your insurance provider may cover telemedicine services like Maple, which lets you see a registered Canadian doctor online. They can talk to you via video, phone call, or chat —

through your public Medical Services Plan, visit <https://www.getmaple.ca/msp-and-virtual-healthcare/> to know more.

It's likely telemedicine will extend beyond the pandemic. If you're covered by B.C. provincial healthcare, for example, you can get weekday telemedicine treatment from Maple covered through your public Medical Services Plan.

Starting October 5, newcomer clients who start banking with RBC can get access to one free virtual visit (rbc.com_onlinedoctor) with a doctor through Maple until March 18, 2021.

How do I get a family doctor now?

In Canada, a family physician is often the first point of contact for most healthcare situations. A family doctor ensures continuity of care, by following your life cycle, and maintaining the health records of you and your family.

Finding a doctor with space for new patients may not always be easy.

Finding a doctor with space for new patients may not always be easy. The best way to begin your search is to see if your province or territory has a centralized waitlist.

Almost all provinces have physician directories on their Provincial College websites. Some of them, like the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario website through its Doctor Search (<https://doctors.cpsso.on.ca/?search=general>), may even help find a doctor who speaks your preferred language.

Limited time offer available to eligible newcomers with a qualifying bank account or credit card. One free Maple online consultation (\$99 value) must be used by March 18, 2021. Conditions apply.



navigate than I first anticipated.

If you're new to Canada and you have some of the same questions I've had, like — “Are all medical services free here?” or, “Is it safe to see a doctor right now?” — here are some answers to help you navigate.

What does public health insurance cover?

Public healthcare coverage varies across provinces and territories. All provinces and territories provide free emergency medical services, even if you don't have a government health card. There may, however, be some restrictions based on immigration status.

In Canada, non-emergency dental care, eye care, prescription medicines and mental health services aren't typ-

ically covered by public health plans, so you might consider taking out a private health insurance plan. Many employers offer private health insurance — check your employee contract to see if that's the case for you.

If you're uncomfortable with going into a physical office right now because of the coronavirus, you can download a registration form online.

How soon can I get public health insurance?

The good news is that some waiting times have been waived because of COVID-19: If you've just moved to Ontario, for example, you no longer need to wait three months to be covered for healthcare, visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/apply-ohip-and-get-health-card> to know more.

You can apply anytime, but in Canada, newcomers typically need to live in a specific province or territory for up to three months before they can receive public health coverage.

whenever you need, check for symptoms and diagnose you virtually, and/or write you a sick note or a prescription. If needed, they can also order bloodwork or diagnostic imaging.

Note: Telemedicine isn't a replacement for emergency care. If you need immediate, life-saving help — call 911.

Is telemedicine an option if I am unable to meet a doctor in person?

Many provinces now offer virtual healthcare options in place of in-person doctor's appointments — in the pandemic, I've even been able to talk to my doctor via instant messaging.

It's likely telemedicine will extend beyond the pandemic. If you're covered by B.C. provincial healthcare, for example, you can get weekday telemedicine treatment from Maple covered

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WORLD NEWS

Pandemic Inspires Creative Teaching in Underprivileged Indian District



By AnjanaPasricha

October 29, 2020 08:56 AM

RIGHER, INDIA - A group of school students bend over notebooks as they sit on mats in a village square in Righer village to study numbers, spelling, and other subjects. In the open space, they can easily be seated at a distance to adhere to COVID-19 social distancing protocols.

The students have assembled for a two-hour session of community classes conducted outdoors by teachers and volunteers across dozens of villages in Nuh district in India's northern Haryana state as schools remain shut due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In another village, Kanwarsika, the morning bell announcing the start of a teaching session rings, not in the local school, but from a van equipped with a loudspeaker. Students settle down inside homes and in courtyards facing the street as, following a prayer, a teacher presents a chemistry lesson on a microphone.

"This helps us keep up with our studies," said Sania Ahmed, a ninth-grade student, "and in our homes, we are safe from coronavirus also."

From the classes held in open spaces to the mobile van that tours villages, the months-long shutdown of schools has inspired creative ways to teach thousands of students who cannot log on to online classes because they do not have access to smartphones and computers in villages across Muslim-dominated Nuh, a poor district in India.

The switch to virtual teaching has highlighted the huge digital divide across India, where millions of poor households do not have computers or Wi-Fi, and the internet device that most students use to log on to classes is a smartphone. In Nuh, even that is not available to many.

"A survey showed that only around 20% of students had access to smart-

phones," according to Anup Singh Jakhar, education officer in Nuh. "So we began searching for ways to teach children in small groups in a way that would be safe and would not pose any threat of infection to them."

The answer was the "community schools" initiative, in which groups of about 15 students assemble in open spaces to be taught by scores of local volunteers and teachers dubbed "education ambassadors."

The challenge however is huge in a district with over 100,000 school students – although the number of community classes has increased steadily in recent months, they only reach about 7,000 students.

"The children used to roam around here and there without focus, but now they study properly. We are trying to cover their syllabus," Jamshed Khan, a primary school teacher in Righer, said.

While many families have scraped together money for cheap or second-hand smart phones for children, their efforts still could not help all students, Khan said.

"Digital education simply could not work here because most of the families are big. Sometimes they share one phone between 10 members," Khan says.

That was the experience of 12-year-old Saista, an eighth grader.

"We are three brothers and sisters and only my elder brother gets the phone to study, so I could not log on to the classes," she said.

It was not easy to get volunteers to conduct the classes in an area where even schools are short of teachers due to low literacy levels -- men mostly work as drivers or construction labor, and most women in Nuh have limited education.

Those who have stepped forward range from teachers to postgraduates.

"I lost my job in a private school because it shut during the pandemic,

Sri Lankan Navy, Volunteers rescue at least 100 stranded Pilot Whales



By VOA News

November 03, 2020 01:34 PM

The Sri Lanka Navy and other groups rescued more than 100 short-finned pilot whales Tuesday after the whales beached themselves on the nation's southwestern coastline.

The pod of pilot whales washed ashore at Panadura Beach, about 25 kilometers south of Colombo. The navy, Sri Lanka coast guard lifesaving teams, police lifesavers, volunteers, lifeguards and residents took part in the rescue mission.

Some villagers defied a coronavirus curfew to join the navy and coast guard, wading into the breaking surf to push the small whales back into the water. Jet skis provided by a local water sports club also were used to pull the whales back into the ocean.

The rescue teams managed to move at least 100 whales back into the ocean. At least two injured whales had

already died and were buried.

The French News Agency reports Sri Lanka's Marine Environment Protection Authority ((MEPA)) confirmed the stranding was the largest of its kind in the south Asian country. Officials were prepared for mass deaths as seen in Australia's island state of Tasmania in September when about 470 pilot whales were stranded and only about 110 could be saved after days of rescue efforts. It was one of the largest ever such mass strandings.

Pilot whales — actually a large species of dolphin that can grow up to six meters long and weigh a ton — are highly social. The causes of mass strandings remain unknown, despite decades of study by scientists. Some believe the extreme social nature of the species will bring the entire pod of whales to the assistance of a single whale in trouble.

Via voanews.com

so I decided to teach these students. They are helping me and helping them cover the syllabus," according to one volunteer, Khushi Mohammad.

Postgraduate Afroz Khan, who is studying to be a schoolteacher, said coaching students has given her the confidence that she can make a successful career in teaching.

"The children are responding very well. If I ask them to learn the lesson that we teach, I find that they have done it the next day and that really makes me very proud," she said.

For many ambitious students, these classes are crucial – Faizan Khan's eighth grade scores will determine whether he can take science courses.

"I want to become a doctor," he said, "Now when I take tests when schools reopen, I will be able to do them well."

However, he said he misses the conventional school day, where he met friends.

"The school was lively. Here we go home after two hours but in school, we had a full day. We returned home by about 3 o'clock and then went to the masjid," he said, referring to a mosque.

Many others are also nostalgic about the prepandemic school schedule – 15-year-old Sania Ahmed even wears her school uniform when she sits down at home for classes being beamed in Kanwarsika village from a loudspeaker.

There is no certainty yet when Khan and Ahmed can get back to school. As India continues to grapple with the pandemic, most schools remain closed although high school students can meet teachers for some coaching in school. Meanwhile the community initiative is going some way to ensure that the pandemic will not cost them a year of learning.

Via voanews.com

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India Gives Submarine to Myanmar Amid Growing Chinese Footprint in Indian Ocean Countries



By AnjanaPasricha
October 25, 2020 08:49 AM

NEW DELHI - India has given a submarine to Myanmar as part of a military outreach to its eastern neighbor that strategic analysts say is driven by New Delhi's bid to counter China's growing influence in South-east Asia.

"Cooperation in the maritime domain is a part of our diverse and enhanced engagement with Myanmar," Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesman Anurag Srivastava said while announcing earlier this month that India is giving its neighbor its first submarine — a 3,000-ton diesel-electric, Kilo class Russian-built submarine that has been refitted.

Renamed UMS MinyeTheinkhathu, a historical hero in Myanmar, the attack submarine was showcased in a naval exercise conducted by the Myanmar navy in mid-October. It can operate at a depth of up to 300 meters.

The submarine, the first supplied by India to any country, is part of an effort by New Delhi to step up its defense engagement with Myanmar as it tries to contain China's looming presence in a country that is a gateway to the Bay of Bengal, a strategic waterway located in the northeastern part of the Indian Ocean.

India and Myanmar share a 725-kilometer maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal.

India's decision to give an underwater vessel to its eastern neighbor comes four years after Bangladesh, which shares a border with both India and Myanmar, acquired two submarines from China. Beijing is also helping Bangladesh build a submarine base, funding the development of its Chittagong port and developing a deep-sea port in Kyaukpyu in Myanmar on the Bay of Bengal.

Analysts say that for New Delhi these projects represent yet another bid by China to expand its naval presence in countries that ring India, prompting it to strengthen its own partnerships in the region.

"Myanmar wants to reduce its military and economic dependence on Beijing, but in order to do that they have

pointed out that they need options," according to Pankaj Jha, a professor of defense and security studies at India's O.P. Jindal Global University.

"We have given them defense equipment earlier, such as naval surveillance aircraft and communication equipment which was nonlethal in nature. But recently they have been seeking more advanced equipment. So, giving a submarine is part of India's decision to engage Myanmar much more cohesively, to build goodwill," he said.

Myanmar's acquisition of a submarine comes amid a spree in recent years by small Asian countries, from Bangladesh to Vietnam, to acquire underwater capability as they seek to modernize their navies — viewed as an effort by the export-dependent countries to ensure open sea lanes.

"Tensions in recent years have been rising along maritime borders," Jha said.

"And many of the small countries now believe that submarines represent a technological upgrade for their navies and give them some biting power," he said.

The website of Myanmar's military's commander in chief, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, says the submarine will enhance the state's defense prowess.

"To be a more modernized navy, we must be facilitated with submarines," the website said.

India's move, according to ministry spokesman Srivastava, was in accordance with its vision "to build capacities and self-reliance in all our neighboring countries." India's army chief, ManojMukundNaravane, and Foreign Secretary Harsh VardhanShringla visited Myanmar this month.

"Seventy to 80% of the world's trade passes through the Indian Ocean and the Chinese have invested in countries like Myanmar, Pakistan, Maldives and Sri Lanka, that are all gateways to the Indian Ocean," defense analyst Rahul Bedi said. "India's giving a submarine to Myanmar is a small cog in the much, much bigger wheel of acquiring a dominant position in these crucial waters," he said.

Via voanews.com

Backlash Against Jewelry Ad Highlights Growing Religious Divide in India

By AnjanaPasricha
October 20, 2020 09:11 AM

NEW DELHI - After a leading jewelry brand in India pulled out an advertisement showcasing an inter-faith marriage following a rightwing backlash on social media, concerns have been raised about a growing religious divide in the country since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party came to power.

prompted a flood of commentary and debates in the country.

"It's a very disturbing trend and shows the fracturing of intercommunity relations. This will only embolden the fringe Hindu groups and few thousand trolls who used social media to make things toxic," said NiranjanSahoo, a political analyst at the Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi. "These were not voices of the mainstream."

Commentators point out that no



The controversy has also generated a debate on whether big corporations should stand up to "faceless trolls."

The 45-second video released by the jewelry manufacturer "Tanishq" featured a Hindu bride and her Muslim mother-in-law holding a baby shower in the Hindu tradition. The company said it was meant to celebrate diversity -- the caption called it a "beautiful confluence of two different religions, traditions and cultures."

But a flood of voices on social media last week slammed the advertisement, some accusing it of promoting "love jihad" while others called it "fake secularism."

"Love jihad" is a term coined by rightwing Hindu groups for what they perceive as a covert attempt by Muslim men to convert Hindu women to Islam on the pretext of love and marriage.

"This is bizarre, highly objectionable and normalizing LoveJihad," tweeted GeethaKothapalli, a BJP politician from southern India.

Some opponents of the commercial questioned why it did not feature a Muslim woman married to a Hindu man.

Following the outcry, Tanishq said it withdrew the video due to "hurt sentiments, and the well-being of our employees, partners and store staff." It had released the commercial to promote a new jewelry collection called "Ektavam" or "oneness" and said the idea behind the campaign was to celebrate people from different walks of life coming together.

The commercial's withdrawal has

evidence of "love jihad" was found in the southern Kerala state where authorities investigated 11 interfaith marriages.

Days after the controversy erupted, Home Minister Amit Shah warned against "overactivism" but said that such "small incidents" cannot break India's social harmony. "The roots of social harmony are very strong," he said during an interview with Network18 on a range of current issues.

However, commentator Sahoo said the outcry against the advertisement reflects the growing trend of religious polarization witnessed in the country in recent years under the BJP government. "While the ruling party does not directly support such intolerant voices, such incidents help to keep the pot boiling and stoke division," according to Sahoo.

Prominent opposition leaders supported the advertisement. Senior Congress Party lawmaker Shashi Tharoor called it a "beautiful ad" and tweeted that if Hindu-Muslim "ekatvam" (oneness) irks "Hindutva bigots" so much, "why don't they boycott the longest surviving symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity in the world -- India?"

It is not the first time that an advertisement featuring Hindus and Muslims has faced a backlash on social media. Last year a commercial by Hindustan Unilever for a detergent, Surf Excel, was trolled for showing a Hindu girl protecting a Muslim boy from revelers spraying color for a Hindu festival.

Contd. on page 10...



WORLD NEWS

Safeguard human rights defenders, rights of NGOs in India, Bachelet urges

20 October 2020

Human Rights

Highlighting that India has long had a strong civil society at the forefront of “groundbreaking human rights advocacy within the country and globally”, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, raised concerns on Tuesday that “vaguely defined laws are increasingly being used to stifle these voices”.

Michelle Bachelet issued a statement calling on the Government of India to safeguard the rights of human rights defenders and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), expressing regret at legal constraints faced by NGOs, including by the application of laws that her Office (OHCHR) perceives to be problematic.

Foreign Contribution Regulation Act Ms. Bachelet cited as worrying the use of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), which a number of UN human rights bodies have also said is vaguely worded and overbroad in its objective. The Act prohibits the receipt of foreign funds “for any activities prejudicial to the public interest.”

Adopted in 2010, and amended last month, the Act has had a “detrimental impact on the right to freedom of association and expression of human rights NGOs”, she added. As a result, it also impacts their ability to serve as effective advocates to protect and promote human rights in India.

According to OHCHR, it is expected that the new amendments will create even more administrative and practical hurdles for such advocacy-based NGOs.

Most recently, Amnesty International was compelled to close its offices in India after its bank accounts were frozen over alleged violation of the FCRA.

‘Constructive criticism should never be criminalized’

“I am concerned that such actions based on the grounds of vaguely defined ‘public interest’ leave this law open to abuse, and that it is indeed actually being used to deter or punish NGOs for human rights reporting and advocacy that the authorities perceive as critical in nature”, Ms. Bachelet continued, stating that even if authorities find “constructive criticism uncomfortable, it should never be criminalized or outlawed in this way.”

Speaking to journalists in Geneva on Tuesday, Rupert Colville, spokesperson for the High Commissioner, noted that “activists and human rights defenders have also come under mounting pressure in recent months, particularly because of their engagement in mass protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act that took place across the country earlier this year”.

More than 1,500 people have reportedly been arrested in relation to the protests, with many charged under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, a law which has also been widely criticized for its lack of conformity with international human rights standards.

Freedom of expression, peaceful assembly

Charges have also been filed under this law against a number of individuals in connection with demonstrations that date back to 2018.

Most recently, the 83-year-old Cath-



olic priest Stan Swamy, a long-standing activist engaged in defending the rights of marginalized groups, was charged and reportedly remains in detention, despite his poor health.

Ms. Bachelet urged the Indian Government to ensure that “no one else is detained for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly – and to do its utmost, in law and policy, to protect India’s robust civil society”.

“I also urge the authorities to carefully review the FCRA for its compliance with international human rights standards and to release people charged under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act for simply exercising basic human rights that India is obligated to protect”, the UN rights chief added.

Earlier this year, in a welcome de-

velopment for advocacy-based NGOs, India’s Supreme Court significantly narrowed the definition of what constitutes a “political activity” under the FCRA.

“I encourage India’s national institutions to strengthen the social and legal protections that enable civil society to function freely and contribute to progress”, the High Commissioner continued.

Ms. Bachelet said that OHCHR would continue to closely engage with the Government of India on issues relating to the promotion and protection of human rights, and would also continue to monitor developments that positively and negatively affect civic space, and fundamental rights and freedoms.

Vianews.un.org

Backlash Against Jewelry Ad ...

Contd. from page 9...

“It is not as if divisive forces are new, they have always been there,” points out women’s right activist, Zakiya Soman. “But they have now started enjoying this kind of impunity due to the political climate in which you want to keep communities polarized.”

The controversy has also triggered a debate on whether leading companies should resist “cyber bullying” and stand by a social issue they chose to highlight.

In an editorial headlined “Craven Cave-In,” the Indian Express criticized the withdrawal of the advertisement by Tanishq, which belongs to the Tata group, one of India’s largest and oldest conglomerates.

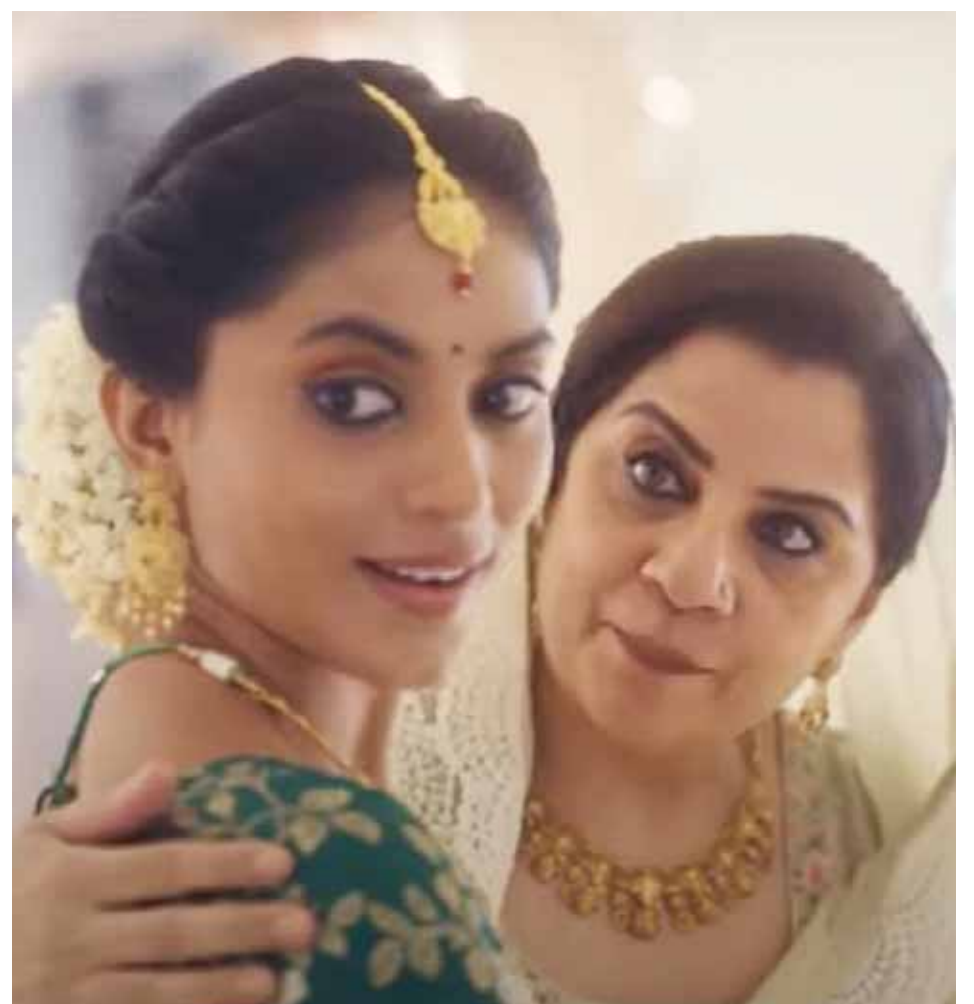
“It is true that from cinema to business, few want to cross the foot-soldiers of a ruling establishment bent on having its way. But this shared experience of diversity is what has enabled the India story, and allowed the building and creation of wealth. It

is worth a fight,” the newspaper said. It pointed out that with ample friends in business and politics, the Tata conglomerate “has the power to stand up to faceless trolls and defend what is right.”

