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Canada to receive almost 950,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccine now



Premier Doug Ford looks on at a vaccine centre

By Siva Sivapragasam

Nearly nine hundred and fifty thousand doses of Covid-19 vaccine is being made available to Canada to fight the Pandemic. This would mean that many Ontarians could be getting Covid-19 shots sooner than expected.

Prime Minister Trudeau has assured all Canadians that everyone who wants a vaccine will get one by the end of September. Federal Government officials confirmed that 500,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine will be made available to the already confirmed 444,600 Pfizer vaccine doses.

More younger persons will get the opportunity to receive the vaccine since a quantity of AstraZeneca vaccine doses expire on April 2nd and these may not be used on those above 65 years of age.

Seniors above 80 years of age are most likely to receive the vaccines from the second week of March. The government first started administering the Pfizer-Bi-

Everyone who wants a vaccine in Canada will get one by the end of September.
- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

oNTech vaccine at the end of December, focusing on four target groups of people: residents, essential care givers and staff of congregate setting for seniors, health-care workers, adults in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit populations, and adult recipients of chronic home health care.

Meanwhile, the Government has also issued travel restrictions on foreign air travel to curtail the spread of the virus. All air travellers arriving in Canada, with limited exceptions, must reserve a room in a Government of Canada-approved hotel for three nights at their own cost, and take a COVID-19 molecular test on arrival at their own cost.

Toronto Van attacker found guilty for the killing of 10 people

“This was the exercise of free will by a rational brain, capable of choosing between right and wrong,” says Justice Anne Molloy

One of the victims was Renuka Amarasinghe, a single mother of Sri Lankan origin

Alek Minassian, the man who used his rental van on a busy Toronto sidewalk killing 10 people and injuring 16 in the city’s worst mass killing, has been found guilty of murder and attempted murder by an Ontario judge. The sentencing will be decided at a future date.

The incident has been described as the deadliest vehicle-ramming attack in Canadian history.

One of the victims was Renuka Amarasinghe, a lady of Sri Lankan origin. She was a single mother of a seven-year-old son and was an active member of Toronto’s Sri Lankan community. Amarasinghe was a nutritional services worker for the Toronto District School Board. The day of the attack was her first day working at a school near Yonge Street. Amarasinghe would also volunteer at

the Scarborough General Hospital, where she’d donate toys to sick children.

Rejecting the argument that his autism spectrum disorder rendered him not criminally responsible, Justice Anne Molloy of the Ontario Superior Court ruled that the defendant, Alek Minassian, understood clearly what he was doing, despite the conclusion of some experts that he was incapable of feeling empathy because of his neurodevelopmental disorder.

“This was the exercise of free will by a rational brain, capable of choosing between right and wrong,” said Justice Molloy, who throughout her verdict refused to identify the defendant by name, instead calling him “John Doe,” as she did not want indulge the fame he desired.



Victim Renuka Amarasinghe, a single mother of Sri Lankan origin

Dr. Navaneelan Christy Gnanapragasam



It is with great sadness that the Monsoon Journal notes the passing of Dr. Navaneelan Christy Gnanapragasam. He was an anesthesiologist who resided in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada. He is a dedicated healthcare professional; and worked in hospitals in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada’s National Capital Region. He is the younger brother of Rev. Dr. Justin Gnanapragasam, Bishop of Jaffna and Patron of St. Patrick’s College Alumni Association. Dr. Navaneelan Christy Gnanapragasam is a lifetime member of St Patrick’s College Jaffna Alumni Association of Toronto, Ontario.

The following is a message of condolences from St. Patrick’s College, Jaffna, Sri Lanka:

“We, the Rector, staff and students of St. Patrick’s College, Jaffna express our heartfelt condolences to Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin B. Gnanapragasam, Bishop & Manager of our College, on the demise of his beloved brother Dr. Navaneelan Gnanapragasam (Canada). May his soul rest in peace.

We pray that God’s love may console our bishop and his family members at this time of their grief.”

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Ontario Takes Action to Support Working Families and Improve Child Care

Reforms will make before and after school programs more accessible

February 26, 2021

Education

TORONTO — The Ontario government announced regulatory amendments that support working families and improve the child care and early years sector and advance the province's dual priorities of accessibility and affordability for parents.

Details were provided today by Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education and Donna Skelly, MPP for Flamborough-Glanbrook.

"The changes we are announcing today are important as they will help ensure working parents can return to the workforce as we make progress containing the pandemic," said Minister Lecce. "We are making child care more affordable for parents, improving safety for children, and reducing red tape for child care operators. Our government appreciates the challenges families are facing these days and we are committed to doing everything we can to reduce their burden."

The regulatory amendments, which take effect on March 8, 2021, will:



- Exempt certain authorized recreational providers from their three-hour operating limit, improving access to select before and after school programs for families with school-age children.

- Enhance health and safety protections in licenced child care settings, such as requirements to support contact tracing by local public health, new requirements for home-based child care and updates to the safe storage of potentially poisonous and hazardous

items.

- Reduce regulatory/administrative burden on child care operators by removing redundant and unnecessary requirements for all providers. These include the removal of duplicate requirements related to the collection of children's emergency contact information, allowing records and documents required by the regulation to be kept in digital format, and no longer requiring licensees to seek ministry approval for children 44 months and up to bring

their own meals from home.

These changes are based on feedback from families and the early years and child care sector, as outlined in the Strengthening Early Years and Child Care in Ontario report, and the long-standing advocacy of community based non-profit organizations delivering before and after school programs.