Others however said that the company could not be blamed and pointed out how a “Tanishq” store in Gandhidham town in Gujarat state briefly put up a handwritten apology to the Hindu community for the “shameful advertisement” after allegedly receiving threatening calls.

“The company had little choice faced with tumult for the brand and tumult for their stores. We are living in tough times today, in sensitive society. The entire tone, decibel of conversation has gone up,” according to brand consultant Harish Bijoor. “And companies have to choose between brand idealism and brand pragmatism. Tanishq chose pragmatism. Brands cannot tread where angels fear to tread,” he said.

Via.voaews.com



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CTCC purchases an office Building of its Own with Full Payment Made

"A Dream becomes A Reality"



By Dr. Tham Vasanthakumar
Chairperson,
Building Committee

Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce (CTCC) was founded in 1991 to develop and foster entrepreneurship within the Tamil community in Canada. Since then CTCC has been serving the community by conducting seminars, workshops, networking events, business forums, speaker's club to encourage public speaking & business communication and an Awards Gala to promote & encourage entrepreneurs at different age groups and gender.

CTCC also conducts women's day celebrations to encourage women's participation in its activities. CTCC also promote cultural programs in its celebrations and a special musical event was conducted with two music maestros from India, Rajesh Vaidya & Stephen Devassy together in one stage, for the first time in Canada along with our famous local artistes. CTCC also donated more than \$200,000 to the Scarborough general hospital by conducting annual walkathons.

During the past 28 years, CTCC has conducted all these events at rented venues. The Chamber has identified that the lack of its own space has inhibited its ability to fulfill its purpose. The problems faced are increasing rental expenses, advance booking & cancellation difficulties in case of unavoidable circumstances, difficulties in setting the space as per our requirements, parking difficulties, extending hours when required, and more.

The only solution to solve all these problems was to own a space for CTCC! To achieve this goal, a build-

ing committee was appointed to study the feasibility of this project and to go ahead. The challenge was to meet the aspirations of the past & present members of the chamber and more than that finding a space for the future generation. The project was a huge challenge with a tight & tough schedule! The challenge was to get the building ready before October 2020 AGM! At this stage it will be appropriate to quote Dale Carnegie "Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seem to be no hope at all."

Having an original target of 1.4 million dollars to complete this project, we started collecting money at the 2019 Awards Gala with a promise that all the money collected from the donors will be returned to each individual if the building project is not completed! Limited time was allocated to collect funds at the Gala and to all our surprise, when we started collecting the pledges, a leading Entrepreneur, Dunstan Peter pledged \$100,000 for this project. As we went along collecting the pledges from the house, he further announced boldly that he will further match the amount what we collected from the house! The house pledged \$120,000 & he increased his amount to \$120,000! In other words, on the first day of our collection, we received \$240,000.00 within 8 minutes!

As you all aware, the unfortunate things started happening later, yes, it is the COVID 19! Business closures, loss of jobs, many of them have been the victims of corona, mobility restricted and so on! Even the people who pledged with good intention had genuine reasons for not giving the money! When the project was almost coming to a halt, Santha Panchalingam, Presi-

President Santha Panchalingam's Message

After 28 years in operation, CTCC now has its own office space to serve the members. The Chamber has identified that the lack of an office space of its own was a drawback to fulfill its purpose. As I have stated in many chamber meetings, we wanted to purchase and own a property without any mortgage or a loan so that the new board can serve the community without being concerned about the monthly payments, and we have done it.

The purchase of an office building is an accomplishment for the Chamber. This achievement was made possible through the extraordinary generosity of the members, hard work of the building committee, board members and volunteers.

CTCC's new home is located at 80 Travail Road, Unit 1 & 2 in the City of Markham. The 3000 Sq feet (2310 Sq. ft Main Floor and 700 Sq. ft Second Floor) facility can be used by CTCC members without renting an external space to hold events, meet-

ings, or discussions with members. It is the Chamber's belief that it can provide more value to its members by hosting more events, larger meetings, more frequent workshops and seminars to allow its members to use the space for improving their businesses. Not only will the new office space provide more value to its members, but also an appreciating real estate asset that will grow over time to deliver additional value to its members.

Finally, I take this opportunity to thank all the donors who believed in us to make our dream of an office building a reality.



Santha Panchalingam
President

dent of CTCC & the building committee member, gave a push by pledging \$125,000! He always insisted that the building to be purchased for CTCC should be free of mortgage & loan. He worked hard, day & night to finish the project during his period.

Fortunately, a building was found at a good location with ample parking space and we were able to negotiate the price for less than what we anticipated. On August 5th, 2020, the building was purchased without a mortgage or loan for \$598,000 and with the closing expenses, it costs \$611,000. CTCC's new home is located at 80 Travail Road, Unit 1 & 2 in the City of Markham (Markham road & 14th Avenue). This 3000 sq feet (2310 sq. feet Main floor and 700 sq. feet Second floor) facility can be used by CTCC members without renting an external space to hold events, meetings, or discussion with members. Not only the new space provides more value to its members, but real estate is an appreciating asset class and will only grow over time to deliver further value to its members.

With the closing cost of \$611,000, another \$250,000 is required to equip it with modern facilities, construct seminar room, meeting rooms & additional washrooms, purchasing furniture, communication equipment etc. Up to now we have collected \$748,000 from 104 members and well-wishers.

We have already submitted our proposal to Markham city and awaiting their approval to proceed with the finalization. We hope to finalize everything and expect the Grand opening to be scheduled for December 2020!

Building Committee Members:

Dr. Tham Vasanthakumar
(Chairperson)
Santha Panchalingam
Vina Devadas (Treasurer)
Vithu Ramachandran
(Secretary)
Dilani Gunarajah
Sinnadurai Jeyakumar
Mike Ahilan
Ken Kiruba
Murali Sivaguru
Kalyani Nathan
Poorany Sornabala
Venu Puvirasan
Ari A. Ariaran

Upcoming Event

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

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Venue: JC's Banquet & Convention Centre
1686 Ellesmere Rd, Scarborough ON. M1H 2V5

With a number of provinces and municipalities issuing directives and advisories relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, with respect to meeting sizes and venues, CTCC board has decided to postpone the Annual General Meeting that was scheduled for October 31st, 2020 to November 28th, 2020 as a tentative date.

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FORMER SHN PATIENT RAISES MONEY FOR FRONTLINE STAFF THROUGH ISOLATION RUN

When Aristotle Domingo was admitted to SHN's Centenary hospital in 2001, he didn't know that it would become his second home – family included.

Upon finding him unresponsive in their Malvern home, Aristotle was rushed to Centenary where he slipped into a coma and was put on life support. This began a year-long journey to recovery, with Aristotle spending his time with the wonderful nurses, doctors, and staff.

"We became part of the SHN family – or maybe vice versa – during my stay at the hospital," Aristotle recalls. "They babied me for three months in the ICU like I was one of their own, and allowed me to see my family as much as we could."

Aristotle became a familiar fixture at the hospital, and the nurses came to know all of his friends, family, and loved ones when they came to visit. "The nurses knew my sisters, my family, and my friends," Aristotle tells us. "My family were so grateful, they would bring food and treats not only for me but for the staff as well!"

Aristotle spent holidays at Centenary while he recovered – Thanksgiving,

Christmas, and birthdays – but he never truly felt like he was alone. "The staff really were like family. We developed meaningful relationships, and they were invested in my care and recovery."

Because of his exceptional care, Aristotle decided to give back during the COVID-19 pandemic by participating in the Isolation Run with funds benefitting SHN. "We gain so much from our frontline staff who are often overlooked, and to me it's just my way of giving back."

"SHN set the expectations very high for health care in Toronto," Aristotle continues. "They always wanted me to do well, and the way they cared for me is the way I would want to care for others."

After undergoing amputation of his left and right legs below the knee in 2017 and 2019, respectively, Aristotle began running to stay active and practice gratitude for what his body was still capable of. He is also a motivational speaker and the founder of Amputee Coalition of Toronto.

"As a patient support peer visitor for new amputees, I realize now that SHN instilled a sense of patient-cen-



tered care in me when I was a patient. SHN showed that I was more than just their patient – I was one of their people, and they went above and beyond the call of duty for me.

I got to where I am because of the sacrifices of others – my family, the dedicated health care workers, my nurses – and the amount of themselves they put into my recovery and well-being is truly mind-blowing. That's why I give – to recognize the sacrifices of others."

Aristotle still recognizes friendly faces when he steps foot into Centenary hospital. "I can't help but get

emotional whenever I step into the hospital," Aristotle says. "They still greet me like family, and to this day I'm so grateful for the great care I received."

Aristotle is still fundraising for SHN, and you can support him and the exceptional SHN staff by [clicking here](#).

You can read more about Aristotle's story on his [website](#) and watch the video feature below about the Isolation Run and why he chose to give back to SHN.

[embedded YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/uOyLUswAZ1Y>]

Is it the flu or COVID-19?

Influenza (flu) is an acute respiratory infection caused by influenza A and B viruses and typically characterized by the sudden onset of fever, cough, and muscle aches. These are also common symptoms of COVID-19. Each of these viruses spreads through droplets produced while coughing or sneezing, when touching a contaminated object or surface and then touching your own mouth, eyes or nose before washing your hands.

Because the symptoms are so similar, it will be difficult to know if you have the flu or COVID-19 without testing. That's why we've pulled together a few clues:

Of course, you'll need to self-isolate for 14 days if you're unsure what is causing your symptoms. The only way to be certain is through testing for COVID-19. Complete a COVID-19 self-assessment or contact Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000 or TTY: 1-866-797-0007.

Wondering how to protect yourself and your family?

1. Follow public health recommendations on physical distancing, wearing a mask, washing your hands, and

SPREAD THE FACTS, NOT THE FLU

MYTH Waiting to get vaccinated covers me through the end of the season.	FACT Get your flu shot as soon as it is available. It takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop.
MYTH I do not need the flu vaccine every year.	FACT Your body builds up resistance to many different strains over time. Getting the flu shot each year compounds its benefit for your immunity.
MYTH If I had the flu or COVID-19, I would show symptoms immediately.	FACT For flu, you typically get symptoms 1 to 4 days after infection. While for COVID-19, symptoms usually develop 5 days after being infected – but can appear as early as 2 days or as late as 14 days after infection.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCES

Symptom	COVID-19	COLD	FLU
Fever	Common	Rare	Common
Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
Cough	Common	Rare	Common
Sneezing	No	Common	No
Aches and pains	Sometimes	Common	Common
Runny or stuffy nose	Rare	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
Diarrhea	Rare	No	Sometimes for children
Headaches	Sometimes	Rare	Common
Shortness of breath	Sometimes	No	No

limiting contact with anyone outside your household.

2. Get your flu shot! It's safe, free, and proven to reduce the number of doctor visits, hospitalizations and deaths related to the flu.

3. Download the COVID Alert mobile app to protect yourself and your community.

4. Spread the facts, not the flu. (Link to graphic)

SIX WAYS TO STAY SAFE ALL WINTER LONG

By **Carla Holyk**, BSc.
PT, Professional Practice Leader, Rehabilitation



Since the pandemic began in March, many of us have turned to neighbourhood walks and appreciating the great outdoors to help us stay active and social. As we get out and enjoy the beautiful fall weather, it's a good idea to start thinking about how we can continue to safely walk outdoors throughout the winter months.

One in three Canadians over 65 years fall each year; slippery winter conditions can make the risk of a fall and injury even higher. But no need to lock yourself away for the winter! You don't want to miss out on being active, and socializing with your neighbours (physically distanced, of course!). Staying cooped up in your house can actually make you weaker and increase your chance of falling.

Ninety per cent of injuries causing falls are preventable. Here's how:

1. Improve your flexibility, strength, and balance. A physiotherapist can create a customized exercise program for you to get you in shape so you can be safe and active. Physiotherapists work in community clinics and many make house calls. You can also look for falls prevention programs in your area. [Click here](#) for a list of programs in Scarborough.
2. Stay warm. When you are cold, your muscles become tense, which may increase your risk of falling. When going outside in cold weather, dress warmly so that your muscles stay relaxed.
3. Don't take shortcuts. Make sure that you stay on paths that

have been cleared and salted or sanded, wear shoes or boots with good soles, and if you use a cane or walker, make sure the ends have new large rubber tips or even ice spikes. This will all help with traction on slippery surfaces.

4. Take extra care getting out of a car. Plant both feet on the ground and hold onto the door frame to stand slowly. If you have a walker, ask someone to set it up for you so it is ready once you have stood. You may want to keep some sand or kitty litter in your car to sprinkle on the ground before you stand.

5. Take your time and pay attention. Walk like a penguin by taking short steps with your toes turned out slightly. Keep your hands out of your pockets and wear a backpack to keep your hands free. This will make you more stable. Look ahead at the ground by moving your eyes rather than moving your whole head so you don't throw yourself off balance.

6. Take a friend, or at least a cell phone, with you. You should always have a way of calling for help if you do slip and fall. If you fall, don't try to get up right away. Take a moment to see how you're feeling and get up slowly once you are ready. If you hit your head, call your doctor for a check-up.

Stay safe and keep moving!



HEALTH & WELLNESS

LINK PROGRAM OFFERS SMOOTH TRANSITION IN MENTAL HEALTH CARE TO YOUNG ADULTS



Adolescents and youth with mental illness are one of our most vulnerable patient populations in Scarborough, facing the greatest number of issues, barriers and challenges in accessing care. Add to that the fact that 1 in 5 young people in Canada will suffer from mental health concerns, and it's clear that something needs to change.

"The mental health program here at SHN is the second largest in the GTA, with an extensive range of existing mental health services and treatments for all ages," says Lydia Huber, manager of mental health at SHN. "However, we identified a crucial gap in care for young adults transitioning from their teen years into adulthood that we wanted to fill."

Despite the need for timely intervention between the ages of 16-24 to achieve optimal health and decrease emergency room visits, most services aimed at children and adolescents typically end at age 18 while the adult mental health system is not yet designed to meet the unique needs of this population.

Thanks to the support and generosity of our donors, SHN has created a program that is the first of its kind to offer specialized transitional

mental health services and break the barriers for mental health care right here in Scarborough. We are tremendously grateful to Mr. Geroge Cope and Mrs. Tami Cope, Mr. Brian Neysmith and Mrs. Carolyn Neysmith, Mr. John D. Walters, Bell Canada, and the RBC Foundation who made this program a reality. The Transitional Aged Youth Pilot Program, nicknamed LINK, bridges the gap young adults face as they transition from youth mental health services into adulthood. Launched in May 2019, the LINK program has already seen a number of successes, with the staff helping patients secure jobs, get into post-secondary education, and help them build self-worth and self-esteem as they navigate the difficult time between adolescence and adulthood.

"This program is designed to fill a huge gap in mental health service, with studies noting that the transition out of adolescent services to adult services results in our patients falling through the cracks," Lydia tells us.

"The Scarborough community is one of the most underserved in the GTA, and we have a population of youth with severe mental illness that before we couldn't properly serve."

The LINK program creates a network of supports including the existing Shoniker Clinic at Centenary hospital, specialized psychiatrists and

youth workers, and other community services in Scarborough.

"We're like the landing pad for these young people," says Andrea, a child and youth counsellor with the program. "They can take off and come back as often as they want. We're the anchor they can always come back to, to help them navigate the system because it can be very challenging and complicated."

"The accessibility and barrier-free support is really what sets us apart," Natasha, also a child and youth counsellor at the clinic, tells us. "We're supporting these young adults in an age-sensitive manner, including being reachable by text message or other technology."

"The impact this program will have on Scarborough as a whole is really positive," Lydia says. "Because when our young people get the mental health care and support they need when they need it, they become thriving adults and will contribute to building a healthier Scarborough."

We are tremendously grateful to our donors who made the LINK program a reality. Because of you, the ground-breaking LINK program at SHN is raising the bar for mental health care right in here in our community.

To learn more, visit www.SHN.ca/mental-health.



Slaight Family Foundation provides funding for Scarborough seniors

5 Questions With...

Dr. Nadine Norman
Breast Surgeon, SHN



October marks Community Support Month in Ontario, and we recognize organizations and programs that deliver home and community care to ensure Ontarians living with disabilities, seniors and other vulnerable people are safe, happy, and healthy.

Upon discharge from hospital, many Scarborough seniors struggle with accessing and integrating new services within the community into their lives. Thanks to the generosity of the Slaight Family Foundation, the Slaight Community Reintegration Initiative was developed

by Scarborough Health Network (SHN) in partnership with Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (SCHC).

"Through this initiative, seniors can access community services directly from the hospital prior to discharge to ensure a strong link and pathway of care is established to enable a successful return back home," says Nancy Veloso, patient care director at SHN.

Scarborough's population of 60+ residents is growing, and is predicted to double by 2040. Together with SCHC and with the support of the

Slaight Family Foundation, we are laying the groundwork to ensure our seniors have the support they need right here in the community for years to come.

This opportunity to integrate services prior to the return home increases the likelihood of retaining services that ultimately help to keep seniors in their homes, and avoid return trips to the emergency room or long-term care homes.

The Slaight Community Reintegration Initiative for Scarborough Seniors offers customizable service packages to support them after they return home from the hospital, including food delivery, transportation to health care appointments, and housekeeping, to name just a few.

"By utilizing SHN's in-house expertise and connecting at-risk seniors directly with community supports, we are ensuring that no senior falls through cracks," says Megan Davies, manager of senior support services at SCHC. "The

Slaight Community Reintegration Initiative is an excellent example of the many benefits of collaboration across the healthcare continuum. By working together, SCHC and SHN are improving healthcare transitions and therefore the overall health outcomes of our shared clients and their families, and the entire Scarborough community."

With a thriving and growing population of Seniors in Scarborough, SHN is committed to empowering our mature adults to age confidently at home. Together with SCHC, the Slaight Family Foundation will allow us to provide easy access to the myriad of services available to ensure they are happy, healthy, and supported in the community they have called home.

By creating better pathways within the community, we can build a healthier Scarborough today.

To learn more about how SHN is supporting seniors in Scarborough, visit shn.ca/seniors-health/.

HEALTH & WELLNESS



SLAIGHT FAMILY FOUNDATION PROVIDES FUNDING FOR SCARBOROUGH SENIORS



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■ The impact of Legacy Giving at Scarborough Health Network



Leaving a gift through a Will to Scarborough Health Network Foundation is a powerful way to continue to make a difference in the lives of the people in the Scarborough community. A gift by Will can help ensure that SHN hospitals continue to deliver exceptional patient care to the community today, tomorrow and in the many decades to come.

Many people make a meaningful final gift through a Will to express their values and beliefs long after they are gone. Legacy gifts can create a lasting statement about who they were and what was important to them. Over the years, SHN Foundation has been on the receiving end of many impactful legacy gifts from people of various backgrounds and stories. Whether they grew up in Scarborough, had a wonderful

experience at one of the hospitals, or are just grateful and want to give back to the community, many people reach out to SHN Foundation to help make a difference in the lives of the people of tomorrow.

Take a look at some of the wonderful stories from legacy giving donors at SHN and how they’ve made an impact at the SHN hospitals and the Scarborough community.

Peter Shizuma Ito

As a Japanese-Canadian growing up in British Columbia during WWII, Peter Ito led a life full of turmoil, gratitude and humility. He experienced internment camps, became an award-winning Sumi-e painter, and at the end of his life, gave back to SHN Foundation. Read about his incredible life story and why he chose to leave a gift to help

the Scarborough community.

[Read Peter’s story here](#)

Ruth Joyce

A long-time volunteer at almost every department in the hospital, Ruth’s infectious laughter and charm made her a favourite at SHN. Ruth’s experiences with the Scarborough hospitals date all the way back to 1971, when her son was born at Birchmount hospital. A lifelong teacher, she decided that she would like to leave one final gift to the hospital when her time comes.

[Read Ruth’s story here](#)

Jennifer Cawthorne

A Scarborough resident and teacher, Jennifer lives minutes away from SHN’s Birchmount hospital, which she has visited numerous times throughout the years. It

was a wish fulfilled when Jennifer and her husband committed a percentage of their estate to SHN Foundation. They considered SHN to be the only hospital that they’d want to make a legacy donation to.

[Read Jennifer’s story here](#)

Charles Woodard

Charles Woodard spent much of his life on the road as a transport driver throughout Ontario and Quebec but felt compelled to give and help in any way he could to the SHN hospitals. Charles died in 2015 and left a \$22,000 legacy to the Birchmount hospital.

[Read Charles’ story here](#)

Want to make a legacy gift to SHN? Learn more by visiting our [website here](#).



SPECIAL FEATURE

KEELADI THE CRADLE OF TAMILS

By: Kumar Punithavel



‘Where do we come from? Where are we? Where are we going?’ is the caption given by the famous French stock broker turned artist, Paul Gauguin living in Tahiti, for the mural he produced, after hearing the sad news that his favourite son Aline, has died of pneumonia in France. It is the human nature to find their roots. Today the hundreds of thousand Tamils living in Canada are having the same nagging question in their minds, where did they come from?

Tamil is accepted as one of the oldest living languages in the world, spoken by about eighty million people. But the irony is its aspirations are restricted everywhere around the world, like bird with broken wings. One main cause is, during the colonial era around the world, the colonial powers integrated different races into one nation, for the convenience of their rule. They also used the divide and rule tactics, to keep the different races fighting among themselves so that the rulers could keep them under their thumb. Worse damage happened when they left, leaving the different races as one integrated nation without mutual trust among them. The mistrust lingered on.

As for the traditional homeland of Tamils, though scattered around the world, it is agreed to a great extent, that they originated from south India. Humans did the first migration from Africa about 60,000 years ago. During the Neolithic period, there was a great movement of Farmers from Sumerian civilization. They mixed with the earlier Indians to produce a population strain commonly known as the Ancestral South Indians (ASI). The latter largely populated the Indus river valley basin called Harappan civilisation, spread over 2600 and 1900 BCE. While some moved south to the land south of Vindhyan mountain range now called as Tamil homeland. The third influx was in the second millennium (2000 BCE), when Indus Valley civilization (IVC) was in a stage of decline, and an influx of central Asian Steppe pastoralists (Referred to as the Aryans), who brought with them Vedic culture and Indo-European languages including the first iterations of Sanskrit. The ASI mingled with

the pastoralists, producing a second population strain, Ancestral North Indians (ANI). The so-called Aryans arrived, as IVC declined.

With the arrival of the pastoralists, there was a certain percentage of IVC people migrated to what is now called the south India. This comprises of four states, namely Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Of these Tamil Nadu population always made a claim they are the descendants of the Indus Valley Civilization, based on the Sangam literature. The Sangam period is the period of history of ancient Tamil Nadu and Kerala (Popularly known as Tamilaham). This Sangam era is traditionally accepted time span from 3rd century BCE to 1st century CE. However, there was no archaeological evidence to show the existence of the secondary settlement of the migrants from IVC.

In 2013- 14, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), with much hesitation undertook the survey along Vaigai river valley. As early as 1973, local people from had come across some archeological clay artifact while digging a well in the neighbourhood of Keeladi village. But there was no effort undertaken by Archaeology department of India, for further study of the findings despite court cases and appeals. Though there was repeated demand by the people residing along the Vaigai river valley, their cry went unheeded. Finally starting in 2013 after doing the first three phases of excavations at Keeladi done by Archaeological Survey of India, where much evidence was brought out of an ancient civilization. But, all activities were stopped

by the central government abruptly, without any reasons given. However archaeological searches continued in the Ganges and other north Indian river valleys without any interruption. Finally, when Tamil Nadu government undertook to continue its search, it took almost a year to get the approval from the central government of India to go ahead with the study. Essentially it may be said, it was a stepmotherly attitude towards south Indian races by the central government of India. Finally, the Tamil Nadu stepped in and continued the archeological survey from where the ASI stopped abruptly without cause.

One may wonder what are the findings of the archaeological studies that are conducted. For a start I may say about 10,000 artefacts have been unearthed by the Archaeological Survey of India and Tamil Nadu Archaeology department in the five phases up till now! By carbon dating some of the artifacts are said to be as early as 600 BC. There were various structures and artifacts including frosts, brick walls, roof tiles, pottery, mimic accessories, skeletal tools, iron Vel, and Tamil-Brahmi letter-etched plates. The use of fired brick, the size of the building complex, an array of pots and other finds suggest that the settlement is of a very civilized population than previously believed to be in Sangam period.

As I've been an irrigation engineer at the beginning of my professional carrier and have heard about the water management systems in Indus valley civilization (IVC), I checked in detail for information in Keeladi. It was noted the water-management infrastructure excelled in the finds. To date about three kinds of channels have been discovered. First was a shallow broad channel – about half a meter across, and about 6 meters long thus far excavated in length – lined with shards of broken terracotta roof tiles.

Nearby there were beautifully crafted terracotta pipe which appeared to feed into a strategically located pot, which in turn was on top of another pot. The third type of channel was a closed channel, gently curved, with the curved portion buttressed with additional support. May be the liquid in it was pressurized. Incidentally this channel went close to a small, square brick-lined tank at the site.

One could infer that different types of channels carried water for different purposes. The flat broad open channel could have been used to carry fresh water where smell was not a concern. The closed channels may have been used to deliver stinky liquids like



SPECIAL FEATURE



sewage or effluent. In another dig in Keeladi, archaeologist unearthed four parallel channels far more than the need of a single house. Incidentally there were several channels crisscrossing a 300-meter stretch suggesting intense water usage. This points to the fact there must have been a factory of sort.

Excavation of 10 spindles whorls, with 20 sharply pin-pointed bone tip tools for creations, hanging stones of the yarn, terracotta sphere and earthen vessels to hold liquid suggesting large scale weaving industry. With industry it is logical there would develop trade. Down stream on Vaigai an ancient port city called Alagankulam was found. Excavations here yielded many Roman artifacts in this location. Some pieces of roulette-ware, characteristic of Roman, have been indeed found at the site. Interestingly in Sangam literature too the dice is mentioned in Kalithokai – 136.

கலித்தொகை 136

நல்லந்துவனார், நெய்தல், தோழி
தலைவனிடம் சொன்னது

இவர் திமில் எறி திரை ஈண்டி வந்து
அலைத்தக்கால்

உவறு நீர் உயர் எக்கர் அலவன் ஆடு
அளை வரித்,

தவல் இல் தண் கழகத்துத் தவிராது
வட்டிப்பக்,

கவறு உற்ற வடு ஏய்க்கும் காமரு
பூங்கடல் சேர்ப்ப!

Kalithokai verse 136 of Sangam literature.

O lord of the beautiful, bright ocean
where boats ply and crashing waves break
on shores, pushing crabs running around
their holes on sand heaps with salty water,

that resemble dice that are rolled perfectly
again and again in the cool gambling arena!

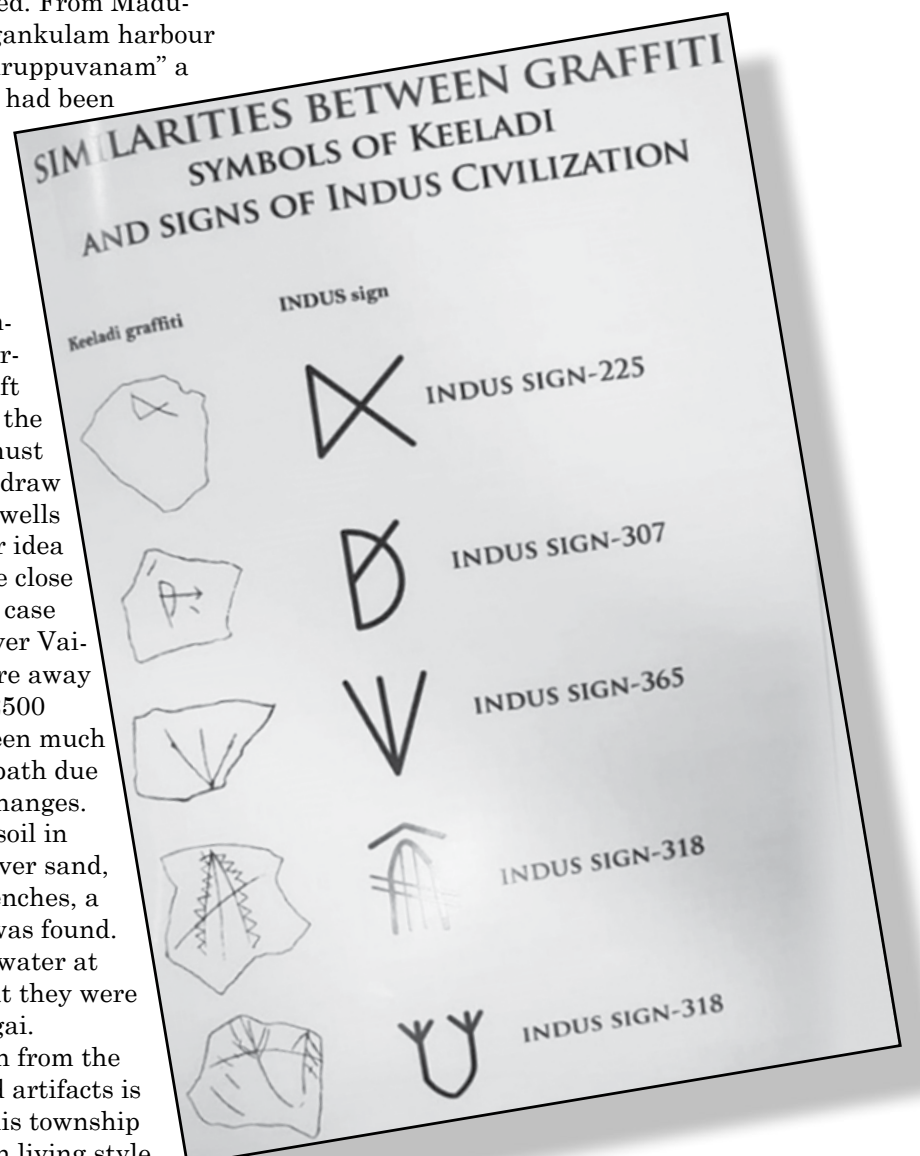
We find many clay brick structures suggesting a large township. During Sangam era on the right bank of river Vaigai an ancient highway must have existed. From Madurai to Rameswaram, Alagankulam harbour city through “Keeladi Thiruppuvanam” a road has existed. Keeladi had been a commercial town near Madurai.

Another interesting feature found is the ring wells, several of which were found at Keeladi archaeological site. Essentially, these wells used terracotta rings inside a shaft to prevent the collapse of the sides. These ring wells must have been used as either draw wells or soak wells. Ring wells as draw wells are a clever idea when water was available close below the surface, in this case about 5 to 10 feet. The river Vaigai flows about a kilometre away from Keeladi today, but 2500 years ago it must have been much closer. Rivers do change path due to various geographical changes. It was observed that the soil in the site is comprised of river sand, further in about three trenches, a sediment layer of shells was found. A logical explanation for water at such shallow depth is that they were located close to river Vaigai.

An important revelation from the findings of structures and artifacts is that the inhabitants of this township must have been secular in living style and thought. None of the buildings resemble a place of worship.

A very strong clue is that many of the graffiti symbols from Keeladi are reminiscent of the IVC signs. Far more studies must be done before a conclusion is made. However, the beginning of Sangam era can be confidently corrected from 300 BCE to 600 BCE, from the findings so far. What has been unearthed is only a tip of the iceberg. Much more work must be done to know the full history of the past people of Tamil Nadu. The Indian Government had washing it had from continuing the archaeological studies in Vaigai river valley has greatly tarnished the image of the central government of India's credibility.

Least we Tamils living in Canada can conclude that we had originated from South India which had a glorious past, and a great language of whose inheritance we could be proud of. Where we are too is the greatest country in the world Canada. The last question where we are going is answered saying going to the Kingdom of the creator, which too is a great place.





SPECIAL FEATURE

Finding Yourself

Absence and Presence

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



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

Video excerpted from "An Evening with PremRawat,"
Colombo, Sri Lanka

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

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

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

Strange! I find that very strange. Why is it wrong for you to be human? Aren't you human? Relationship of darkness, light. Relationship of absence, presence. All the things you imagine you are, you are not. But what you are, you don't know. So you imagine yourself to be a doctor, a lawyer, a housemother, a wife. An I.T.—"it". IT technician. It. "It" is referred to people without life, things without life. It. I.T. It means you go into a room, and try to plug wires and see if something works or doesn't work. You ask somebody, "Excuse me, sir. Who are you?" "Oh, I'm a salesman." Really? You're not a human being? This relationship of absence and presence. We don't understand the presence. The presence is real. Absence is nothing.

What is the presence? The presence is, this breath just came into you. This is the presence. Do you understand the meaning of this breath? Do you understand the value

of this breath? When you were born ... when you were born, when you came out of your mother's womb. Yes, all of you came out of a mother's womb. You better have come out of a mother's womb. Otherwise, you should be stuffed and sent to a museum. You all came out of a mother's womb.

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

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

Never figure it out. That's why the world doesn't know

what peace is. Because we're playing a game of ignorance with ourselves, and wars that we hate are a result not of knowledge, but of ignorance. So, which world do you want to live in? Which world do you want to live in? The world of presence or the world of absence?

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

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

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

- PremRawat

www.timelesstoday.com



By Thulasi Muttulingam



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

Long lost home

One late afternoon at the end of August 2002, I finally reached Jaffna after a particularly arduous journey.

The A9 road had just re-opened after several years of war, due to the newly signed ceasefire between the Sri Lankan State and the LTTE.

The road then was little more than a barren dirt track nude of even trees for miles on end. Both the Army and the LTTE had cut down the trees down the entire stretch for miles on end to avoid ambushes from the other side. The barren landscape, save for Army Checkpoints upto Vavuniya and LTTE checkpoints thereafter, was depressing.

I could see nothing but an expanse of red soil and dust billowing up at my face through most of the journey. I tried closing the window but it became suffocating inside the little non a/c van I was travelling in — so I opened it again — to be greeted with more dust blowing heavily onto my face, body and hair. I was thoroughly dirty and grimy by the time I reached “home.”

But at least, I joyously thought, I was home. At long, long last.

The home I had left at the age of three. The home I had carried with an aching sense of loss through all my childhood — the red floors, the wide verandah, the multi-hued garden; the old, comforting scent of a grandfather, the loving warmth of a grandmother, the protective loyalty of our beautiful black and white dog Nakulan...

My grandmother had been dead five years by the time I returned home. We had not been able to come see her, the path had been closed. Nakulan had been dead and deeply mourned more than 10 years. My grandfather, touching 93, was still alive but bed-ridden and ailing. And I, I was 21.

Officially an adult.

Emotionally still a naive child.

A child whose trauma at suddenly leaving had never healed.

A child who expected to be miraculously healed now just by the mere act of returning.

All the lack of rootedness and sense of belonging I had felt growing up abroad, I had expected Jaffna and that home to almost immediately resolve.

Nobody anymore would stop and ask me where I was from, I fondly imagined.

Nobody would tell me to “go back home where you belong” either.

I was back in a place where I belonged and such questions and attitudes automatically did not belong. Heh heh.

My loving grandmother was not there anymore but at least my grandfather was — as was an aunt and uncle living with him. I had family, I had cousins, I even had two new dogs in place of the irreplaceable Nakulan.

They wouldn’t replace him — growing up in a country without any dogs, we had had only photos of Nakulan and my father’s many tales of the dogs he had himself grown up with to sustain our yearning for a pet of our own.

I retain memories of Nakulan coming to check on me at various neighbourhood houses I might happen to be in, at the time I’d lived back here.

As a toddler, I was apparently very cute and thus in high demand among the neighbours. One or the other of them was always spiring me away for a few hours to play with at their houses. Nakulan didn’t take well to the idea but he couldn’t do anything about it as my mother allowed it.

So he took to regularly dropping by every hour to check for himself that I was being well looked after by these neighbours he clearly did not trust.

Dogs as I subsequently realized are not all that respected in Jaffna — yet I remember the decorous respect with which my neighbours would show Nakulan into whichever room I was then in, in their house — “See? She’s alright,” they would tell him placatingly. He would satisfy himself that I indeed was, and then turn and go away. Not for long though. He’d be back soon for yet another inspection.

I just cried, writing this.

Unconditional love and protection like that, I have since searched for all my life.

Even though I had left aged just three when my family fled some months after the ’83 riots, I managed to retain some early memories of Jaffna. Glorious, incandescent memories of a fun filled, comfortable existence — sounds of laughter echoing through the hallways; the serenity and stability of adults who always acted calm, composed, indulgent and happy.

No-one’s world had turned upside down at that point — that would come post ’83 when we had to suddenly leave — there would only be two adults to look after me thereafter instead of the entire neighbourhood on top of a loving extended family. Two adults going through various stressors of their own which they did not handle very well — and I could not understand why.

All that I understood, even by the age of 21, was that I had been sublimely happy until the age of three and then that happiness had suddenly been snuffed out. Leaving in the first place was the primary cause for this suction effect on our collective happiness as a family, I reckoned. Coming home would resolve it.

And so, I found myself full of hope as I alighted that August evening at my long lost home, even as the skies overhead darkened.

Jaffna was not welcoming to its prodigal daughter.

On Numerology

“Hey there, what is your number?”

I was 21 years old.

But this was not a group of young men, heckling me.

They were a group of young women, reaching out in welcome.

That was their form of a welcome greeting.

Sorry, I don’t have a mobile phone. And I can’t recall the telephone number either.

I was new to Jaffna. The year was 2002. And mobile phones were still quite expensive — generally considered a luxury, not a necessity. It would be 2006 before I got my first ever mobile phone.

The young women laughed.

“No, not your phone number. We mean your birth number.”

“My birth number?”

“Yes, when is your birthday?”

“September 4th.”

Right, so that’s your first number. No 4. That would mean you are studious. Also stubborn. What’s your total number?

“What’s a total number?”

“The sum of your date of birth. When were you born?”

“1981.”

Right that’s 4–9–1981. The sum of that is 4+9+1+9+8+1

which is 32.

It has to be a single digit

however.

Sum it up again. 3+2=5.

So your birth number is 4

and your total number is 5.

The number 4 indicates to us that you are stubborn and argumentative. But the 5 in your total number will mellow you down a bit as 5 means mellow personalities.”

“Oh OK.”

“So you have a tendency to be a stubborn, argumentative person but the Number 5 in your total birth number acts as your saving grace. You won’t be quite as insufferable as you otherwise could have been. We can get along.”

“Uh, thanks — I think.”

This was how many people figured others out, when I first landed in Jaffna. The habit seems to have died down now. It was quite common to have one’s birth numbers exchanged, before even names or so much as a how-d’you-do were exchanged.

A typical exchange went like this:

“Hi, there — what’s your number? I am a 6. Oh gosh, you are a 4?”

4s and 6s generally don’t get along. We better keep out of

each other’s way then.”

No, I am not kidding.

I have had to live in hostels where room-mates / dormitory mates feared our numbers didn’t “match.” Or if anyone ever did anything wrong, it was not unusual to hear commentary like “Well, you know a 7 would so do that” or “So bossy, just like a typical No.1.”

One of my friends had her own way of trying to get out of the stereotype attributed to her number. “I am a number 2. Gandhi was a 2. So was Hitler. Make of that what you will.”

Quite often, these stereotypes leading to preconceived notions as to one’s character caused one to have to defend onerously against spurious charges.

“No 4 eh? Quite the flirt then. Who have you set in your sights these days?”

I am asexual — although I did not know the terminology for it then.