The Ontario government recognizes the contributions of early childhood educators, child care workers and providers who continue to deliver care for children across the province, especially during the pandemic. Of the approximately \$4.5 billion spent on the delivery of child care in Ontario, about 2.5 per cent is funded by the federal government and remainder by the province, municipalities and parents.

By expanding access to before and after school programs, Ontario is promoting more child care options for working parents who maintain early, late, or irregular hours, or reside in communities with limited access to child care. With these amendments we are ensuring that Ontario remains a leader in supporting working families.

Via news.ontario.ca

Ontario Taking Steps to Make it Easier and Safer to Participate in Provincial Elections

New legislation would help modernize the voting process in a COVID-19 environment

February 25, 2021

Attorney General

TORONTO — The Ontario government is taking steps to make it easier and safer for people to vote, become a candidate and protect provincial elections against outside influence and interference. The Protecting Ontario Elections Act, 2021 would, if passed, help guard against threats such as the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, under-regulated third-party advertising, irregular campaign spending and collusion.

"We strongly believe that Ontario voters should determine the outcome of elections, not big corporations or unions, American-style political action groups or other outside influences," said Attorney General Doug Downey.

"That's why we are proposing legislative action to protect Ontarians' essential voice in campaigns and to make it easier to cast a vote safely in an advance poll or on election day. These amendments would help modernize Ontario's electoral process and ensure it is updated to meet urgent challenges, including COVID-19."

The proposed reforms build on the Ontario legislature's 2016 decision to ban corporate and union donations to political parties and help ensure individuals remain at the centre of the electoral process.

To protect Ontario elections, 19 legislative amendments have been proposed to:

- Make it more convenient and safer for people to vote in a COVID-19 environment by increasing advance polling

days from five to ten, changes first proposed by Ontario's Chief Electoral Officer;

- Double the amount individuals can donate to a candidate, constituency association, leadership contestant or party from \$1,650 to \$3,300 per year, protecting the essential voice of Ontarians in campaigns;

- Extend third-party advertising spending limits from six to 12 months before an election period and introduce a definition of collusion to help protect Ontario's elections from outside influence and interference; and

- Clarify the rules that allow Members of Provincial Parliament to maintain individual social media accounts before, during and after a writ period, as well as pave the way for the legislature to set other social media rules.

Elections Ontario has reported that the scale of third-party advertising in Ontario is greater than at the federal level, and Ontario is the only province in Canada where third-party spending is counted in the millions of dollars, rather than in the thousands. In 2018, third parties spent over \$5 million during the election period and the six months prior to the election.

"Each and every Ontarian is a driving force of our democracy - from casting their votes to volunteering on campaigns or putting one's name on a ballot," said Attorney General Downey. "We want to ensure that the electoral system continues to evolve to protect their central role as individuals and promote fairness in the electoral process for everyone."

Via news.ontario.ca

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Monsoon Journal wishes
Readers, advertisers, distribution outlets
and well-wishers
a Happy Spring 2021.
Please stay safe!

International Women's Day and Women's History Month 2021: *Let us continue efforts to advance equality for all women and girls in Canada and elsewhere*

By **Harrish Thirukumar**

While it has now been a year since the COVID-19 has been recognized as a global pandemic, March 2021 will also be a time where we have something much more positive and equally urgent to recognize. That namely being International Women's Day 2021 (IWD2021) on March 8.

International Women's Day is celebrated in many countries around the world. It is a day when women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political.

Since those early years, International Women's Day has assumed a new global dimension for women in developed and developing countries alike. The growing international women's movement, which has been strengthened by four global United Nations women's conferences, has helped make the commemoration a rallying point to build support for women's rights and participation in the political and economic arenas.

The theme for the IWD 2021 campaign theme is #ChooseToChallenge. A challenged world is an alert world. Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions - all day, every day.

We can all choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality. We can all choose to seek out and celebrate women's achievements. Collectively, we can all help create an inclusive world.

From challenge comes change, so let's all choose to challenge. As with

the pandemic, this is another matter that we as Ontarians and Canadians can come together to address.

To participate in the #ChooseToChallenge work, you can show your support and solidarity by raising your hand high to show you're in and that you commit to choose to challenge and call out inequality. Next, send in your #ChooseToChallenge images.

Individuals and organizations are invited to send in their #ChooseToChallenge images as we share images from around the world in the lead up to International Women's Day 2021.

Strike the #ChooseToChallenge pose with your hand high to show your commitment to choose to challenge inequality, call out bias, question stereotypes, and help forge an inclusive world.

Submissions are photographs of individual or group compositions striking the #ChooseToChallenge hand up pose to potentially be shared on the IWD website and social media feeds - and are ideally 16:9 aspect ratio (landscape composition; max 3000 pixels width).

The link to the website is located here: <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/>

All gender identities welcome. Please submit #ChooseToChallenge images as early as possible.

As we work together to overcome this health pandemic, let us also continue efforts to advance equality for all women and girls in Canada and elsewhere on International Women's Day 2021 now and in a post-pandemic world.

Canada Historic Milestones

March 1, 1927

The boundary between Labrador and Quebec is established by the Privy Council in London. The Privy Council decides in favour of Newfoundland in its dispute with Canada. The two Dominions are former British colonies.