I also come from a culture where many do have romantic partnerships but keep denying it, especially if they are of the female sex.

Everybody did it. Then everybody acted shocked when others did it.

“Er... no! I don’t have a boyfriend and I do not have anyone set in my sights either.”

“Ah, typical 4. Always the sly one. You would have more than one at a time, but you would also deny it.”

Sigh!

“You are a 4 aren’t you? Here, you keep your sights off my boyfriend.”

Yeah, that lout? I’ll pass, thank you.

The Irish occultist William John Warner — otherwise known by his more popular pen name Cheiro, was likely at the bottom of this phenomenon.

Most people I came across in Jaffna swore by this number system.

In an effort to understand the local culture and how they interpreted people, I even got myself a locally available book of numerology written by Cheiro.

It was rather fascinating stuff for a 21 year old yet to understand my own character. So I had to go by Cheiro’s interpretation too.

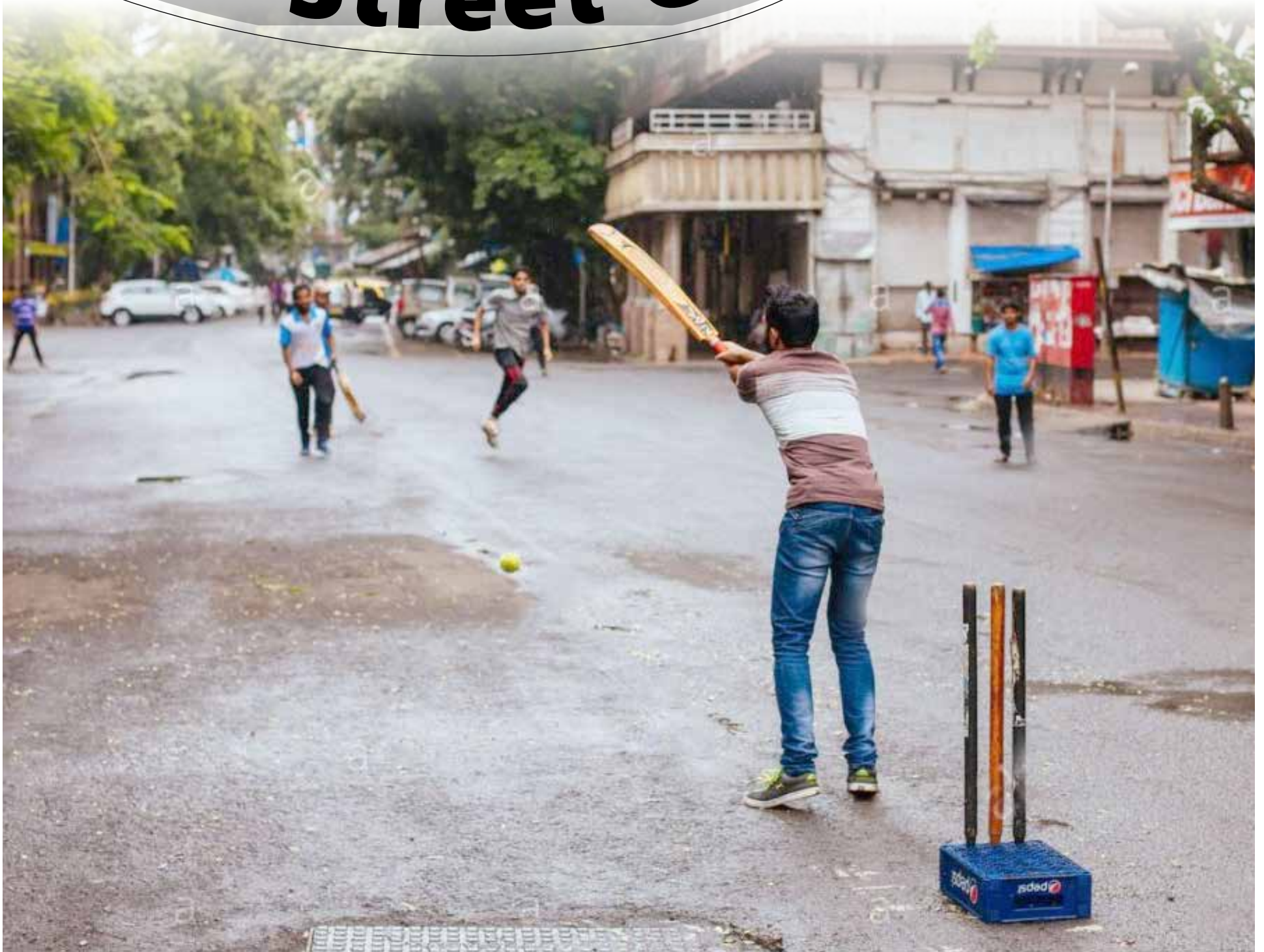
I was stubborn, argumentative, unlikable and unlucky in life.

And for a long time, I believed it



SPECIAL FEATURE

Street Cricket



By: Kingsley

There was neither traffic nor walkers:
 The road was free for the players.
 Wicket was a stem of a tree,
 Three vertical lines on the tree.

Bowlers found it very hard to hit
 The chalk line or even near it.
 The other wicket was directly opposite
 Was a brick. That wasn't a clear sight.

It was a match, keen, friendly,
 Free, but unorthodox while
 Disputes often made the law,
 But it is not the ICC.

The scorer seated behind the brick:
 Was seen scribbling on paper off white.
 He was scorer, umpire and the crowd
 Was busy; watching for run outs.

All players were serious, but jolly.
 I was attracted, enjoyed their game fully.
 Watched the lads playing the game
 Let the moments pass; admiring their game.

Oh! How well he drove for a six;
 Then a loud cry; eclipsed the six
 Enjoyed both teams taking to their heels
 Followed by the umpire, from the field.


US Elections 2020
SPECIAL FEATURE


Third White House run lucky for Joe Biden

By: Raymond Rajabalan



This election was the culmination of former US Vice-President Joe Biden's third bid for the White House.

But unlike previous attempts in 1987 and 2008, he entered the race for the Democratic nomination as the de facto frontrunner, the best-known in the field.

The 77-year-old suffered early setbacks in the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary but seized control of the contest with a string of successes on Super Tuesday when 14 states vote on the nomination.

Mr. Biden's lower-key election campaign style contrasted with President Donald Trump's larger rallies as the Democrat portrayed himself as more responsible on observing coronavirus measures.

Although former President Barack Obama called him the "best vice-president America has ever had", Mr. Biden's record from four decades in public office came under attack.

So who is Joe Biden and how did he get to this point of becoming president-elect?

A political fixture

Mr. Biden ran for the Democratic 2008 nomination before dropping out and joining the Obama ticket.

His eight years in the Obama White House - where he frequently appeared at the president's side - has allowed Mr. Biden to lay claim to much of Mr. Obama's legacy, including passage of the Affordable Care Act, as well as the stimulus package and reforms enacted in response to the financial crisis.

Joe Biden's life and political career

His association with Mr. Obama - a man he frequently calls his "brother" - may have also contributed to his enduring support among African-American voters.

As a long-time Washington insider, Mr. Biden had solid foreign affairs credentials, and helped balance Mr. Obama's comparative lack of executive experience.

The so-called "Middle Class Joe" was also brought on board to help woo the blue-collar white voters who had proved a difficult group for Mr. Obama to win over.

He made headlines in 2012 by saying he was "absolutely comfortable" with same-sex marriage, comments that were seen to undercut the president, who had yet to give full-throated support for the policy. Mr. Obama ultimately did so, just days after Mr. Biden.

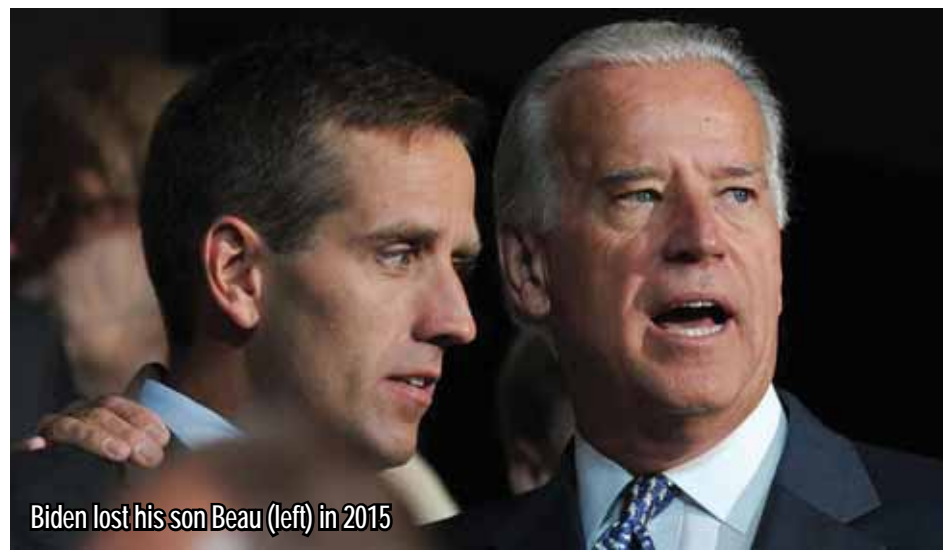
The six-term senator from Delaware was first elected in 1972. He ran for president in 1988 but withdrew after he



President Elect Biden with his wife Jill



Mr. Biden's two terms supporting the first black president followed a long political career.



Biden lost his son Beau (left) in 2015



Biden during a meeting in early 2020



1974, Biden was the youngest US senator

harassed by the nominee.

Mr. Biden was also a fierce advocate of a 1994 anti-crime bill that many on the left now say encouraged lengthy sentences and mass incarceration.

The record made Mr. Obama's moderate vice-president a sometimes uncomfortable fit for the modern Democratic Party.

Losing loved ones

Mr. Biden's life has been dogged by personal tragedy.

In 1972, shortly after he won his first Senate race, he lost his first wife, Neilia, and baby daughter, Naomi, in a car accident. He famously took the oath of office for his first Senate term from the hospital room of his toddler sons Beau and Hunter, who both survived the accident.

In 2015, Beau died of brain cancer at the age of 46. The younger Biden was seen as a rising star of US politics and had intended to run for Delaware state governor in 2016.

The elder Biden has credited Beau with encouraging him to run again, and during the campaign has used both tragedies to explain why healthcare - one of his signature policy goals - is "personal" to him.

Mr. Biden garnered considerable goodwill following Beau's death, which served to highlight Mr. Biden's central strengths: a reputation as a kind and relatable family man.

This perceived warmth is not without its pitfalls. After entering the 2020 race, he faced accusations of unwelcome physical contact during interactions with female voters - complete with uncomfortable accompanying footage.

But the avuncular politician responded by saying he was an empathetic person, though he accepted standards had changed. The episode, however, stoked a perception for some that he was out of touch.

Yet Biden, a deeply religious man and the second Catholic after John F. Kennedy, to become president of USA has finally been rewarded for his tireless efforts.

admitted to plagiarising a speech by the then leader of the British Labour Party, Neil Kinnock.

His lengthy tenure in the nation's capital has given critics ample material for attacks.

Early in his career, he sided with southern segregationists in opposing

court-ordered school bussing to racially integrate public schools.

And, as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1991, he oversaw Clarence Thomas's Supreme Court confirmation hearings and has been sharply criticised for his handling of Anita Hill's allegations that she was sexually



Kamala Harris – the first woman US vice-president

How her fortunes have changed in the last 16 months.

The California senator had surged to the front of a crowded field of Democratic candidates on the back of a series of strong debate performances - and a searing critique of her rival Joe Biden over race in June 2019. By the end of the year, however, her campaign was dead.

Now the 55-year-old will be running the country alongside Mr. Biden at a critical time in its history - trying to unite after a bitter few months and arresting the surge of coronavirus cases gripping parts of the US.

She will also be the first black and the first Asian American vice-president.

Here's a look at Kamala Harris as she prepares to work in the White House.

The California Democrat was born in Oakland, California, to two immigrant parents - an Indian-born mother and Jamaican-born father.

After her parents' divorce, Ms Harris was raised primarily by her Hindu single mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, a cancer researcher and civil rights activist.

She grew up engaged with her Indian heritage, joining her mother on visits to

"Politicians should not have to fit into compartments because of their colour or background." My point was: I am who I am. I'm good with it. You might need to figure it out, but I'm fine with it. A year ago her own presidential dreams sputtered to a halt, but now Kamala Harris has made history by becoming the first female vice-president-elect of US.



Kamala Harris as child with her mother and younger sister Maya



Harris began her career in the Alameda County District Attorney's Office in Oakland, California.

India, but Ms. Harris has said that her mother adopted Oakland's black culture, immersing her two daughters - Kamala and her younger sister Maya - within it.

"My mother understood very well that she was raising two black daughters," she wrote in her autobiography *The Truths We Hold*. "She knew that her adopted homeland would see Maya and me as black girls and she was determined to make sure we would grow into confident, proud black women."

Kamala Harris – Her life and career

A look at the life and career of Joe Biden's historic VP pick.

Senator Harris' early years also included a brief period in Canada. When Ms. Gopalan Harris took a job teaching at McGill University, Ms. Harris and her younger sister Maya went with her, attending school in Montreal for five years.

She attended college in the US, spending four years at Howard University, one of the nation's preeminent historically black colleges and universities, which she has described as among the most

ris went on to earn her law degree at the University of California, Hastings, and began her career in the Alameda County District Attorney's Office.

She became the district attorney - the top prosecutor - for San Francisco in 2003, before being elected the first woman and the first black person to serve as California's attorney general, the top lawyer and law enforcement official in America's most populous state.

In her nearly two terms in office as attorney general, Ms. Harris gained a reputation as one of the Democratic party's rising stars, using this momentum to propel her election as California's junior US senator in 2017.

Since her election to the US Senate, the former prosecutor gained favour among progressives for her acerbic questioning of then-Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh and Attorney General William Barr in key Senate hearings.

White House aspirations

When she launched her candidacy for president to a crowd of more than 20,000 in Oakland, California, at the beginning

early 2020.

In March, Ms. Harris endorsed the former vice-president, saying she would do "everything in my power to help elect him the next President of the United States".

She performed strongly against Mike Pence in October's vice-presidential debate as the candidates exchanged fierce remarks on a range of topics.

Her "Mr. Vice-President, I'm speaking" reminders to Mr. Pence, after he repeatedly interrupted her, were noted online as a pointed effort by the first black woman in a vice-presidential debate to be heard.

Her record on crime and policing

Ms. Harris' 2020 run put her record as California's top prosecutor under the spotlight.

Despite leftward leanings on issues like gay marriage and the death penalty, she faced repeated attacks from progressives for not being progressive enough, and was the subject of a withering op-ed by University of San Francisco law Professor Lara Bazelon.

Penned at the start of Ms. Harris' campaign, Ms. Bazelon wrote that Ms. Harris has largely dodged progressive fights involving issues like police reform, drug reform and wrongful convictions.

The self-described "progressive prosecutor" tried to emphasise more left-leaning parts of her legacy - requiring body cameras for some special agents at the California Department of Justice, the first state agency to adopt them, and launching a database that provided public access to crime statistics - but she still failed to gain traction.

"Kamala is a cop" became a common refrain on the campaign trail, spoiling her attempts to win over the more liberal Democratic base during the primaries. But those same law enforcement credentials may prove beneficial in the general election when Democrats need to win over more moderate voters and independents.

And now, as the US grapples with an ongoing racial reckoning and there is scrutiny over police brutality, Ms. Harris has taken a front row seat, using her sizable microphone to amplify progressive voices.

After quitting the race in January,



Kamala Harris addressing during her Presidential nomination a year ago

Ms. Harris endorsed Joe Biden two months later

On talk shows, she calls for changes to police practices across the US, on Twitter, she calls for the arrests of the police officers who killed Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old African-American woman from Kentucky, and she speaks frequently about the need to dismantle systemic racism.

When it comes to the contested progressive push to "defund" the police - the call for police departments' budgets to be slashed and funds diverted to social programmes - which is opposed by Mr. Biden, Ms. Harris hedges, calling instead for a "reimagining" of public safety.

Ms. Harris has often said that her identity makes her uniquely suited to represent those on the margins.

Now she has the chance to do just that from inside the White House.

Adapted from a BBC news report & Revised by Raymond Rajabalan





US Vice Presidents who became Presidents

1789-2020



By: **Raymond Rajabalan**

With Joe Biden winning the presidency in the 2020 US Presidential Elections he becomes the 15th vice president who has been successful in being elected President.

Since George Washington first became president in 1789, we have had 45 different presidents, 14 of which were Vice Presidents. Five of these were elected president later on. There have been eight vice presidents who took over when the former president died and one due to the president's resignation.

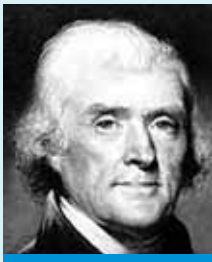
John Adams

John Adams served as the 1st Vice President of the United States from April of 1789-March of 1797 under George Washington. At the time, the presidential candidate with the second highest number of votes became the Vice President. From there, Adams succeeded Washington and became the 2nd President of the United States. He served for one term, from March of 1797-1801.



Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson, a Democrat-Republican, received the second highest number of votes when he ran against his Federalist opponent Adams in 1797, thus becoming the 2nd Vice President of the United States. In 1801, he ran once again, this time up against Aaron Burr. Jefferson very narrowly beat him and became the 3rd President of the United States. When he ran for a second term in 1804, he ran against Charles C. Pinckney. This was also when the rule that the candidate with the second highest number of votes became vice president changed and Jefferson was able to choose his own vice president.



Martin Van Buren

Martin Van Buren was first Presi-

dent Andrew Jackson's Secretary of State before becoming his vice President when he ran for a second term in 1833 and Van Buren became the 8th Vice President of the United States. He then ran for president in 1836 as a Democrat up against William Henry Harrison and Hugh L. White. Van Buren served for one term and was succeeded by Harrison in 1841.



John Tyler

John Tyler, a member of Whig party, served very briefly as the 10th Vice President of the United States under William Henry Harrison.



However, Harrison died about thirty days after entering office and Tyler succeeded him as 10th President of the United States. He served until the end of Harrison's term in 1845, not even running for a second term. Tyler was the first vice president to become president without being elected to the office and also served as president longer than any other president to not be elected to office.

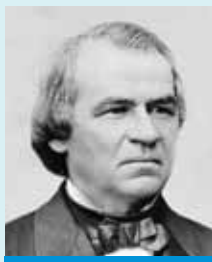
Millard Fillmore

Millard Fillmore was elected to be Zachary Taylor's vice president in 1848 as the 12th Vice President of the United States. When Taylor died on July 9, 1850, Fillmore succeeded him as the 13th President. He finished out Taylor's term in 1853 and Franklin Pierce succeeded him. Though he tried to run again, Winfield Scott was chosen as his party's candidate. Fillmore was also the final member of the Whig party to serve as president.



Andrew Johnson

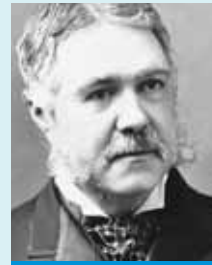
Andrew Johnson, a Democrat, was the vice president of one of the most notable presidents in U.S. history, Abraham Lincoln, who was also a Republican. He served as Lincoln's VP during his second term, as Hannibal Hamlin had in Lincoln's first. On April 15, Lincoln was assassinated barely a month after being re-elected and Johnson became the 17th President of the United States. Johnson himself



is well known for being impeached for violating the Tenure of Office Act. He was unsuccessful in running again in 1868, and left office the following year.

Chester A. Arthur

Chester A. Arthur served as 20th Vice President in 1881 under President James A. Garfield. However Garfield was assassinated on September 19, 1881 and Arthur became the 21st President of the United States. He finished out Garfield's term until 1885 after failing to secure the nomination from the Republican Party, mainly due to his limited campaigning efforts because of his poor health.



Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt Jr., a Republican leader, was the 25th Vice President under William McKinley, who was assassinated six months after he came into office. Roosevelt finished out McKinley's term in 1905 and was then re-elected, serving until 1909. At 42, Roosevelt is, to this day, still the youngest president ever. Though he had originally been on his successor William Howard Taft's side, Roosevelt became increasingly annoyed by him, and tried to run against him in 1912, but was unsuccessful.