Imagination was given to man to compensate him for what he isn't

- Horace Walpole, 4th Earl of Oxford
- (24 September 1717 - 2 March 1797) - English art historian



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Ontario Administers over Half a Million Doses of COVID-19 Vaccines

Province Ramping up Capacity in Preparation of Vaccinating Phase Two Populations

February 19, 2021

Office of the Premier

TORONTO — The Ontario government has administered over 500,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccines to Phase One priority populations, which now includes adults 80 years of age and older. At the same time, the province is working with public health units to build and expand its capacity to immunize Phase Two populations by increasing delivery networks and preparing a booking solution and customer service supports for mass vaccination clinic registrations. Ontario has administered more vaccines than any other province.

Details of the vaccine rollout were provided today by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Solicitor General Sylvia Jones, and General Rick Hillier (retired), Chair of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force.

“I want to assure the people of this great province that we are ready to get vaccines into as many arms as possible, we simply need the supply,” said Premier Ford. “Our Vaccine Task Force, led by General Hillier, is executing our vaccine distribution plan with military precision and we have now administered over a half a million doses. This is great progress, but we would all like to be moving faster. I urge our federal government partners to do whatever it takes to get us more vaccines so we can better protect people and eventually defeat this deadly virus.”

The unexpected reductions in supply

and delayed shipments in early February forced Ontario to quickly adjust its vaccination plan to accelerate its focus on vaccinating the province’s highest risk resident populations. Last week, Ontario reached its target to offer a first dose of the vaccine to residents of all long-term care homes across the province and has now administered over 167,000 doses to long-term care and retirement home residents.

When all reasonable steps have been taken to complete first-dose vaccination offers to all staff, essential caregivers and remaining residents of long-term care, high-risk retirement homes and First Nations elder care homes, and adults in Indigenous communities, first-dose vaccinations will be made available, pending supply, to the remainder of Phase One populations, including those ages 80+. Public health units are currently planning for how they will reach this group, with timing slated for early March.

“This week we reached an incredible milestone in our fight against the virus with the administration of over half a million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine,” said Minister Elliott. “We know Ontarians are eager to receive this layer of protection, and we are ready to ramp up our efforts as we receive more doses from the federal government. This upcoming increase in vaccine supply will allow us to expand our vaccination efforts for Phase One priority groups further as we prepare for Phase Two.”

The province continues to expand capacity and ramp up efforts for Phase Two of its vaccination rollout, expected

to begin in April 2021. Public health units have developed plans to operate mass immunization clinics as soon as enough supply becomes available, as well as continuing to offer mobile clinics to vaccinate our most vulnerable.

Ontario is developing an online booking system to support the next phase of vaccination roll-out. A customer service desk will be made available to those who are unable to book an appointment through the online tool. Details will be provided over the coming weeks.

“Our government continues to take decisive action to keep Ontarians safe and by expanding our Phase One priority populations, we are ensuring more vaccines are being distributed to those who need it most,” said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones. “As we prepare for a broader rollout in Phase Two, we ask Ontarians to stay the course and follow public health guidance to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus to help save lives.”

“We are ramping up our Phase One program now that supplies are arriving again,” said General (Ret’d) Rick Hillier. “Our focus continues on our populations of highest risk, but we are also refining the systems and processes required for mass vaccinations in Phase Two. Our Ontario health care workers have done an exceptional job of completing the first 500,000 vaccinations and I want them to know that they are the real heroes of this important work.”

Operation Remote Immunity, led by Ornge, is vaccinating adults in the 31 fly-in First Nations communities and



Moosonee in Northern Ontario. As of February 17, 2021, over 8,000 doses of the vaccine have been administered in Sioux Lookout and communities within the Operation’s scope. Ornge teams will continue to administer first and second doses of the vaccine with an aim of completion by the end of April 2021. Planning for vaccine distribution to additional First Nations communities and to urban Indigenous populations is underway through ongoing and regular engagement of the First Nations and Urban Indigenous Vaccine Distribution Sub-Tables, respectively.

As the vaccination rollout continues, it remains critically important that all Ontarians stay at home as much as possible and continue following regional public health measures, restrictions, and advice to protect our most vulnerable populations and help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Via news.ontario.ca

Stay-at-Home Order Extended in Toronto and Peel Public Health Regions Along with North Bay-Parry Sound

- York Region to Return to Strengthened COVID-19 Response Framework -

February 19, 2021

Health

TORONTO — In consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the local medical officers of health, the Ontario government is maintaining the shutdown, the Stay-at-Home order and all existing public health and workplace safety measures for an additional two weeks in the Toronto and Peel Public Health Regions, along with the North Bay-Parry Sound District. The York Public Health Region will transition out of the shutdown and into the revised and strengthened COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open.

“Our government’s number one priority is the safety of all individuals and families, and that’s why we are taking a gradual, cautious approach to returning regions to the Framework,” said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. “These are difficult but necessary decisions, in order to protect against COVID-19 variants and maintain the progress we have all made together. Until vaccines are

widely available, we continue to urge all Ontarians to follow public health advice and measures, and stay home, stay safe, and save lives.”

In the Toronto and Peel Public Health Regions, and the North Bay-Parry Sound District, the shutdown measures and the Stay-at-Home order will continue to apply until at least Monday, March 8, 2021, based on key public health indicators and following consultation with the local medical officers of health. While the Peel and Toronto regions have seen a reduction in COVID-19 transmission from the period of February 8 to 17, 2021, rates still remain too high in the regions, with case rates of 83.4 cases per 100,000 people for Peel and 67.9 cases per 100,000 people for Toronto, both well above the provincial average. During this same period of time, North Bay Parry Sound District has also seen its case rate increase by 11.5 per cent to 14.6 cases per 100,000 people. Variants of concern also remain a serious risk to community transmission and health system capacity.

Based on a general improvement in trends of key indicators, York Region Public Health will be moving back to the Framework at the Red-Control level and will no longer be subject to the Stay-at-Home order. In addition, Lambton Public Health will be moving from the Orange-Restrict level to the Red-Control level as a result worsening public health trends in the region over the past week. These changes will come into effect on Monday, February 22, 2021 at 12:01 a.m.

After returning to the Framework, public health regions are required to stay in their level for at least two weeks. The government will then assess the impact of public health and workplace safety measures to determine if the region should stay where it is or be moved to a different level. Public health regions may be moved to a higher level within the two-week window, if necessary, based on the set indicators and thresholds outlined in the Framework. In addition, Ontario has introduced an “emergency brake” to allow the Chief Medical Officer

of Health, in consultation with the local medical officer of health, to immediately advise moving a region into Grey-Lockdown to interrupt transmission.

“While the health indicators have improved enough to allow us to return an additional region to the Framework, we are not yet at the point where we can safely transition back the remainder of the province,” said Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health. “Everyone is strongly advised to continue staying at home, avoid social gatherings, only travel between regions for essential purposes, and limit close contacts to your household or those you live with regardless of which level of the Framework you are in.”

The Chief Medical Officer of Health will continue to consult with public health and other experts, review data, and provide advice to the government on the appropriate and effective measures that are needed to protect the health of Ontarians.

Via news.ontarioz.ca



Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership

February 23, 2021

Ottawa, Ontario

"It is in the shared interest of the United States and Canada to revitalize and expand our historic alliance and steadfast friendship to overcome the daunting challenges of today and realize the full potential of the relationship into the future. The Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership announced today establishes a blueprint for an ambitious and whole-of-government effort against the COVID-19 pandemic and in support of our mutual prosperity. It creates a partnership on climate change, advances global health security, bolsters cooperation on defense and security, and it reaffirms a shared commitment to diversity, equity, and justice. Bound by history and geography, the partnership between the United States and Canada endures because we invest in each other's success."

President Joe Biden

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

February 23, 2021

Combating COVID-19

The top priority of the President and the Prime Minister is to end the COVID-19 pandemic. They agreed to strengthen comprehensive and cross-sectoral efforts to control the pandemic, collaborate on public health responses, and build resilience against future outbreaks.

- The Prime Minister and the President committed to working closely together to defeat the virus, including by surging the health and humanitarian response to the global pandemic, responding to new variants, following expert advice, and supporting global affordable access to and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines, including through the COVAX Facility.

- The leaders emphasized their strong support for the multilateral institutions that are on the front lines of COVID-19 response, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN development agencies, and committed to rapidly fulfilling national pledges to COVAX.

- They agreed on the importance of a transparent and independent evaluation and analysis, free from interference, of the origins of the COVID-19 outbreak, and to work together toward the development and use of swift, effective, transparent, and independent means for investigating such outbreaks in the future.

- They also recognized the importance of urgent global action to advance health security, counter biological threats, and prevent the next pandemic and agreed to leverage existing pandemic preparedness arrangements and platforms, such as the North American Plan for Animal and Pandemic Influenza, the Global Health Security Agenda and the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

- They further agreed on the need to improve international institutions for global capacity for pandemic preparedness and response, including by working to strengthen and reform the WHO, and the Pan American Health



Organization (PAHO), and exploring the establishment of a permanent facilitator for high consequence biological threats within the office of the UN Secretary-General and a sustainable health security financing mechanism.

- They discussed emerging outbreaks, including the Ebola outbreaks in West and Central Africa and agreed on the importance of a robust global response and partnership with regional organizations, such as the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, to build health security capacity for the future.

- They agreed on the importance of countering biological threats, whether naturally occurring, deliberate, or accidental and to advancing policies and practices domestically and through health, foreign assistance, and threat reduction programs to improve biosafety, biosecurity, and biological norms for mitigating biological risks associated with life sciences research and biotechnology advances.

The President and the Prime Minister recognize coordinated border policies remain central to controlling COVID-19 and new variants while promoting economic growth and recovery.

- Both leaders agreed to take a coordinated approach based on science and public health criteria when considering measures to ease Canada-U.S. border restrictions in the future.

- The two leaders agreed to strengthen the U.S.-Canada Action Plan on Opioids recognizing the rise in drug use and overdoses in both of our countries as a result of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic.

Building Back Better

The Prime Minister and the President share a vision for a sustainable and inclusive economic recovery that strengthens the middle class, creates more opportunities for hard working people to join it, and ensures people have good jobs and careers on both sides of the border. They also recognized the opportunity for clean growth driven by workers, communities, businesses, and innovation.

- The leaders agreed on the need to build back better together in a way that addresses the disproportionate impacts on women, youth, underrepresented groups, and Indigenous peoples.

- As COVID-19 has rolled back many of the hard-won gains women have achieved over past decades, the President and Prime Minister committed to implement measures to support women's full and equal participation in the workforce, including with respect to

early learning and childcare.

- The President and the Prime Minister also considered the impact of the pandemic on small businesses. The United States and Canada announced joint initiatives to accelerate economic recovery of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with a focus on supporting women-owned and minority/Indigenous-owned SMEs, by leveraging the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) SME chapter and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) model.

- The two leaders launched a strategy to strengthen Canada-U.S. supply chain security and agreed to reinforce our deeply interconnected and mutually beneficial economic relationship.