Calvin Coolidge

Calvin Coolidge, Republican, was the 29th Vice President, serving under Warren G. Harding. When Harding died of a heart attack in August of 1923, Coolidge became the 30th President. He was re-elected in 1924 and became known as 'Silent Cal' for his quiet demeanor.



Harry S. Truman

Harry S. Truman was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's third Vice President as he came to serve when Roosevelt was re-elected to his fourth term in 1944. When he died of poor health in 1945 only a few weeks after he began his fourth term, Truman succeeded him as the 33rd President. Truman then ran again



when he finished off the term for the Democratic Party. He famously ended World War II when he used nuclear weapons on Japan.

Lyndon B. Johnson

Lyndon B. Johnson was the 37th Vice President under President John F. Kennedy. Kennedy was assassinated two years into his term in 1963 and was succeeded by the 36th President, Lyndon B. Johnson. Johnson finished the term in 1965 and was then reflected by a landslide against Republican Senator Barry Goldwater. He is among the favorite presidents of many historians for his notable achievements during his term such as passing many civil rights and gun control laws and more.



Richard Nixon

Richard Nixon is the only president to have served as a vice president not back to back. He was first the 36th Vice President under President Dwight D. Eisenhower from 1953-1961. He ran for president in 1960, but just narrowly lost to John F. Kennedy. Once again, he ran in 1968, but this time he won. His first vice president, Spiro Agnew, resigned in 1973 and Gerald Ford took over, who would soon become president when Nixon resigned over the infamous Watergate scandal.



Gerald R. Ford

Like said above, Gerald Ford, the 40th Vice President, became the 38th President in August of 1974 when Nixon resigned. He ran for re-elections in 1976 and won the Republican primary, but lost to Democratic nominee Jimmy Carter. Ford is the first person to serve as both Vice and President of the U.S. without being elected into office, since he was appointed after Nixon's first VP resigned.



George H.W. Bush

After serving two terms as vice president under Ronald Reagan, George Bush Snr was elected as President in 1989. He served as the 41st President for one term until 1993. His attempts for a second term failed as he was defeated by Bill Clinton.



James Bond actor Sir Sean Connery dies at age 90

By Siva Sivapragasam

Sir Sean Connery, the Scottish actor who was largely regarded as being the best actor to have played the original James Bond 007 movie in the long-running franchise died recently at age 90.

Sean Connery who was best known for his portrayal of James Bond, being the first to bring the role to the big screen appeared in seven of the spy thrillers. Sean died peacefully in his sleep, while in the Bahamas, having been “unwell for some time”, his son said.

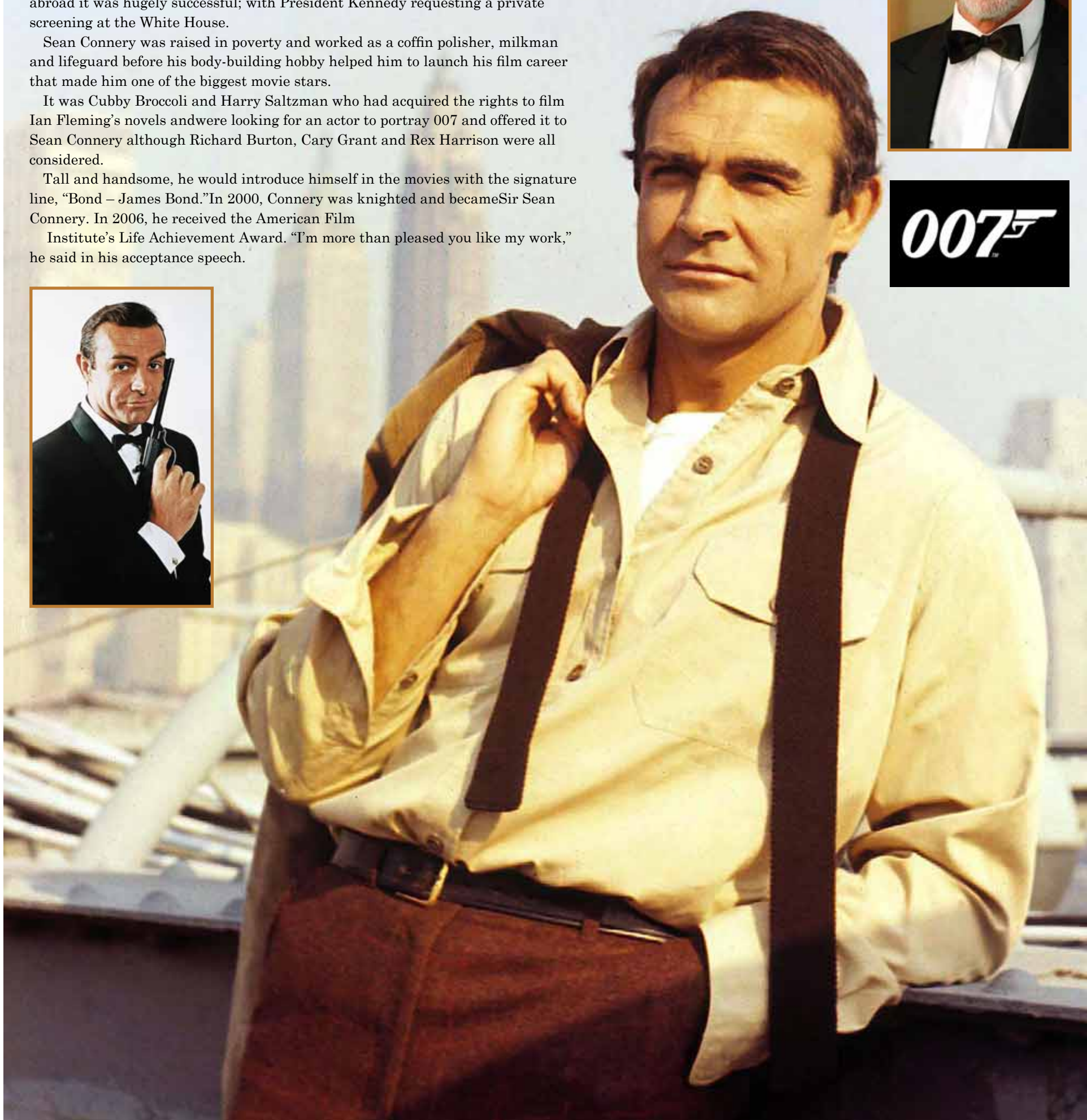
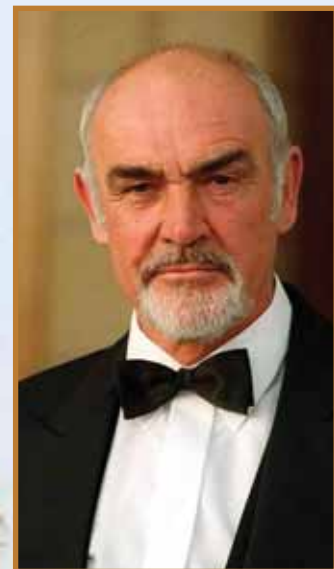
The action scenes, sex and exotic locations were a winning formula for Connery’s acting in his role as James Bond. The first film Dr No along with a stunning and sultry actress Ursula Andress made a pile of money at the box office. Even abroad it was hugely successful; with President Kennedy requesting a private screening at the White House.

Sean Connery was raised in poverty and worked as a coffin polisher, milkman and lifeguard before his body-building hobby helped him to launch his film career that made him one of the biggest movie stars.

It was Cubby Broccoli and Harry Saltzman who had acquired the rights to film Ian Fleming’s novels and were looking for an actor to portray 007 and offered it to Sean Connery although Richard Burton, Cary Grant and Rex Harrison were all considered.

Tall and handsome, he would introduce himself in the movies with the signature line, “Bond – James Bond.” In 2000, Connery was knighted and became Sir Sean Connery. In 2006, he received the American Film

Institute’s Life Achievement Award. “I’m more than pleased you like my work,” he said in his acceptance speech.

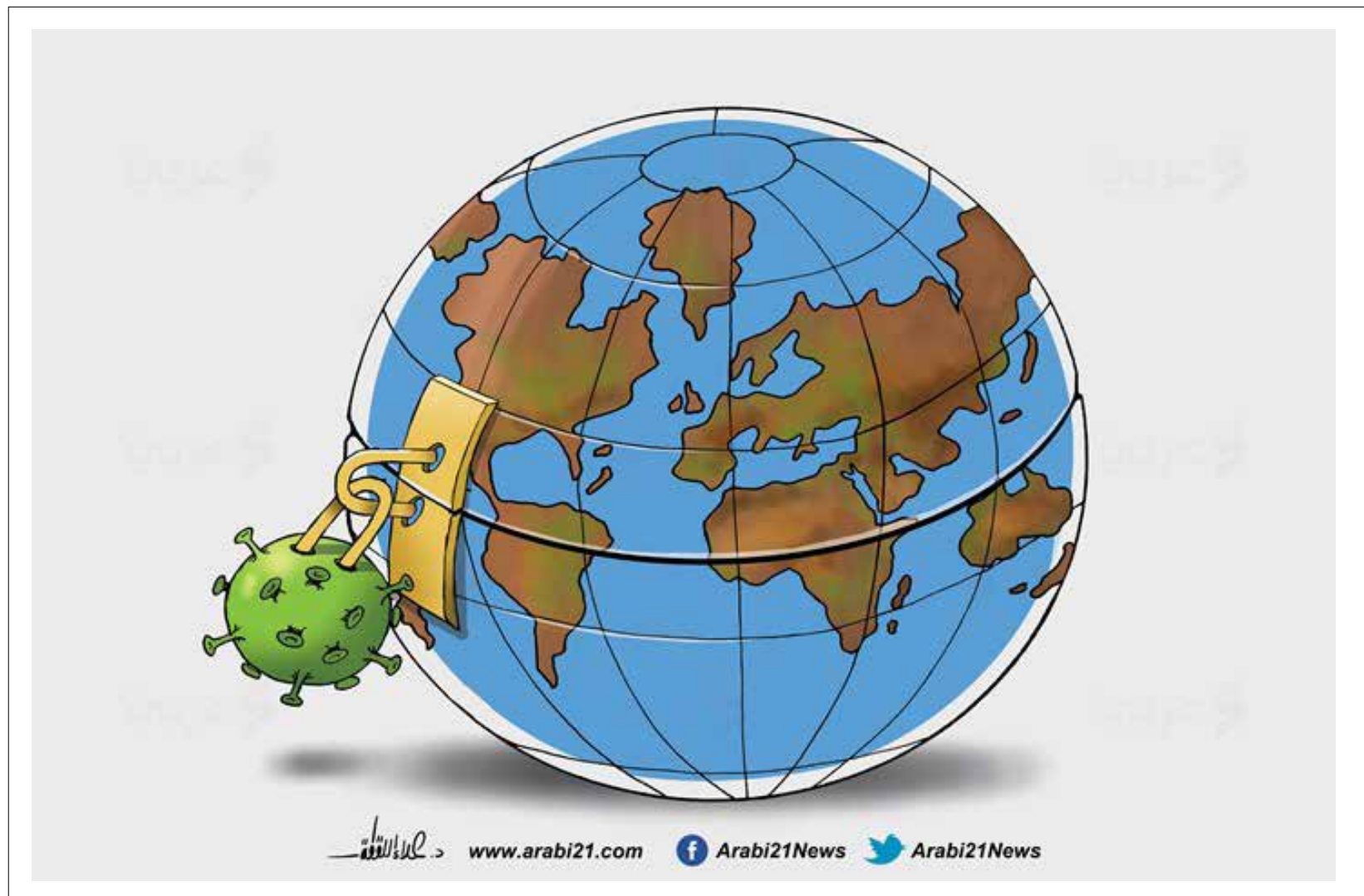




THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON HUMANITY

— An affected victim laments during lockdown —

C. Kamalaharan



With a feeling of complete isolation
And lost in deep contemplation
Murugesu Thatha remains indoors
Where life for him really bores

Afflicted with ailments of the aged
He felt himself permanently caged
To lead a solitary life so monotonous
And with a feeling of helplessness

For months it has been so
Since COVID-19 began to soar
At eighty vulnerable to infection
Secluded life ended in depression

Visit to the bar prohibited
To the restaurant restricted
To the visitors park banned
Nothing worked as planned

Many a time he got fed up
Going to clinic for check up
As the clinic remained closed
Due to curfew being imposed

“How long must I be in lockdown
With the external world shutdown”,
Thought he while musing on the situation
As he sat in the arm chair in frustration

For an emergency leaving home possible
Without adequate precautions impossible
So the use of masks became mandatory
And maintaining social distance obligatory

But for Thatha outside life seems isolated
And the surroundings appear deserted
COVID-19 has seeped into all activities
Forcing him into untold difficulties

Will a vaccine in near future be found
To make our lives more profound
And free ourselves from lockdown
And the security forces track down



SPECIAL FEATURE

Paths of Goodness - 7



Awwaiyar

By: J. A. Rajah

Lasting Marriage

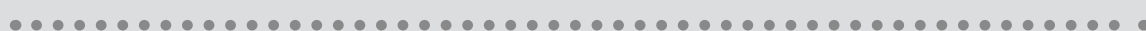


- Shutterstock

Parthavukketta pathivirathai undanaal ,
Ethalum koodi varlalam-sattu,
Earumaraha iruppale yamahil
Kooramal sanniyasam korl - *Thanipaadal-1*

If the wife matches the husband ,
They could always live amicably- by any means
If she is at cross purposes,
It's best for him to embrace a life of hermitage.

Awwaiyar highlighted the need for mutual understanding and confidence for marriage partners. If they are mismatched, she felt that it would be a lifetime of misery. According to values of her times one should renounce marriage and adapt a life of hermitage. Today's marriages contracted in haste end up in divorce courts. Both the man and the woman must have the basic virtues and hence Awwaiyar uses the terms 'Partha' and 'Pathivirathai' for husband and wife. Partha means a devoted husband and pathivirathai means a faithful wife. In those times the male gender was held as superior to the female and that's why the 'pathivirathai' was found to be good only if she was suitable for the 'partha'. However, it is interesting to note that Tamil culture gave such priority for aptitude in marriage arrangements. Mutual respect, affection, interdependence and conformity to collaterally accepted code of conduct is vital for lasting marriages. Awwaiyar brilliantly compresses all these ideas in one phrase: 'Parthavukketta pathivirathai'.



SPECIAL FEATURE



FACEBOOK AND THE GLOBAL VILLAGE



- Getty Images

By: J. A. Rajah

A. Its Major Features:

The Facebook has become a very effective social media helping the world to be interconnected. The world can now qualify to be a village. A person in one corner of the world is able to get all information of his friend or acquaintances and get updated. It helps to find information even if a person wants to keep such information private. It will be easy to get information of the people who may like or want to. For people who want to know what you are thinking, how you feel about different things the kind of information is gold. You can set your own private terms so that your posts and information is only shared with your friends. However, there is a side-door for your information to slip out. However, the information you see in the Facebook not guaranteed for truth and accuracy.

Facebook was created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg when he was enrolled at Harvard University. Facebook enables you to share personal details get you to interact with other people. To design a social media like Facebook one must have some knowledge of the human mind. In 2009, Facebook entered a major milestone with 350 million users; it became the most popular social platform in the world. In 2010, it was valued at a massive 41 billion dollars. Meanwhile it became the third largest web-company in the US, behind Google and Amazon. In June 2011, Facebook reached 1 trillion-page views. Facebook has now become a very impressive name, a globally used web-site and at the top of the social media revolution.

B. Its Disadvantages:

The Facebook has several negative aspects which need to be looked into if one wants to benefit from it. People may become addictive. They tend to be always conscious of it and hence it becomes an unconscious habit to spend more time on it. It becomes a threat to the productiveness of its users. Students will neglect their studies and spend more time it. Workers at offices may spend time on Facebook and therefore waste working time and hence have problems with their employers. Frequent use of equipment may result in malwares and viruses. Your account may have to encounter hazards. Identity thefts

are likely to happen because someone may try to use the information, they get from the Facebook against you. They could embarrass you and highlight the details you want to keep secret. It may also result in causing damage to your finances. Anti-social behaviour is another problem that has to be looked into. Cyber bullying, arguments via on-line become a nuisance. Some university students were reported to have ragged the new entrants using the Facebook. Facebook in the US has also led to relationship problems. Information is compromised leading to conflicts and resultant divorce.

C. Experience with Facebook:

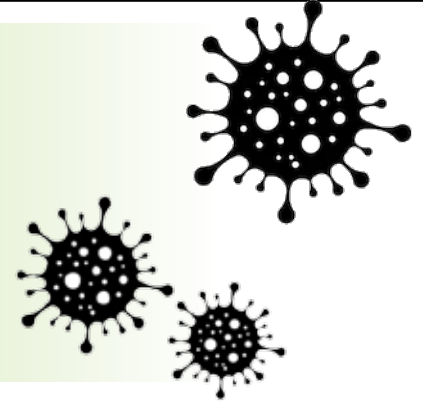
Facebook's popularity has increased by leaps and bounds recently. The number of users has expanded universally. Users have a tendency to add information daily in the Facebook and photographs relating to functions, meetings and anniversaries find a place in the Facebook. It is easy to get information about someone known to you from his or her Facebook even without the person's knowledge. One could write an account on someone with the information gathered from the Facebook. Sometimes the facts collected from the Facebook can be used against the person and that is where the hazards of Facebook arise. Sometimes you may like to put in a photograph privately in your Facebook just for your friends and close circle. Somehow or other it becomes public and many unknown persons become accessible to it and put you into feelings of uneasiness or discomfort. That is why one should exercise utmost care in the use of Facebook here was a news report of two Facebook friends. A young lad from Batticaloa, Sri Lanka exchanged photographs through the Facebook with a girl in K.K. Nagar South India. When the young lad went to K.K. Nagar to meet her, some hooligans set up by the girl abducted him and demanded money. It ended up in a court case. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Facebook has made the world a well-connected village. Facebook has a record of recent events-well presented. I was able to listen to Australian Church services from Canada on Sunday mornings. A person on one side of the globe gets to know of the activities of his kith and kin in another part of the world. It helps to get about the developments of your relatives and friends spread throughout the world.

D. Assessment:

The main use of Facebook is that it is a real-time social net-working site. This makes it one of the best sources to stay updated with the latest news and information. Major news goes viral on Facebook and most brands use it to announce important things regarding their products/services. Facebook is free and it's one of the best media for communication. It can help you to connect to different people from any part of the world as almost every people around the world use it. Facebook helps you to connect and share with people in your life. You can connect and find your old school friends on Facebook from different areas of the world. You can connect with people by using Facebook chat and the messages. It's good for people and advertiser. It is useful for creating awareness and transaction. Besides it enables large scale and specific targeting. It could enjoy access to extremely sophisticated targeting across an audience of 1 billion people a day. It also promotes traditional digital and mobile advertising. It helps you learn more about the culture, values, the customs and traditions of other people in the world. Many people especially student's use Facebook for group discussions, while some businesses use it for group discussions and show meetings. It provides a simple and smart chatting application that you can use it for chatting with your friends. You can sell a product or promote the product or services, thus increase the possibilities of making money on the internet. It allows the establishment of partnership between various products. Facebook provides many gaming and Facebook apps that you can use and engage such as photo-editing, the horoscope, and stock analysis while some people open Facebook only to play games. Facebook offers you an e-mail address which works like Yahoo, Gmail, Outlook and Hotmail. It allows to send and receive e-mails with users within and outside the site. It is based on your Facebook username and you can also receive the files attachment through Facebook e-mails. Thus, Facebook is a tremendous source of information and news. It is one of the best media to stay updated with the latest news and updates. Facebook is a world phenomenon that has come to stay. With people spread all over the world the Facebook has become a handy device to stay connected.



How COVID-19 has affected students



Student article

by: Raakul Muralitharan

COVID-19 is a contagious respiratory disease that has infected over millions of people across the world. Even when people are put in quarantine for over two to three weeks, the pandemic persists. Since the outbreak of the virus, the government has mandated many places to close. Many workers are asked to work remotely. Recently, some places have re-opened, like schools, restaurants, and public places. One area which COVID-19 has impacted the most is schools and students' education. Schools had to close down for the remainder of the last school year, and now that it has reopened, the virus is becoming more easily spreadable. Schools are highly worried about how to work around this problem and to continue their teaching students in a safe and effective manner.

One way COVID-19 has affected students' education is the rule which the school boards have applied to student grading during the last school year, when schools were closed. One of the rules is that students' marks cannot decrease. However, it can increase or stay the same. This promoted a sense of laziness in students as they would not care about their education. If a student already had a decent mark for a course, he/she might not be motivated to try for the rest of the year knowing they can still end the school year with a passing mark. This also affects the students' progress for the following year. When school resumes, students will have fallen behind due to the lack of study.

COVID-19 has also impacted the quality of school life. Now that schools have reopened, a lot of restraints are put on the student. Students have to be two meters apart, wear masks at all times, and the school day is cut in half. Though rules have increased, students still lack the discipline to follow safety precautions. Students roam about in hallways without maintaining physical distance and they sometimes do not wear their masks. It has also affected students' learning. Students now have to do most of their learning online. Since the time students spend in school is cut in half, many students have expressed difficulty in learning virtually. Learning virtually has also made it easier for students to cheat on their tests and exams.



-bbc

Finally, the opening of schools have made the virus more easily spreadable. Those with a weak immune system are most at risk. Children at school may catch the virus and show no symptoms. However, they can still act as carriers of the virus and bring it back home to family members. This contamination cannot be easily monitored and is only detectable once symptoms appear. Unlike other viral diseases we have seen so far, the outbreak of this COVID virus is considered a serious one because it has killed millions of people in the world already. In addition, there is no scope of finding a definite solution to stop the spread of this virus. In fact, we hear about people and the number of cases still rising. Because of this, school, which was once a trusted and safe place to be, is not a high-risk space for students, parents, teachers, and their loved ones.

Through the first and second wave of the virus, scientists are still unable to find an acceptable solution to control the spread of this virus. This problem has been going on for the last 10 months and people are highly worried about how long they have to live in this misery because there is still absolutely no sign of any successful method to control this fateful virus. However, it is important to keep our hopes up and be optimistic during these trying times. If everyone plays their part in reducing the chances of spreading the virus, we can help flatten and bring down the curve.



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THE NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSICS 2020

Black Holes And The Milky Way's Darkest Secret Has Been Revealed

By OUE Research Institute



The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has decided to award the Nobel Prize in Physics 2020 with one half to Roger Penrose, University of Oxford, UK, “for the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of the general theory of relativity” and the other half jointly to Reinhard Genzel, Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics, Garching, Germany and University of California, Berkeley, USA, and Andrea Ghez, University of California, Los Angeles, USA, “for the discovery of a supermassive compact object at the center of our galaxy.”

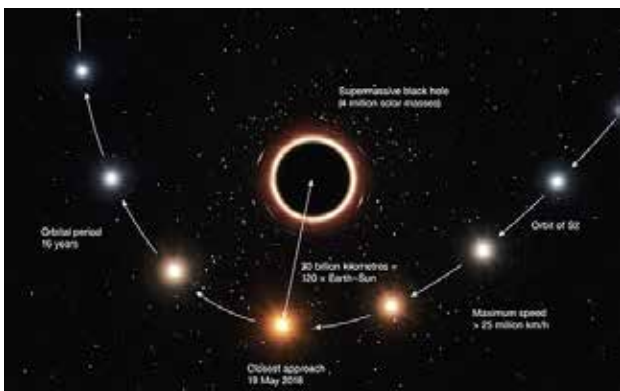
Milky Way's Darkest Secret

Trio Laureates share this year's Nobel Prize in Physics for their discoveries about one of the most exotic phenomena in the universe, the black hole. Roger Penrose showed that the general theory of relativity leads to the formation of black holes. Reinhard Genzel and Andrea Ghez discovered that an invisible and weighty object governs stars' orbits at the center of our galaxy. A supermassive black hole is the only currently known explanation.

A Breakthrough

Not even Albert Einstein, the father of general relativity, thought that black holes could exist. However, ten years after Einstein's death, the British theorist Roger Penrose demonstrated that black holes could form and described their properties. The super-heavyweight monsters that capture everything that enters them. Nothing can escape, not even light. At their heart, black holes hide a singularity, a boundary at which all the known laws of nature cease.

To prove that black hole formation is a stable process, Penrose needed to expand the methods used to study relativity theory – tackling the theory's problems with new mathematical concepts.



Penrose's ground-breaking article was published in January 1965 and is still regarded as the most significant contribution to the general theory of relativity since Einstein.

Reinhard Genzel and Andrea Ghez each lead a group of astronomers since the early 1990s. They have focused on a region called Sagittarius A* at the center of our galaxy. The orbits of the brightest stars closest to the Milky Way's middle have been mapped with increasing precision. These two groups' measurements agree, with both finding a weighty, invisible object that pulls on the jumble

of stars, causing them to rush around at dizzying speeds. Approximately four million solar masses are packed together in a region no more massive than our solar system.

Using the world's largest telescopes, Genzel and Ghez developed methods to see through the vast clouds of interstellar gas and dust to the Milky Way center. Stretching the limits of technology, they refined new techniques to compensate for distortions caused by the Earth's atmosphere, building unique instruments and committing themselves to long-term research. Their pioneering work has given us the most convincing evidence yet of a supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way.

“The discoveries of this year's Laureates have broken new ground in the study of compact and supermassive objects. But these exotic objects still pose many questions that beg for answers and motivate future research. Not only questions about their inner structure but also questions about how

that described how heavy masses could bend space and time.

Later studies showed that once a black hole has formed, it is surrounded by an event horizon that sweeps around the mass at its center like a veil. The black hole remains forever hidden inside its event horizon. The giant mass, the larger the black hole and its horizon. For a mass equivalent to the Sun, the event horizon has a diameter of almost three kilometers, and, for a mass like that of the Earth, its diameter is just nine millimeters.

A Solution Beyond Perfection

The concept of the 'black hole' has found new meaning in many forms of cultural expression, but, for physicists, black holes are the natural endpoint of giant stars' evolution. The first calculation of the dramatic collapse of a massive star was made at the end of the 1930s by physicist Robert Oppenheimer. He later led the Manhattan Project that constructed the first atomic bomb. When giant

stars, many times heavier than the Sun, run out of fuel, they first explode as supernovas and then collapse into too densely packed remnants, so heavy that gravity pulls everything inside, even light.

When Albert Einstein published his general theory of relativity, some solutions to the theory's notoriously difficult equations described just such dark stars. Until the 1960s, these solutions were regarded as purely theoretical speculations, describing ideal situations in which stars and their black holes were perfectly round and symmetrical. But nothing in the universe is perfect, and Roger Penrose was the first to find a realistic solution for all collapsing matter, with its dints, dimples, and natural imperfections.

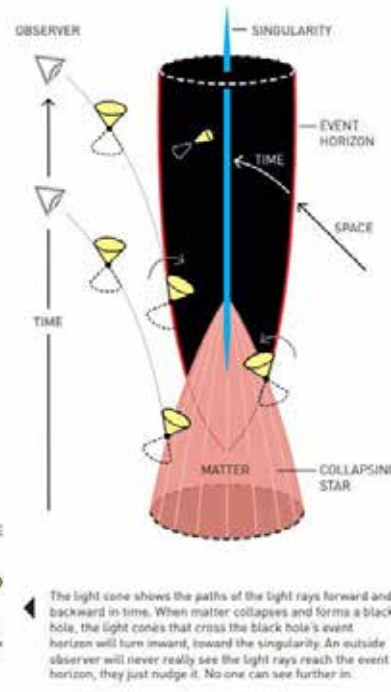
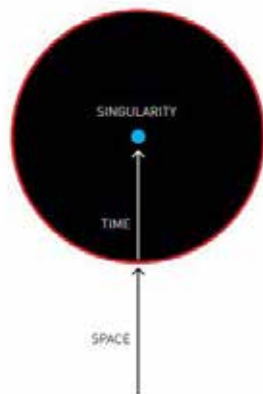
What We Do Not Know

Roger Penrose showed that black holes are a direct consequence of the general theory of relativity, but this theory ceases to apply in the infinitely strong gravity of the singularity. Intensive work is being conducted in theoretical physics to create a new theory of quantum gravity. It must unite the two pillars of physics, the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics, which meet in the extreme interior of black holes.

At the same time, observations are coming closer to black holes. The pioneering work of Reinhard Genzel and Andrea Ghez has led the way for new generations of precise tests of the general theory of relativity and its most bizarre predictions. Most likely, these measurements will also be able to provide clues for new theoretical insights. The universe has many secrets, and surprises left to be discovered.

Cross section of a black hole

When a massive star collapses under its own gravity, it forms a black hole that is so heavy that it captures everything that passes its event horizon. Not even light can escape. At the event horizon, time replaces space and points only forward. The flow of time carries everything towards a singularity furthest inside the black hole, where density is infinite and time ends.



The light cone shows the paths of the light rays forward and backward in time. When matter collapses and forms a black hole, the light cones that cross the black hole's event horizon will turn inward, toward the singularity. An outside observer will never really see the light rays reach the event horizon, they just nudge it. No one can see further in.

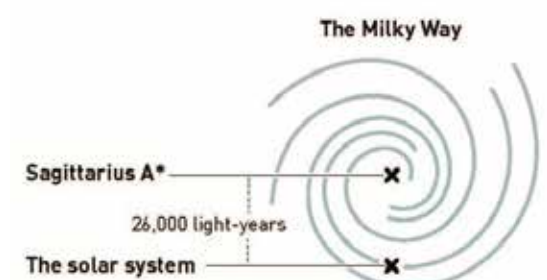
to test our theory of gravity under the extreme conditions near a black hole”, says David Haviland, chair of the Nobel Committee for Physics.

Gravity Holds The Universe

Black holes are perhaps the strangest consequence of the general theory of relativity. When Albert Einstein presented his thesis in November 1915, it upended all the previous space and time concepts. The idea provided an entirely new foundation for understanding gravity, shaping the universe at the most massive scale. Since then, this theory has provided the basis for all studies of the universe and has practical use in one of our most common navigation tools, the GPS.

Einstein's theory describes how everything and everyone in the universe is held in the grip of gravitation. Gravity keeps us on Earth. It governs the orbits of the planets around the Sun. The rotation of the Sun around the center of the Milky Way. It leads to the birth of stars from interstellar clouds, and eventually, their death in a gravitational collapse. Gravitation brings shape to space and influences the passage of time. A solemn mass bends space and slows time; a big mass can even cut off and encapsulate a piece of space – forming a black hole.

The first theoretical description of what we now call a black hole came just a few weeks after the publication of the general theory of relativity. Despite the theory's too complicated mathematical equations, the German astrophysicist Karl Schwarzschild provided Einstein with a solution



The Milky Way, our galaxy, seen from above. It is shaped like a flat disc about 100,000 light-years across. Its spiral arms are made of gas and dust and a few hundred billion stars. One of these stars is our Sun.



Boomers – dreams and realities about retirement

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

Boomers are often optimists – but, according to a recent survey, they can also be unrealistic about their health and the state of their finances in retirement.

The survey found that 97% of respondents described their current health level as good, very good, or excellent and 86% expect to retire in good health – and yet, the survey revealed that 61% of employees over age 50 actually suffer from one or more chronic health conditions. The most common conditions were hypertension, arthritis, high cholesterol, diabetes and mental health problems such as depression or anxiety.

Where finances are concerned, more than a third of survey respondents reported that they save 10% or less of their current salary for retirement yet, in retirement, they plan to withdraw a yearly average of 15% from their savings – or more than four times the typically recommended rate of withdrawal.

The main take-aways from this survey are obvious:

- Many Boomers may need to be more realistic about their health and the escalating healthcare costs they are likely to face in retirement.
- Many should save more for retirement.
- And, in retirement, they must

have a sound financial plan that allows them to pursue the lifestyle they want while ensuring their financial resources will last for all their retirement years.

Boomers are rapidly heading toward (or are already in) retirement – but it's never too late to plan for a secure financial future. Here are a few tips for doing so that apply to Boomers and, equally, to working Canadians of any age.

- Begin saving as early as possible – and save regularly.
- Avoid bad debt that doesn't generate income or increase your net worth.
- Invest intelligently – especially in registered retirement savings plans (RRSPs) and tax-free savings accounts (TFSA's).

Contributions to an RRSP are the most common way Canadians privately save for retirement. The contributions you make grow on a tax-deferred basis allowing you to fully benefit from long-term compound growth and help reduce your immediate income taxes. It's important to know that you must convert your RRSP savings into something that pays you an income no later than December 31st of the year of your 71st birthday.

The Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) is a registered plan that allows you to contribute up to \$6,000 in a savings plan that grows tax-free and

provides you with tax-free withdrawals. Of course, contributions do not reduce your taxable income at the source like an RRSP.

Not that long ago, men and women worked to age 65 and then abruptly left the workforce. Today, many members of the baby boom generation continue to work past the standard retirement age – on their own terms. For example, some are choosing phased retirement, which provides a balance between work and leisure. This additional income, even if a small amount, can go a long way to pushing back your full dependence on your retirement savings. However, it can also have an adverse effect on other income tested benefits

- Be sure that you have adequate insurance coverage for any health/medical challenges that may arise – especially disability, critical illness and long-term care insurance. Keep in mind that healthcare costs generally

increase with age.

- Have a plan that includes a realistic budget for your retirement years, coupled with a

realistic withdrawal strategy. Maintain an emergency fund to deal with any surprises

(health and otherwise). Be sure your plan includes a provision for inflation.

And, most importantly, get advice. Your professional advisor can provide the expertise and realistic assessment you need to create and implement a financial plan that will work for you, regardless of your age, for a lifetime.

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.

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Loan to pay off Consumer Proposal

A consumer proposal allows you to repay unsecured debt, which includes credit card debt, lines of credit, payday loans and income taxes. Student loan debt can also be included in a consumer proposal after you've been out of school for over 7 years. Any forms of secured debt, such as a mortgage or car loan, cannot be included in a consumer proposal. Our debt continues to accumulate, you have no emergency funds to assist with a job loss or unexpected life event, and you're worried about your future. While you believe you have the ability to repay some of your debts, you're unsure how to go about it. What's the right debt solution? For many people, it is a consumer proposal. The following line highlights and expatiates on the benefits of a loan to pay off consumer proposals for the greater satisfaction of one's wellbeing.

Improved Credit Score

In this view, in case you have a debt record and you pay early enough, your credit score will improve significantly. While you are in a customer proposal you have no unsecured debt; by obtaining a loan to pay off consumer proposal, you currently have debt, and as long as you are making your payments, there are enough chances for your credit score to improve.

Good Credit Report

A note showing you recorded a customer proposal will stay on your credit report for a long time after you make your last payment. On the off chance that your proposal takes five years to finish, the note stays on your credit report for a sum of eight years. In case you can borrow to pay your proposal within a period of two years, the note vanishes after five years, so your credit report looks presentable in the twinkle of an eye.

Genuine feelings of serenity

By paying off your buyer consumer proposal on time or early, you realize that there is no way that you will default on your proposal payments. Government law expresses that a consumer proposal is consequently annulled in the event that you are three months behind in your payments. By paying it off ahead of the normal schedule, there is no possibility that you will miss any future payments, and gives a lot of comfort to your life and way of living. In case of you have credit or debt issues visit www.gtacredit.com or call 416-489-2000.





Compiled by Siva Sivapragasam

Vanathi Srinivasan becomes President of the BJP Women's Wing in India



Vanathi Srinivasan (50), one of the senior functionaries in the Tamil Nadu unit of the BJP has been appointed as the president of the party's women's wing at the national level.

Vanathi is an Indian lawyer and politician. She belongs to the Indian political party Bhartiya Janata Party. She also served as vice president and general secretary in Tamil Nadu unit of the Bhartiya Janata Party. Hailing from an agriculturist's family near Coimbatore, Vanathi Srinivasan received her B.Sc (Chemistry) degree from PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore. Later, she did her Bachelor of Law degree at DrAmbedkar Law College, Chennai, and started practicing as a lawyer in Madras High Court from 1993.

Justice K. Sripavan and Dr. J.M. Swaminathan appointed as Advisors on Hindu Affairs to the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapakse



Justice K. Sripavan



Dr. J.M. Swaminathan

Justice K. Sripavan was the former Chief Justice of Sri Lanka. He was educated at Jaffna Hindu College and joined Ceylon Law College in 1974 passing out as an attorney at law in 1976, obtaining a first class in the Intermediate Examination.

Mr. Sripavan was appointed a judge of the Court of Appeal on 29 May 2002. He went on to become president of the Court of Appeal in 2007. He was appointed to the Supreme Court in 2008, replacing retiring Justice Nihal Jayasinghe.

Dr. J. M. Swaminathan holds LLB (Ceylon), LLM, M. Phil. (Colombo and LLD (Honoris Causa) Degrees and is an Attorney-at-Law. He has been in the legal profession for over 50 years. He is a Member of the Law Commission of Sri Lanka and Former Member of the Council of Legal Education. He is also a Member of the Company Law Advisory Commission and Chairman of the Intellectual Property Law Advisory Commission.

He was a Member of the Board of the Faculty of Law of the University of Colombo. He also serves as a Member of the Legal Cluster of the National Council for Economic Development and the Financial Services Stability Committee of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.

DFCC Bank CEO Lakshman Silva elected chairman of the Sri Lanka Banks Association



DFCC Bank CEO Lakshman Silva was elected chairman of the Sri Lanka Banks' Association at the recently concluded Annual General Meeting of the SLBA held in Colombo. This is a position he will hold for the ensuing period up to the next AGM in the year 2021. Lakshman Silva takes up this prestigious position from Dimantha Seneviratne, the outgoing chairman of the board for the years 2019/2020.

Lakshman Silva is an industry veteran who with his extensive background and expertise in the financial service and banking industry of over 30 years, has helped steer DFCC Bank to an arena of elite players, by becoming one of the respected and foremost commercial banks in the island.



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Welcome to our recipe corner! We sisters will entice you with recipes that we have fallen in love with and teach you a little Tamil along the way, as all the ingredients will have their Tamil names. Both of us love to cook and we have developed very different styles. Niranjini has a very refined palate and cooks more contemporary world cuisine with an Asian touch. Rajini is 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.

Chicken Hakka Noodles

cheat's version

This recipe is not from the South of China, but an Indo-Chinese fusion that has stolen the hearts of many people in India and Toronto. Here is a quick recipe to give you your taste of Hakka at home.

Ingredients:

- ✓ 200 gms boneless chicken, diced
- Marinate chicken in: ✓ 1 tsp of chilli powder
- ✓ ½ tsp of garlic paste ✓ ½ tsp of pepper
- ✓ 1 tsp of soy sauce ✓ 1 tsp of oyster sauce
- ✓ Salt

For the noodles:

- ✓ packets of instant noodles
- ✓ 4 cups of chicken stock (optional)
- ✓ ¼ cup carrots, grated
- ✓ ¼ cup beans, thinly sliced
- ✓ ¼ cup mushrooms, sliced
- ✓ ¼ tsp cumin powder
- ✓ ½ tsp coriander powder
- ✓ ¼ tsp garam masala
- ✓ Pinch of turmeric
- ✓ 2 tbsp garlic chilli sauce
- ✓ ½ tsp of fish sauce ✓ 1 tsp of vinegar
- ✓ 4 tbsp sesame oil ✓ Spring onion to garnish
- ✓ Salt

Method:

Marinate the chicken for a minimum of 20 mins or overnight in the fridge. Remove from fridge before cooking and bring to room temperature. Pan fry in 2 tbsp of oil on a medium heat. Once the chicken has become crisp on the outside, remove and set aside.

Cook the noodles according to the pack instructions ensuring to remove it before it fully cooks. You can cook this in the chicken stock for increased flavour.

Using the same pan as you fried the chicken in add the remaining oil and the vegetables starting with the beans and then adding the mushrooms in last. Cook on a medium heat for 5 minutes. Add all the powders in along with the chilli sauce, fish sauce and vinegar and cook for a further 4-5 minutes on a low heat. Add salt sparingly as the soy sauce and chicken all have salt as well.

Next add the chicken to the vegetables, followed by the noodles and toss together. If wanted you can also add egg to this dish, either fried and served on top, or scrambled in with the vegetables. Garnish with chopped spring onions and serve with a smile.

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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Durham Tamils Association is always looking for ways to help our members, youth, and seniors. During this pandemic period and this winter, we are continuing to provide free virtual activities almost every day. Thank you to our fabulous volunteers who do not expect anything but serving the community. We deeply appreciate your continued support. Also, DTA's Tamil school continues to provide virtual Tamil classes for our students.