- The leaders also agreed to work together to build the necessary supply chains to make Canada and the United States global leaders in all aspects of battery development and production. To that end, the leaders agreed to strengthen the Canada-U.S. Critical Minerals Action Plan to target a net-zero industrial transformation, batteries for zero-emissions vehicles, and renewable energy storage.

- The leaders recognized the important economic and energy security benefits of the bilateral energy relationship and its highly integrated infrastructure. To further advance climate priorities, they agreed to renew and update the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on energy between the U.S. Department of Energy and the Department of Natural Resources Canada to enhance cooperation on sustainable and equitable energy transitions, clean energy innovation, connectivity and low-carbon transportation.

- The leaders also agreed to strengthen cooperation under the Energy Resource Governance Initiative (ERGI), a multinational effort to foster international cooperation on the minerals and metals that make the energy transition possible.

- The Prime Minister and the President acknowledge the impact of international regulatory cooperation on enhancing economic competitiveness and well-being while maintaining high standards of public health, safety, labor/labour, and environmental protection.

Accelerating Climate Ambitions

The President and the Prime Minister expressed their commitment to strengthened implementation of the Paris Agreement, including by working together and with others to increase the scale and speed of action to address the

climate crisis and better protect nature.

- Recalling the Agreement's call to pursue efforts to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees C., they will work in tandem, and encourage others to achieve net zero emissions no later than 2050.

- The Prime Minister and the President expressed their commitment to have their two countries work together on cooperative action ahead of the US-hosted Leaders' Climate Summit that will allow both countries to increase their climate ambition. The President, in addition to acknowledging Canada's new strengthened national climate plan and its globally ambitious price on pollution, reiterated his aim to have ready the US nationally determined contribution (NDC) in advance of the Summit and welcomed the Prime Minister's aim to announce the enhanced 2030 emissions target for its NDC by the Summit as well.

- The President also restated his commitment to holding polluters accountable for their actions. Both the President and the Prime Minister agreed to work together to protect businesses, workers and communities in both countries from unfair trade by countries failing to take strong climate action.

- Both leaders agreed to launch a High Level Climate Ministerial, which will coordinate cooperation between the United States and Canada to increase ambition aligned to the Paris Agreement and net-zero objectives. This Ministerial will also explore opportunities to align policies and approaches to create jobs, while tackling climate change and inequality, and enhancing adaptation and resilience to climate impacts.

- The leaders reaffirmed the shared commitment to reducing oil and gas methane emissions to protect public health and the environment, as guided by the best science.

- The leaders also agreed to take a coordinated approach to accelerating progress towards sustainable, resilient, and clean energy infrastructure, including encouraging the development of cross-border clean electricity transmission. To advance this work, the President affirmed the goal for the United States to achieve a net-zero carbon pollution free power sector by 2035 and the Prime Minister reaffirmed the goal for Canada to achieve 90% non-emitting electricity by 2030.

- Given the integrated nature of the road transport, maritime, and aviation sectors, the President and Prime Minister agreed to take aligned and accelerated policy actions, including efforts to achieve a zero-emissions vehicle future.

- The leaders committed to work with Canadian and American public and private financial institutions to advance the adoption of climate-related financial risk disclosure and align financial flows with climate goals, including the achievement of a prosperous net-zero emissions economy.

- The leaders also recognized the ecological importance of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. In particular, they agreed to work together to help



safeguard the Porcupine caribou herd calving grounds that are invaluable to the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit peoples' culture and subsistence.

- The Prime Minister and the President agreed to be partners in protecting nature, including by supporting Indigenous-led conservation efforts.

- The two leaders agreed to work together on environmental restoration and conservation efforts, and to advancing nature-based climate solutions.

- In advancing climate solutions and protecting nature, both the President and the Prime Minister agreed on the importance of doing this work with Indigenous peoples, sub-national governments, workers, and stakeholders including civil society, youth, business and industry.

Advancing Diversity and Inclusion

The Prime Minister and the President discussed their shared commitment to addressing systemic racism, unconscious bias, gender-based discrimination, barriers for persons with disabilities, and all other forms of discrimination and exclusion.

The two leaders expressed their shared determination to implement more effective, equitable, and inclusive approaches to community safety, criminal justice, and law enforcement. They will direct their agencies to focus on modernizing approaches to community safety and addressing issues of systemic racism and discrimination, including through meaningful engagement with civil society and community leaders. The work will also consider innovative approaches to implementing institutional and community-based prevention, intervention, and diversion initiatives, including prioritizing the provision of adequate support and services to individuals facing mental health challenges or addiction.

The leaders agreed that promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls is the most effective approach to eradicating poverty and building a more peaceful, more inclu-

sive, and more prosperous world. They also committed to ensuring that women are not left behind by COVID-19, including by addressing the she-cession caused by the pandemic through investments and policies to support women's full participation in the workforce.

They agreed to exchange best practices in feminist public policy and the advancement of gender equity. They will do so by engaging policy actors from Canada and the United States, within and outside of government, to consider child benefits, early learning and childcare, pay equity, and women's entrepreneurship, among other issues.

The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to combat systemic racism and discrimination, and agreed to work together to share best practices and promote diversity and inclusion within both public and private sectors.

Bolstering Security and Defence/Defense

The President and the Prime Minister agreed that collective security is a shared responsibility.

- The leaders agreed on the importance of investment in modern, ready, and capable forces in line with their commitments to NATO under the 2014 Wales Summit Defence/Defense Investment Pledge. Such investments enable effective contributions to NATO, United Nations, and other global missions.