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[REGISTER ONLINE AT DURHAMTAMILS.ORG](http://DURHAMTAMILS.ORG)

One on One Reading Support and Reading Practice
Run by: DTA Youth

MONDAYS
4:30 PM-5:30 PM

FRIDAYS
4:30 PM - 5:30 PM

GRADES K-AND UP






AGES 7-11
STARTING IN SEPTEMBER
CLASS TIME (TBA)



DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION

Free virtual Leadership Classes
(Members Only)



Accepting New Students

FACILITATORS
Sharmili Thangarajah & Pranavie Premkumar

AGES 12-17
CLASS TIME
Saturdays 5-7 PM

FACILITATOR:
Kathirithamby Subramaniam



Register Online At durhamtamils.org



DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION

FREE VIRTUAL CHESS CLUB (MEMBERS ONLY)

[REGISTER ONLINE AT DURHAMTAMILS.ORG](http://DURHAMTAMILS.ORG)

RUN BY DTA YOUTH



DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION



DTA SERVING DURHAM TAMILS DURING THESE UNPRECEDENTED AND CHALLENGING TIMES

DTA's Seniors

We are keeping our seniors fully occupied with multiple free virtual classes and programs. DTA runs Seniors Chair Yoga Class, Mind Exercises, Mat Yoga Class, Cooking Classes, Health Seminars, Chess Club, Virtual Game Nights, Travel Around The World From Arm Chair, Crafting Classes (including free craft items), and much more for our seniors. DTA is here to support you in any way. We are going to give the senior care package soon. Please register for virtual Seniors programs at www.durham-tamils.org

If you want to participate in our programs, please check our monthly calendars.

Digital Youth Festival 2020

Get ready for DTA's 19th Annual youth festival. DTA's kids have prepared some very crafty and unique programs so make sure to mark your calendars on December 12th, 2020. It will be live streamed on Zoom, Facebook, and You Tube. The login info will be on www.durhamtamils.org

Navarathri

DTA celebrates the Navarathri celebration with the Zoom. It was a great virtual event full of great performance. Special thanks to all the performers and special thanks to DTA's special guests Dr. Mohan and Kalai Teacher Natiyalaya Fine Arts Teacher - Smt. Kalaimathy Vageeasan. Thank you to our producers Sveta Manorathan and Mano Pancharatam for their excel-

lent editing and putting together our program.

Free Virtual Storytelling and Read-Along

This session is run 2 times per week, on Monday and Wednesday, from 3 pm - 4 pm for Kindergarten to Grade 3 kids. **Please Register online at durhamtamils.org**

Free Virtual Math Class

GRADES: Kindergarten to GRADE 12
TIME: Tuesday's 6:30pm-8pm
Teacher: Raatha Ravigulan
Please Register online at durham-tamils.org

Free Leadership classes

Youth Leadership Age Group 12- 17 & Age Group 7-11

We are continuing our Teen leadership program. Please register online at durhamtamils.org

Tamil Discussion Session

Durham Tamil Association is inviting all Parents, Youth & Grandparents to participate in a Tamil Discussion session. The discussion will be held every Monday at 6 pm. Our younger generation, parents, and seniors will discuss their opinions on this subject.

Halloween

DTA celebrated the Virtual Halloween Party with a lot of fun activity. Our kids dressed up and enjoyed the day without going outside. We provided a small prize to the first, second, and third place winners of each category of the best costume, the scariest story, and most answers right in the

trivia.

Thank you to DTA's Annual Sponsors

DTA thanks our annual sponsors Nava Wilson Law, Computek, TSN Express, Chapel Ridge Funeral Home, Showtha Thushijanthan-RE/MAX, Ajax Crematorium, and Visitation Ctr, Threat IQ, Elankeeran-DF Credit

Solutions, and all sponsors for the continued support throughout the year.

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

DTA News Channel on You-tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIQinT8000o>



DURHAM TAMIL SENIORS WEEKLY PROGRAMS SCHEDULE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	10:00 am-11am Mind exercises to experience complete peace & happiness 			10am-11:30am Virtual chair yoga class (1.5 hour) 	10:00am-11:00am Mind exercises to experience complete peace & happiness 	10:00PM-11:30PM Virtual Mat yoga class
	11:00am-12:30pm Drop in Zoom Sessions for Tamil Seniors 					
			5:00PM-6:30PM இலக்கியமும் வாழ்வியலும் கேள்வி பதில் நிகழ்ச்சி 			5:30PM-6:30PM Durham Tamils Got Talents
6:00PM-7:30PM Tamil Discussion Group 	5:00PM-6:30PM Travel around the world from arm chair 	5:00pm-6:30pm Beading and clay workshop 	Medical Seminar (Every third week- 6:30-8:00pm) 		7:30PM-9:00PM Virtual Game Night 	



COMMUNITY WATCH

A well-attended ZOOM meeting was hosted by Dr. Parvathy Kandasamy, PhD., on October 8, 2020, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm for the service providing sectors for the Tamil mental health patients. Speakers of the event are prominent personalities in the respective field of work with first-hand information. Tamil community members are encouraged to attend and learn about the recent increasing mental health issues among the younger generation. The speakers are encouraged to discuss the problems and address the possible solution as to how the service providers and health care system can make a difference to the Tamil and other marginalized communities.

Sherbourne Health and has extensive experience in leading projects and programs in community health, hospital networks and in international development sectors.

Referring to the topic 'Are We Served?' As one of vital importance, she responds: 'not the way we want to be served.' Tamil Community is remarkable for its resilience and strength. It is immensely entrenched in the Canadian mosaic and has strong business, social and political presence. We learn from the Tamil Community through several studies, but the needle moves very slowly. Tamil community on one level is very established, thriving, and



ARE WE SERVED?

Understanding Tamil Mental Health Do Tamil Families Receive Equality in Psychiatric Treatment & Care?

Zoom meeting hosted by Dr. Parvathy Kanthasamy, PhD. - Reported by Parthiban Vadivelu

Dr. Parvathy Kanthasamy, one of the Board of Directors of Vasantham, began her introduction with a heart-wrenching news about the twenty or so young Tamil men who lost their lives within the last three months due to drug overdose. Since this is an alarming issue among the community, Vasantham as a Tamil wellness centre, has come forward to address this problem by coordinating a series of meetings via Zoom on every 1st and 3rd Monday of the month. From the time of its establishment in 1999, Vasantham has been involved with Mental Health, Addiction Counseling, Psychosocial counseling and Gambling Addiction, providing services in Tamil for seniors, youth and members of their extended families. Dr. Kanthasamy pointed out that one of the main reasons for this mental health crisis in the Tamil community is the 'collective trauma' that the people have gone through. The series of Zoom meetings is one of the efforts initiated by Vasantham to bring together professionals, experts, workers in Health Services, families, profit and non-profit organizations and all in order to find out the contributing factors to this suffering and take action to prevent tragedies, protect families and promote well-being.

The first panelist, Dr. Nalini Pandalangat spoke about lessons learned from the Tamil Community, discussing mental health planning that is suitable to diverse communities. She is the Director of the Immigrant, Refugee and Newcomer Communities Program at

successful; on another level, it continues to struggle with challenges that are of very deep significance. It is a rural collectivist community with a family-centric orientation and gendered-role expectations. The richness of cultural context includes immense pride in homeownership, education, family relationships, and community building. The war shook the very core of the community throwing it into unfamiliar circumstances, isolation of seniors, women, men and children. Systemic barriers, discrimination and language play a significant role in this setting. The current system does not understand the Tamil community issue. It is essential to know what they have lost, the value of the deprivation, and develop programs to integrate these crucial factors.

Without understanding the culture, the system steps into the family arena after the violence has started. It does not want to learn, but sends the man to the shelter, gives a restraining order and forces him to enroll in a Partner Abuse Response Program. Perhaps the couple do not essentially want to be separated. It is not an appropriate way to handle familial problems. Cultural knowledge and understanding are necessary to deal with conventional relationships and subsequent mental health issues. When dealing with a community, the system needs to think differently. Tamil community went through a gradual change regarding mental health stigma. Mental health issues should be explored in alignment with the familial structure. There are

communication challenges; conceptualizing health is not a good idea. A man disengaged from the system ends up with various mental health problems, including alcohol addiction. System does not seem to understand the mental health needs of Tamil youth. Collective trauma is remarkably high among the Tamil Community.

Dr. Nalini Pandalangat highlighted the following points to the community to be vigilant:

- We have done many studies; therefore, we do not need more studies; we need action
- The system does not seem to understand the community's needs and values
- We need to have collaborated action in multiple sectors
- We need more research to include the second generation and the LGBT holistically.

Dr. Nalini touched the core of the issue very well emphasizing the need to move beyond the traditional times of health and to promote capacity building in multiple sectors. Dr. Kanthasamy endorsed what Dr. Nalini mentioned about the LGBTs by emphasizing the existence of these groups and their silence in Tamil community. There is no forum for the LGBTs.

Dr. Chandrakanthan, in response to the question said, "we need to be served in the context of who we are." His topic was 'Alcoholic and Substance Addictions among Tamil Youth in Canada: Familial, Cultural and Ethical Perspectives.' Dr. Joseph Chandrakanthan was a Senior Bioethicist at St.

Michael's Hospital for over 20 years and is now a regular Professor at the Faculty of Theology in the University of Toronto. He taught Ethics and Theology at Concordia University in Montreal. His specialized areas include: Mental Health Ethics, Palliative and End of Life Care Ethics especially Hindu – Saivite – Tamil Ethics and Islamic Ethics. He looked at three major issues, namely, alcohol addiction, substance abuse among youth and their impact on families. These are serious problems because they involve suicides, homicides, death by overdose and so on. Dr. Chandrakanthan covered a period scanning almost two decades and highlighted the important factors that were not taken into consideration. The Tamil community had a sense of communality which was artificially assembled until the end of the ethnic war in Sri Lanka. The focus was on what was left behind: the homeland, loved ones, relatives, etc. As a result, a sense of communality was formed by the negative factors of war: the achievement of battles. The media profusely carried headlines of such scenes. The community did not have time for deeper introspection. Later from 2009 to 2012, there was a larger sense of confusion, distress, disappointment, and defeat; even these mental conditions did not give way to any healthy reflection about family, settlement, or planning. The ripples of this condition are being felt today: our failure to address ourselves in a profound, coherent way. Those who were prospering economically, separated themselves and formed an elitist community. A sizeable proportion of the population was



Understanding Tamil Mental Health

Do Tamil Families Receive Equality in Psychiatric Treatment & Care?

left with a hand-to-mouth existence. The issues under discussion arise, in fact, from that community which is still struggling to settle down in this country. They are, ironically, stateless people with citizenship. On one side, nationalistic fervor was intense among them; once that feeling had dissipated, they are now struggling to find their niche in a strange land. This condition affects family relationships enormously in terms of mental health, addiction, distantiation, domestic violence and various other forms of abuse. Caught up in this mess, children suffer unduly as some are snatched from families against their will because Canada has its own norms and principles about child advocacy. Once they are taken away, they are put up in a completely strange environment which traumatizes them. This situation reminds us of the way the early settlers plucked the Native children and boarded them in residential schools, thereby destroying their lives which was a norm during that time. The trauma and subsequent abuses that these children suffered are now being brought into public attention. No other communities had gone

through that kind of trauma as the Native Canadians had. Even today, a larger number of them are suffering from some types of mental health issues, addiction and suicide than other communities, though the indigenous people make up only 4.9% of the national population. Tamil community has much to learn from these facts and should not be disheartened as there are other communities grappling with these issues for more than six decades. The topic 'Are we served' is, therefore, a profoundly serious and important matter. Whether we are served effectively, in the relevant way or as a community involving families, the ultimate cell of our existence is our family. As it is largely a rural community, interlocking and interconnecting families is the ultimate support. Alcohol and drug addiction distance a person even from the family. Families go through enormous pain, agony and anxiety when they see a son acting awkwardly or a daughter exhibiting a different behavior or physical outlook. Therefore, familial struggle is one that has to be addressed in a systematic way. In the old days, if a member of the family consumed

"ganja", it was a criminal offence, and the person would be ostracized from the community. Whereas here, drug abuse extends from the elitist communities to the poorer ones. Focus on family is very essential and that will not be possible without services that are organized, systematic, well-planned and have access possibility which won't jeopardize their social respectability as there are people who are not willing to talk openly about their issues. They instead seek advice from wrong people, taking the person involved to the temple and getting blessings, or get hold of an influential person to guide them. This approach is carried on in order to maintain secrecy but, ethically, it is not correct. On one level, labelling or stigmatizing the person is dangerous; on the other, making it a secret and allowing the person to go completely astray is equally imprudent and not the right way to solve the problem.

When we deal with this issue, the cultural aspect must also be taken into consideration. Is culture something that is unchangeable? Culture is a human product. There is nothing that is culturally moribund, static or concretized. Tamil culture has gone through enormous changes in the last few decades after the war, not only by virtue of migration, but even in our homeland. Looking at the Tamil community as a research subject is as bad as looking at it as an extraordinary human reality. We have to help people overcome the barriers that are placed in front of them by our moribund culture. Culture is always open to change and that change can take place in an effective, dynamic and productive way. The cultural aspects require greater attention because we often try to escape by bringing culture into the picture of treatment. Certainly, we need to understand the person in order to treat the person. The historical background and the collective trauma should be taken into consideration. The fact that there is no time to attend to these aspects results in negligence, especially of children. Dr. Chandrakanthan said that on a national level, Multiculturalism has become a fanciful label and he has serious reservations about it. As a priest who serves in a church, he sees so many different communities coming for worship; therefore, the church is considered multicultural. Actually, they come as segmented communities and leave as the same. They come for a common worship and that is the be-all and end-all of it. There is no deeper interaction, no sense of community. Do the Tamil youth automatically have the ability to participate in larger groups? There was a time when the Tamil community existed as

a homogenous one with a general sense of community in terms of race, color, our external environmental conditions, physical outlooks; whereas in Canada, we are sending our students amidst people, languages, ethnicities, cultures that they have never come across. In a recent publication, CAMH pointed out that South Asian students in high schools with addiction issues are not quite different from other multiracial student communities. The peer pressure is so much that the fact that 58% of high school students have either consumed alcohol more than once or forced into doing it applies to all. Tamils are not an exception. Further, in terms of treatment, can we look up to a service as Tamil community from non-Tamil medical teams without any reservation that our specific socio, psychosocial reality is taken into consideration in treatment? It is important because of the collective trauma that lies buried within us and the background we bring together. Without understanding these factors, is it possible to understand and treat a Tamil youth or a Tamil family? Culture certainly has a place there. It is the psychosocial history that underlies the culture which has to be addressed. Moreover, from an ethical perspective, it is questionable whether the current policies and norms of treatment are authentic or viable enough to deal with these issues. Most of our ethical principles are drawn from a Judeo-Christian background; as a result, they have a western coloring. In the Tamil community, ethics does not always give priority to the autonomy of the individual. Among many of the ethnic communities, when a family member is admitted to a mental health institute, most of the time it is a police admission; therefore, an involuntary admission. The hospital norm is that the focus should be on the individual, and the autonomy of the individual should be respected. Family does not come into the picture. Once that happens, all the decisions are taken based on whether this person is capable or not to share their information. In other words, the primary ethical principle is focusing on the autonomy and self-determination of the individual. Dr. Chandrakanthan insisted on the advocacy that autonomy has to be a segmented autonomy. Tamil families don't treat the person concerned as holistically different, but as part of the family. Respecting the autonomy is an ethical expectation of hospitals, psychiatric institutions and treatment places, whereas involving the families in treatment decisions is also very essential.

Contd. on page 44...

VASANTHAM

TAMIL WELLNESS CENTRE ZOOM INFORMATION

Youtube: Vasantham Wellness

KEEPING SAFE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH - SERIES

1st and 3rd Mondays:

Safe Community Mental Health Series:

7.00- 9.00 pm

(Professional speakers)

ZOOM 918 584 6813

TEL: 1-647 374 4685

SENIORS PROGRAM

Every Thursday

Zoom : 11am - 12 pm-talks/socializing.

12pm-1.00 pm Chair Yoga

ZOOM: 870 9138 3578

Passcode: 106 876

EVERYONE IS INVITED

VASANTHAM Tel: 416 847 4172

Email: vasanthamwellness@gmail.com

THANK YOU

Dr. Parvathy Kanthasam



COMMUNITY WATCH

PURI JAGANNATH TEMPLE AND THE ELEVEN MYSTERIES THAT DEFY SCIENTIFIC LOGIC AND NATURE'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Compiled by Kidambi Raj

INTRODUCTION

Sri Jagannath Temple in Puri in Orissa, India holds a prominent place of importance for Hindus. It is one of the **Char Dham** (four abodes) is a set of four pilgrimage centres in India. It is believed that the pre-historic Hindu philosopher, Sri Adi Sankaracharya coined the term Char Dham. The literal meaning of this term is four abodes of God or Holy Destinations. Hindus believe that visiting these sites helps devotees achieve **moksha** (salvation). The four abodes comprise of Dwaraka, Badrinath, Puri and Rameswaram. Jagannatha (Lord of the Universe) a form of Vishnu, is a deity worshipped in the regional traditions of Hinduism in India and Bangladesh

It took three generations worth of time and effort to brick up the humongous walls of the famous Puri Jagannath temple in Orissa.

According to the legends, **King Indradyumn** built this Holy Shrine after Lord Vishnu blessed and guided him in his dreams. It was during one of the holy dips in the river, King Indradyumn found an iron rod floating. It is believed that Lord Vishnu then whispered to him that the floating rod is His heart, which will remain on the land forever. The King then ran with the rod to Lord Jagannath and placed it in Him discreetly. He never allowed anyone to ever see or touch the rod.

In order to see the deity, he observed fast unto death on **Mount Neela**. One day, he heard a voice saying that he will see the deity by performing **Ashwametha Yaga**. After that he built the temple and **Saint Narada**, installed the idol of Lord Narasimha in the temple. One night he saw Lord Jagannath in his dream

The traditional story concerning the origins of the Lord Jagannath temple is that here the original image of Lord Jagannath (a deity form of Lord Vishnu) at the end of **Treta Yuga** manifested near a banyan tree, near seashore in the form of an **Indranila Mani** or the **Blue Jewel**.

Sri Jagannath temple, one of the most impressive monuments of the Indian state of Orissa, was constructed by a famous King of Ganga Dynasty, Ananta Varman Chodaganga Deva, dating back to 12th century at the seashore Puri.

UNIQUENESS OF PURI JAGANNATH'S IDOL AND WHY THE IDOL IS INCOMPLETE?

The uniqueness of Lord Jagannath's idol the fact that it is carved out of **Neem Wood**. Yes, unlike the usual metal or stone carving of the Hindu idols in temples. The idols of Lord Jagannath depicts the lord embodying features of a large, square shaped head, big eyes and unfinished limbs.

It is believed that **Vishwakarma**, known as God's architect was invited to be the carpenter. But he stipulated a condition for doing the work and that was, no one should disturb him while carving the statue and if anybody disturb him, he would leave the work unfinished. After some time, the King opened the door of Vishwakarma's room and that was the end of his work on the idol.



- Puri Jagannath Temple

HISTORY AND LEGENDS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TEMPLE

The history and the many legends woven around the temple can be read in the temple chronicles called the **Madapanji**. Legends say that there was a temple in Puri for thousands of years. Historians date the present temple to the 12th century and the rule of the Ganga dynasty. It was started by **King Vedabhima Deva** and completed by his son Anangabhima Deva. The architectural design follows the layout of temples in Orissa and this temple is similar to the Lingaraja Temple at Bhuvaneswar, though this is much larger.

The temple was attacked by the Muslim general Kalapahad in the sixteenth century and it was restored by later kings of Orissa. They also built the high walls turning the temple compound into a medieval fortress. In the nineteenth century, **King Ranjit Singh** of Punjab donated the **Kohinoor Diamond** to the temple and it is said that in his will he had donated the Kohinoor diamond to the temple but it was taken away by the British to London and presented it to **Queen Victoria**.

ABOUT THE SRI JAGANNATH TEMPLE IN PURI

At Puri, Lord Jagannath welcomes you to His ancient shrine with the melodious sounds of hymns and mantras, the playing of conches and drums and the perfume of flowers and incense.