- The Prime Minister and the President agreed to expand cooperation on continental defence/defense and in the Arctic, including by modernizing the North American Aerospace Defense/Defence Command (NORAD). They directed their Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Defence and Secretaries of State and Defense to meet in a 2+2 Ministerial format to further coordinate our joint contributions to collective security.

- The President and the Prime Minister reaffirmed their determination to work together to counter terrorism and violent extremism in all forms, both at home and abroad. In this context, the leaders agreed to enhance cooperation

to counter exploitation of social media and the Internet by terrorists, violent extremists, and hate groups, strengthen information sharing to improve our respective prevention strategies addressing domestic violent extremism, and enhance reciprocal sharing on known and suspected threats.

- Canada and the United States will enhance law enforcement collaboration by reestablishing the Cross-Border Crime Forum to facilitate cooperation among law enforcement bodies, including strengthening information sharing between the two countries and addressing justice reform, as well as cross-border law enforcement challenges to make communities safer. The challenges include, but are not limited to tackling illegal cross-border flows of firearms, drugs, and currency, as well as organized crime, mass marketing fraud, and human trafficking. In this context, the President and Prime Minister noted their common objective to reduce gun violence and directed officials to explore the creation of a cross-border task force to address gun smuggling and trafficking.

- The two countries will launch an expanded U.S.-Canada Arctic Dialogue to cover cross-cutting issues related to continental security, economic and social development, and Arctic governance.

Canada and the United States will increase cooperation to strengthen cybersecurity, and to confront foreign interference and disinformation. As part of their efforts to protect critical infrastructure in North America, the two countries will implement a Framework for Collaboration on Cybersecurity in the Energy Sector to enhance the security and resiliency of our cross-border energy infrastructure.

Building Global Alliances

The Prime Minister and the President affirmed their shared commitment to addressing global challenges, and reiterated their firm commitment to the United Nations, G7 and G20 as well as NATO, the WTO, and the Five Eyes

community.

- The leaders agreed to work towards reviving the North American Leaders' Summit as a recommitment of solidarity between the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

- They also agreed to expand cooperation with respect to the promotion of democracy, human rights, and media freedom in our hemisphere and around the world. The Prime Minister committed to partnering with the United States on a Summit for Democracy as well as through the Media Freedom Coalition.

- They also discussed ways to more closely align our approaches to China, including to address the challenges it presents to our collective interest and to the international rules-based order. This includes dealing with its coercive and unfair economic practices, national security challenges, and human rights abuses, while cooperating with China on areas where it is in our interest, such as climate change.

- President Biden condemned the arbitrary detention of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor and committed to work for their release.

- The two leaders discussed their shared concern about Russia's egregious mistreatment of Aleksey Navalny and its repression of democratic processes, gross violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and destabilizing policies around the world. They also reviewed the situations in Venezuela, Myanmar, Iran, Yemen, and the Middle East.

- The leaders expressed their common concern about the global migration crisis, commitment to providing safe haven to refugees and asylum seekers, and determination to work together to strengthen efforts in these areas, including refugee resettlement. Recognizing the sources of instability and irregular migration in Central America, the leaders also agreed to work together to expand support for capacity building in affected countries.

Via pm.gc.ca

Government of Canada announces proposed extension of the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB)

The government has announced a proposed extension to the CRB eligibility period limits. The change would allow eligible recipients to apply for a total of 19 periods (38 weeks) between September 27, 2020 and September 25, 2021.

The Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB) gives income support to employed and self-employed individuals who are directly affected by COVID-19 and are not entitled to Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. The CRB is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

If you are eligible for the CRB, you can receive \$1,000 (\$900 after taxes withheld) for a 2-week period.

If your situation continues past 2 weeks, you will need to apply again. You may apply up to a total of 13 eligibility periods (26 weeks) between September 27, 2020 and September

25, 2021.

More information on this proposal can be found here: https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/benefits/recovery-benefit.html?utm_campaign=fin-fin-financialresponseplan-20-21&utm_medium=smp&utm_source=fb&utm_content=static-crb_v1_en-en&adv=2021-0045&id_campaign=24908340&id_source=5620656-285878391&id_content=479676411-139953652

Via [canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca)



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WORLD NEWS

Impunity for Civil War Crimes in Sri Lanka Risks Future Offenses, UN Says



FILE - United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet

By Lisa Schlein

February 25, 2021 11:40 AM

GENEVA - A report submitted to the U.N. Human Rights Council warns of future violations and instability in Sri Lanka because of the government's repeated failure to redress past violations and bring justice to the victims.

Thousands of Tamils allegedly were killed and women sexually assaulted and raped by Sri Lanka's security forces in the last six months of the country's 26 year-long civil war.

A report issued by the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights at the end of January documents violations including extra judicial killings, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture and sexual violence. It noted some of these violations, which could amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity, were committed by both the Sri Lankan military and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam or LTTE.

U.N. human rights chief Michelle Bachelet submitted a critical assessment of the current situation in Sri Lanka to the Council. She said nothing has been done to ensure justice for the victims nearly 12 years after the armed conflict. She said the current government, like its predecessor, has failed to promote reconciliation or hold any of the perpetrators to account.

"The impact on thousands of survivors, from all communities, is devastating. Moreover, the systems, structures, policies and personnel that gave rise to such grave violations in the past remain—and have recently been reinforced. Addressing grievances and redressing past violations are

critical prevention tools at the core of the Council's work," she said.