The Jagannath Temple, also called **Srimandir**, is at the heart of the town of Puri. It stands on the grand avenue called **Bada Danda** and is at the centre of the spiritual and daily life of this tirtha. The temple with the tall soaring **Shikara** (head) has a huge Chakra and a flag flying on top and from the sea it is visible from far away. Within the temple precinct there are many smaller shrines dedicated to various deities, pavilions, gardens and scared tanks.

The temple is a gigantic enterprise and it employs over six thousand priests from thirty-six clans. The religious rituals and festivals are unique to Puri as there is the involvement of not just Brahmin priests but also members of **Sabar tribal commu-**

nity called the **Daitapatis** who continue to create and maintain the images.

The administration of the temple was organized eight hundred years ago by **King Anangabhima Deva** of the **Ganga dynasty** who donated treasures in gold and also gave land to pay for its upkeep. Even today the king of Puri is considered to be the premier servant or sevak of Lord Jagannath and his presence is required to begin the annual **Ratha Yatra**.

The Jagannath temple, called Srimandir by the locals, was built facing the east to catch the first rays of the rising sun. The



- Sudarshan Chakra

temple precinct covers ten acres and is surrounded by two walls. The outer wall is called the **Meghnada Prachira** and the inner wall is called the **Kurma Bheda** and the walls are pierced by gateways.

The main sanctum called the **Bada Deul** with the tall curvilinear spire called **Shikhara** has an attached pillared assembly hall called the **Jagamohan**. These were built first and then the hall of offerings, the **Bhoga Mandapa** and the dance hall, the **Natya Mandapa** believed to be added in the 14th century during the reign of the **Gajapathy dynasty**. There is a giant wheel made of eight metals on top of the

spire, this is Vishnu's discus and is called **Nilachakra** and the huge flag flies over it.

The temple precinct is surrounded by a high wall pierced by four gateways. The main entrance from **Bada Danda** is called **Simhadwar** or the Lion's Gate and it is guarded by two stone lions. This is the gate from which the deities are taken out to be placed in the chariots for the Ratha Yatra. Right behind the gate there is a small image of Jagannath that is visible from the road called **Patit Pavana**. The images of two temple guardians called **Jaya** and **Vijaya** stand at the gate. The other three gates are guarded by elephants, called **Hastidwar**; horses called **Ashwadwar** and by tigers, called **Vyaghradwar**. There are twenty-two steps that take devotees inside from the Simhadwar and these are considered sacred and are called **Baisipahacha**. Beyond the steps on the left is the temple kitchen where the Mahaprasad is prepared and on the right is the Ananda Bazar where the Mahaprasad is sold to pilgrims.

There are two sacred pillars within the precinct. The first is a beautiful column made of chlorite called **Aruna Sthambha** right before Simhadwar. On top of the eleven-metre-high column is the image of **Aruna, the God of Dawn** who drives the seven-horse chariot of the sun god Surya. The pillar was brought here from the **Sun Temple at Konarak**. The second pillar called the **Garuda Sthambha** stands before the sanctum. It is said that the saint-poet **Chaitanya Mahaprabhu** used to stand here to say his prayers to Jagannath.

In the sanctum or garbha griha the deities are placed on a pedestal called **Ratna Simhasan or Ratnavedi**, the throne of jewels. Beside the images of Jagannath, Subhadra and Balabhadra there is also a log of wood that symbolizes Vishnu's discus **Sudarsana Chakra**. Around them are images of the Goddess **Lakshmi**, **Saraswati**, **Sridevi**, **Bhudevi** and Lord **Nilmadhav**. The outer walls and pillars of the temple are covered with carvings.

There are a number of smaller shrines, open pillared halls called **mandapas**, scared tanks and wells within the temple precinct. There are over thirty smaller temples dedicated to various gods and goddesses scattered around the temple complex.

Two of the smaller temples, one dedicated to **Goddess Vimala** and the other to the **Vishnu Avatar Narasimha** are believed to be older than the present Jagannath temple. The Mahaprasad that is offered to Lord Jagannath is also then offered to Goddess Vimala and only then it is considered to be a consecrated food. The Vimala temple is considered a shakti peeta where the feet of Goddess Sati fell. There are also shrines to Lord Rama, Ganesh and Mahalakshmi. Among the other temples are shrines to the Goddesses **Saraswati**, **Bhuvaneshwari** and to **Hanuman**.

The pillared halls or **mandapas** include the **Mukti Mandapa**, a sixteen pillared hall where members of the **Chhattis Niyog** sit. These are the representatives of the thirty-six Brahmin clans who were originally selected by **King Anangabhima** to

COMMUNITY WATCH



- Flag atop the temple

run the various departments of the giant enterprise of the temple. They sit here to answer questions on religion, theology and rituals and in important matters the group is headed by Sri Sankaracharya of Puri. The **Dola Mandapa** has a beautifully carved arch on which the swing festival called **Dol Yatra** is held every year.

Devotees also bathe in the five sacred tanks called Pancha tirtha within the temple complex. These tanks are called **Indrayumna, Rohini, Narendra, Markandeya and Setaganga**. Devotees often bathe in the sea before entering the temple for the puja rituals.

PUJA SCHEDULE

The pujas start every morning with the playing of the drums called **Dunduvi Vadya**. The daily worship schedule includes aarti with the waving of lamps, incense and flowers before the deities to the chanting of mantras and also five bhogas when the deities are offered food. The deities are also clad in new sets of clothes after every bhoga ceremony.

The daily pujas are called **Nitis** and follow a daily schedule. There are also periodic Nitis performed during dates of the lunar calendar for Ekadasis, Sankarantis and Amavasyas with special rituals.

Devotees can watch the puja and bhog ceremonies from the Jagannmohan hall. Twice a day in the morning and evening there is the period called Sahana Mela when devotees are allowed to enter the garbhagriha and move closer to the Ratnavedi and pray to Jagannath.

MAHAPRASAD

The Mahaprasad of Puri is the meal that Lord Vishnu partakes from every day and it is a legend across the world and they say that the cooking is supervised by the Goddess Mahalakshmi. A total of fifty-six dishes called **Chhappan Bhoga** are offered to the deities in five offerings during a day. During some festivals like Makara Sankranti, the number of dishes rise to an astonishing eighty-two and it is claimed that the kitchen can feed up to one hundred thousand people in a day.

The dishes are all cooked in a kitchen said to be the largest kitchen in the world with Brahmin cooks labouring over a huge number of ovens. The menu includes cooked rice, various dals, vegetables, curry, sweet dishes, fries and dry confectionaries. These are cooked over a row of wood fires in earthen pots and then carried in slings to the temple. Here the food is offered first to the trinity of Jagannath, Subhadra and Bhalabhadra in the main temple and then to Goddess Vimala. Later the consecrated Mahaprasad is sold to devotees in the Ananda Bazaar.

MYSTERIES OF PURI JAGANNATH TEMPLE THAT DEFY SCIENTIFIC LOGIC AND NATURE'S CODE OF CONDUCT

1. The flag on top of the temple defying the Wind flow

Needless to say, things float in the direction of the wind. However, in Jagannath Temple you can see the opposite. The flag attached to the top of the temple, for some weird reason, always floats in the opposite direction of the wind. This is something that brings one's scientific reasoning to a halt and just tends one to believe that there is some force more powerful than science.

2. Changing the Flag atop the Temple every day

Every day a priest climbs atop the temple, which is as tall as 45 storey building, to change the flag. This ritual seems to have been in place for 1,800 years. The practice is done with bare hands without any protective gear. This might make



- The Deities at Temple

the professional climbers jealous. **It is believed that if this ritual is ever missed, the temple will be shut for the next 18 years.** Just click the link below and see a short video of the Priests climbing up to the top of the temple to change the flag, which is done each and every day. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcJN_96jKIM

3. Temple casts no shadow away from the temple itself

The structure of the temple is such that it does not cast any shadow at any given time of the day. Actually, the shadow of the main dome always falls on the building itself and that is why invisible at any time. It still remains to be deciphered whether it is an engineering marvel or a phenomenon that can be attributed only to the divine force.

4. Mystery surrounding the Sudarsana Chakra atop the temple

The Sudarsana Chakra atop the temple is actually 20 ft. in diameter and weighs a ton. It is fitted on top of the temple. But what is interesting about this Chakra is that you can see this chakra from any corner of Puri city. The engineering mystery behind the placing and positioning of the Chakra is still a mystery, because irrespective of your position, you can always feel

that the Chakra is facing you.

5. Nothing flies over the temple, not even birds

You will be surprised to know that no birds or planes fly above the temple. By contrast, such an aspect is a rarity at any other temple in India. The has never been declared as a no-fly zone. This phenomenon also apparently has no explanation and some attribute this phenomenon to divine force.

6. Not even a bite of Prasadam prepared (food) is ever wasted

According to Hindu mythology, wasting food is considered a bad sign and the temple staff follow. The total number of people visiting the temple varies anywhere from 2,000 to 200,000 every day. Miraculously, the Prasadam prepared every day is never wasted, not even a single bite. Could this be an effective management or the Lord's will?

7. Reverse gear of the Breeze

In any part of the world, you must have witnessed that during the day time, the wind from the sea comes to the land and goes towards the sea in the evening. But in Puri, the breeze has a tendency to contradict and opt for the exact opposite direction. In short, the geographical laws are also reversed.

8. Audibility of Ocean waves are non-existent inside the temple

Seconds after you step inside the temple from the Singha Dwara entrance, the audibility of the ocean

waves is entirely lost. This phenomenon is more prominent in the evening time. Again, no scientific explanation adds up to this fact. The sound returns once you leave the temple. According to the local lore, it was the will of **Subhadra Mayi**, the sister of the two lords who wished for serenity within the temple gates. Hence her will was duly filled.

9. Magical Methods for Cooking Prasadam

We learnt that prasadam cooked never goes wasted at this temple. Irrespective of the number people visiting the temple, the quantity of prasadam which is cooked in the temple remains the same throughout the year. Yet, the prasadam never gets wasted or insufficient in any given day. Pota are actually used to cook this delicacy using firewood only. 7 pots are used for this and they are placed one on top of the other. What's intriguing about this technique of cooking is that irrespective of the ingredients in the pots, those in the pot placed on top will get cooked first.

10. Deities disintegration

The Deities (wooden idols) are buried every 14 to 18 years, one above another, replaced by new ones. These deities made up of neem wood are believed to disintegrate on their own.

11. The Ratha Yatra

The Ratha Yatra is an annual parade in which the deities are carried outside the temple on 2 sets of chariots (3 each). The first chariot carries the deities till the river which separates the Jagannath temple and the Mausai Maa temple. After that, the idols are boarded in 3 boats across the river. Now, the second chariot comes in play. It carries the deities from the river to the Mausai Maa temple where the ritual takes place. History and culture are the fuel to Hindu spirit. That is what makes our culture so extraordinary, and after reading such celestial facts, you might share my opinion as well. So, do not forget to check these facts on your next trip to Puri in Orissa, India.



- Ratha Yatra

Understanding Tamil Mental Health

Do Tamil Families Receive Equality in Psychiatric Treatment & Care?

Contd. from page 41...

Finally, in terms of the response to the question 'Are we served', we need to address this concern to the state, to the government of Ontario that has the duty to look after the health of all Canadians. In the past ten years, most of the addiction research projects, supported by the government of Ontario, have been implementing a segmented approach. They have been studying different communities together but, when it comes to responding to them, they switch to a holistic, single frame of reference. It is time that we begin to focus on individual priorities or collective priorities of communities. Given that the Tamil community has been living in Canada for a considerable period, it has not received the kind of support and service possibilities as it should receive.

Supporting Dr. Chandrakanthan's comments and concerns about the Mental Health concepts, ideas, approaches and treatments, Dr. Kanthasamy pointed out that the system is not seeing the family as a holistic entity and there is a serious lack of specialized staff to treat the patients professionally. Some communities seem to be quite successful in establishing themselves. For example, Hong Fook Mental Health Association has three different units in downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Markham. We have been longing and lobbying for quality services from all three levels of government but haven't received any accommodation yet.

Dr. Pushpa Kanagaratnam talked about problems that arise while resettling and parenting. She dealt with the question from a clinical perspective. Dr. Pushpa is a registered clinical psychologist in the province of Ontario and a member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario and the Ontario Psychological Association (OPA). She has experience working with different ethnic groups nationally and internationally and has published peer-reviewed articles and done numerous presentations on topics of Mental Health, War Trauma, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and intimate partner violence in immigrants and refugees. She began her presentation with a slightly negative note saying that people are losing hope and trust in other people, in governments and in relationships. When we talk about trauma, we talk from a Western perspective, about events that could create post-traumatic symptoms. Social dimension of health is something that the system is not capturing. There are considerable number of research work done in these areas. One of them involved men and examined the guilt they were feeling about not being able to save their families through the war; how they felt

less manly which was more traumatic for them than their own experience of torture, violence or killings. They came through illegal means with emotion-laden baggage, didn't receive a warm welcome, had to fight for immigration status and strive for their family reunification that was constantly delayed. Some families are still separated due to immigration issues. Others had deportation orders, worries about settling their debts to travel agents, struggles with marriages based on obligations and so on. Sometimes marriage seemed to be the only option even if they didn't want to get married. They didn't have time to study the language or work on their credentials. The community is land-oriented and feels home as a safe haven. Rearing the children and how to make their dreams come true through the children become a major component in their lives. As they were living in a strange environment, love and affection were expressed differently as the first generation is used to. Affection is often exhibited by satisfying the basic needs of their loved ones. A father who works all the time is seen as one who is sacrificing for his family. On the other hand, children are viewed as having power. Parents are fearful of the system; a parent may not physically discipline a child not because the child would be hurt emotionally, but they don't want Children Aid Society (CAS) to be involved. It is not a question about criminality but about good and bad. Suicidal ideations can be a way of expressing one's distress. It is a way a weak family member wants to communicate something to a dominant family member. Perhaps it seems to be an effective way of expressing a person's internal woes. Many parents see and understand the society through the eyes of their children. Sometimes children are forced to take sides. Intervention separates the kids from home. Settlement is not a systematically planned process for the community. Our intervention strategies for domestic violence, partner abuse, alcohol and substance use are not working with the community that values belongingness as equally important as individual wellbeing.

In response to Dr. Pushpa Kanagaratnam's concerns about the inattentiveness of service providers and the insensitivity of organizations such as CAS, Dr. Parvathy argued that such entities are 'closed', not wanting to know about history, about other cultures or the 'baggage' they are loaded with. Unless we come together as a community and voice our grievances, the system will remain slow, sluggish and stagnant.

Dr. Senthuran Gunaratnam, a Staff Psychiatrist at the Scarborough Health



Network (SHN), looked at the question from a physician's perspective. Discussing the barriers that prevent access to Mental Health, he emphasized community belonging. Dr. Gunaratnam is one of the very few psychiatrists who is fluent in the Tamil language with being mindful of cultural barriers in treating Canadian Tamils foreseeing mental health challenges. He argued that Children Aid Society is not open to flexibility due to bias in the system. Cultural pressure, social pressure, and religion play a significant role in our community. It is an unwritten law, and our community is so profoundly addicted, and they don't know how to come out from that circle.

Our values of love and care for families and children are thrown away as soon as anyone tries to access the system. The system can be social services, CAS, police services, or mental health. Therefore, the Tamil community needs to take action to make a change in the system. The funding agency gives a piece of the pie. System neglects the emotional and psychological needs of the family or family members. Tamil community also keeps the family information very secretly. They do not want to share with others. It is one of the reasons they suffer silently. The government needs to address our issue holistically.

Dr. Gunaratnam said that while he was working in Thunder Bay, he was extremely shocked to experience the complexity of mental illness the First-Nation population has been going through. Their situation is very complex and the treatment very difficult. He feels the same complexity in Scarborough. There are many reasons for the complexity of mental illness among Tamil patients suffering with severe and persistent mental illness: partially war, immigration, cultural 'maladaptation', etc. Tamils very rarely call 911 on their loved ones because they don't see the police as a friend. The mainstream children know how to utilize the emergency response services for their own needs which is lacking very much in our community. People who usually come to the clinic behave as if they don't belong to that environment. If there is a one-hour consultation that is booked

to see a new individual in the clinic, at least 15 to 20 minutes prep-time is needed to engage the client into that environment to get the information. Dr. Gunaratnam can understand the colloquialism in Tamil. Stomach pain may be represented in six different words in Tamil. If it is difficult for him to complete the consultation within a certain time, how is a mainstream treatment provider going to assess this patient within that timeline? It is extremely difficult to abstract the core information on an initial visit. Many patients are misdiagnosed, under-diagnosed, mistreated because of the language barrier. An interpreter may not be able to interpret a patient's emotions precisely when it comes to mental illness. We can interpret the words or language, but not the emotions. The representation may get misinterpreted, in Sigmund Freud's language, as malingering, conversion disorder, or factitious disorder. But it may be a severe form of depression with psychotic features or somatic symptom disorder. The idea of having the right diagnosis in this patient population is highly complex. That process is going to determine the treatment. He emphasized the huge need for more psychiatrists, cognitive behavioral therapists, case managers and psychologists in the field. There is a huge language barrier. Some professionals don't want to serve this particular population. There are Tamil cultured doctors, social workers, clinicians, but they don't want to serve the Tamil community. This attitude needs to be changed. Working in mental health is a blessing and it is financially promising. Not everyone is going to tell their personal stories to others.

Dr. Senthuran Gunaratnam ended his emotional and informative speech with a humble request: as a community, we have to encourage the people to serve for mental health for the betterment of the Tamil community.

The meeting came to end with Dr. Kanthasamy requesting the viewers to join the chatroom to discuss their concerns.

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Email: vasanthamwellness@gmail.com

Quotable Quotes - 2020

“They said it”



“

“I am a true Democrat, but I will govern as an American President”

- Joe Biden at election rallies

”

“

“Now he’s got Lady Gaga — Lady Gaga. It is not too good. I could tell you plenty of stories. I could tell you stories about Lady Gaga. I know a lot of stories - Lady Gaga. And Jon Bon Jovi: Every time I see him, he kisses my a--”

- Trump at an election rally

”



“

“Can you imagine if I had a secret Chinese bank account when I was running for re-election? ... Fox News might have been a little concerned about that. They would have called me Beijing Barry”

- Former US President Barack Obama

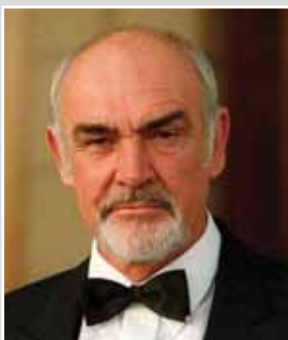
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“I have always believed in evolving a consensus before taking any major decision”

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

”



“

“The knighthood I received was a fantastic honour but it’s not something I’ve ever used and I don’t think I ever will.”

- Sir Sean Connery, James Bond actor

”

“

“It is easy to make promises - it is hard work to keep them”

- Boris Johnson, British Prime Minister

”



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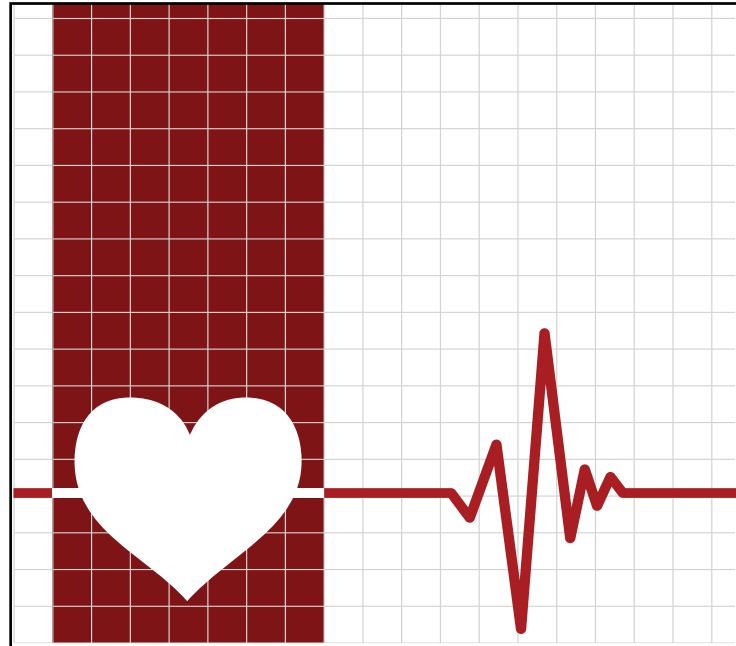
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