Bachelet said disturbing trends over the past year indicate a serious deterioration in civil and political rights. She cited the rapid shrinking of Sri Lanka's independent media and the erosion of judicial independence. She warned the growing militarization of key civilian functions was encroaching on democratic governance.

"The continued failure to implement comprehensive reforms—or to vet personnel—leaves in place security and military officers who have been implicated in alleged grave crimes and violations ... Long-standing, structural and systemic issues persist in Sri Lanka, and now there are clear warning signs that past patterns of violations could be repeated," she said.

Bachelet said the government has largely closed the door on ending impunity through a national process. Therefore, she urged the council to explore new ways to advance accountability and seek redress for victims at the international level.

Sri Lanka's foreign minister, Dinesh Gunawardena, rejected the U.N. report.

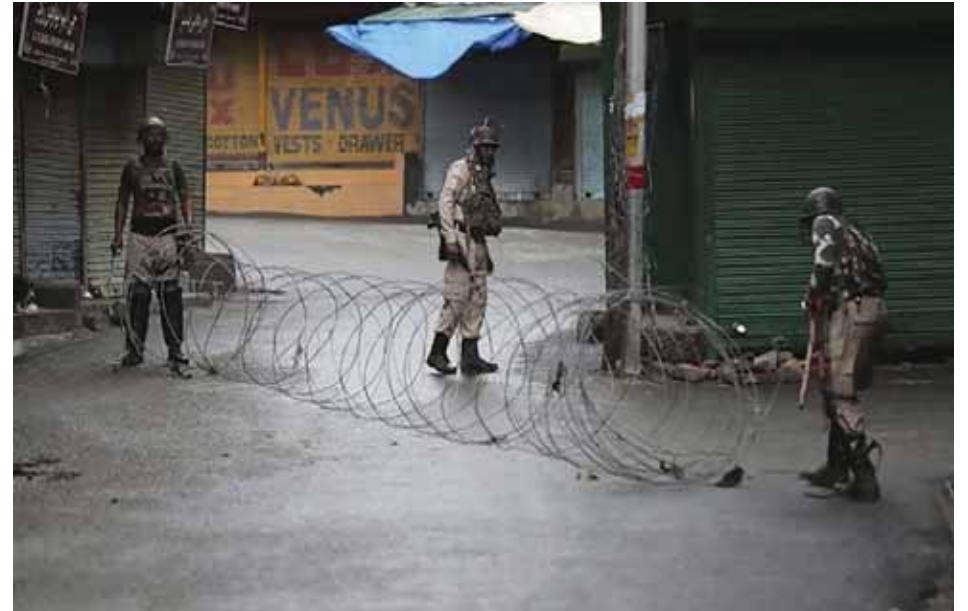
"The contents of the report ... are rife with factual inaccuracies that appear to equate atrocities committed by the LTTE, a terrorist organization proscribed internationally, with the legitimate action taken by the government to safeguard the territorial integrity of the country and the right to life of our people," Gunawardena said.

The minister called on members of the council to reject any resolution based on the report.

Via voanews.com/

Loss of autonomy in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir threatens minorities' rights

– UN independent experts



18 February 2021

Human Rights

India's decision to end autonomy in Jammu and Kashmir and restrict the participation of minorities in political and other activities sparked the concern of two UN-appointed independent human rights experts, on Thursday.

"The loss of autonomy and the imposition of direct rule by the Government in New Delhi suggests the people of Jammu and Kashmir no longer have their own government and have lost power to legislate or amend laws in the region to ensure the protection of their rights as minorities", Fernand de Varennes, Special Rapporteur on minority issues, and Ahmed Shaheed, Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, said in a statement.

Autonomy imperiled

As Jammu and Kashmir were India's only Muslim-majority state, India granted them partial autonomy out of respect for the ethnic, linguistic and religious identities of its people.

On 5 August 2019, the Government unilaterally revoked its special status and in May 2020, passed the so-called Domicile Rules, which removes protections for those in the territory.

The new laws override previous ones that had granted the Kashmiri Mus-

lim, Dogri, Gojri, Pahari, Sikh, Ladhaki and other established minorities the right to buy property, own land and access certain state jobs.

"These legislative changes may have the potential to pave the way for people from outside the former state of Jammu and Kashmir to settle in the region, alter the demographics of the region and undermine the minorities' ability to exercise effectively their human rights", the experts said.

Moreover, the number of successful applicants for domicile certificates that appear to be from outside Jammu and Kashmir raised their concern that demographic changes on a linguistic, religious and ethnic basis have already begun.

Undermining minority rights

The UN experts urged India to ensure the economic, social and cultural rights of the people in Jammu and Kashmir along with their rights to freedom of expression and participation in matters affecting them.

Independent UN Special Rapporteurs are appointed by the Human Rights Council. They are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity.

Via news.un.org

Unsmoke Canada and TerraCycle to Reduce Cigarette Waste Nationwide

TORONTO, March 1, 2021 /CNW/ - Unsmoke Canada and international recycling leader, TerraCycle are launching a multi-year, community-based recycling partnership to collect and recycle the world's most littered item: cigarette butts.

In Canada, an estimated 8,000 tonnes of cigarette butts are littered each year, the majority within three metres of an ashtray. Contrary to popular belief, cigarette butts are non-biodegradable and contain filters made from cellulose acetate, which can take up to 15 years to decompose. The free, national UNSMOKE Cigarette Recycling Program will aim to divert hundreds of thousands of butts each month from the ground and landfills.

The new partnership builds on the work Unsmoke Canada began in 2019 to combat littering in local communities. A pillar of Unsmoke Canada

is to reduce smoking and, consequently, the effect it has on people, on communities and on the environment.

"We want to build a smoke-free future, which is a future without cigarettes. This has an impact not only on people but also on communities and on the environment. This partnership is an example of how we are making tangible and measurable improvements to the problem of cigarette butt littering," said Vasie Papadopoulos, Communications Manager at Rothman's Benson & Hedges Inc., the company which started Unsmoke Canada. "We are looking forward to working with TerraCycle and communities to help clean up and appropriately recycle cigarette litter."

"TerraCycle's cigarette recycling programs have already had great success across Canada," said

Tom Szaky, Founder and CEO of TerraCycle. "This partnership with Unsmoke Canada will create even more opportunities for Canadians to dispose of their cigarettes in a responsible way, helping to keep shorelines, sidewalks and communities clean."

To join the UNSMOKE Cigarette Recycling Program, community organizations can sign up on the TerraCycle program page here. For every pound of cigarette waste collected by the program, Unsmoke Canada will donate \$1 to the community group's non-profit or charity of choice.

"The message of Unsmoke Canada is clear – if you don't smoke, don't start. If you smoke, quit. If you don't quit, change," said Papadopoulos. "Unsmoke Canada is committed to a smoke-free future, one without cigarettes. This partnership



is about creating a smoke-free and waste-free future."

Related Links

<https://www.pmi.com/>



Pakistan, India Agree to Immediate Ceasefire, Restoring 2003 Truce



Farmers participate in a candlelight vigil to pay homage to paramilitary troops killed in a suicide bomb attack in south Kashmir's Pulwama district in 2019, in Ghaziabad, India, Feb. 14, 2021.

By Ayaz Gul

Updated February 25, 2021
05:36 AM

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and India have agreed to immediately cease military hostilities in disputed Kashmir by restoring a 2003 truce to deescalate tensions between the nuclear-armed South Asian rivals.

The two nations said in a joint statement Thursday their top military commanders spoke "over the established mechanism of hotline contact" and reviewed in a "free, frank and cordial atmosphere" the situation along the Line of Control that splits Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

"Both sides agreed to strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease firing along the LOC and all other sectors, with effect from midnight 24/25 February 2021," according to the text of the statement issued by the Pakistan army.

It went on to say that in "the interest of achieving mutually beneficial and sustainable" peace, the two sides "agreed to address each other's core issues/concerns, which have propensity to disturb peace and lead to violence." It did not elaborate further.

The Indian and Pakistani military commanders in their conversation reiterated the need to utilize existing bilateral arrangements, including meetings between their border security officials, to resolve "any unforeseen situation or misunderstanding."

Thursday's communication between the two militaries through their so-called hotline contact came after months because of worsening relations between Pakistan and India.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi hailed the understanding as an "important step" for promoting regional peace.

"It can be a good beginning, but India will have to sincerely implement

the arrangement," Qureshi said.

Analysts in India also welcomed the move.

"It's a good development and should have happened a long time ago," said Amit Baruah, Delhi resident editor at The Hindu newspaper.

"India and Pakistan may not see eye-to-eye, but contact is always good for the sake of the people living on either side of the Line of Control," Baruah told VOA.

Kashmir has sparked two of the three wars India and Pakistan have fought since they both gained independence from Britain in 1947. Both the countries claim the Himalayan territory in its entirety, and it remains the primary source of regional tensions as well as low-level border skirmishes.

The two countries agreed to the 2003 Kashmir cease-fire amid international concerns continued hostilities could accidentally escalate into a nuclear exchange.

Routine border military skirmishes in recent years have rendered the truce almost ineffective, though, with both sides accusing the other of committing violations. India and Pakistan say the violence has inflicted hundreds of casualties on security forces and civilians on both sides.

New Delhi has long accused Islamabad of arming Muslim separatists fighting the Indian rule in Kashmir, charges Pakistan denies as an attempt to divert international attention from "atrocities" it says Indian scrutiny forces have been inflicting on Kashmiris.

Bilateral tensions have escalated dangerously since August 2019, when India unilaterally revoked the semi-autonomous status of its administered Kashmir and split the region into two union territories.

The move was accompanied by monthslong security and communications clampdowns in the majori-

India, China Complete Troop Pullout From Lake Area



By Reuters

February 21, 2021 11:11 AM

NEW DELHI - Indian and Chinese troops have completed a pullout from a lake area on their disputed border in the western Himalayas, setting the scene for disengagement at other friction points, the two countries said on Sunday.

Thousands of soldiers have been facing off since April on the Line of Actual Control (LAC), or the de facto border, including at the glacial Pangong Tso lake.

Earlier this month, military commanders agreed to begin pulling out troops, tanks and artillery in a first step towards full withdrawal.

On Saturday, the two commanders met to review the pullout.

"The two sides positively appraised the smooth completion of disengagement of frontline troops in the Pangong Lake area noting that it was a significant step forward that provided a good basis for resolution of other remaining issues along the LAC in Western Sector," a joint press release said.

The deployment in the remote area that falls in India's Ladakh region and adjoins the Chinese-administered Aksai Chin plateau had raised fears of a broader conflict between the two

countries.

A clash erupted in the Galwan Valley in June, when 20 Indian soldiers were killed in the first combat losses on the disputed border in more than four decades. China said this week it lost four soldiers in the fighting.

Troops remain in close proximity on other parts of the undefined border including at Hot Springs, Gogra Post and the Depsang plains, officials said. The commanders had a candid and in-depth exchange of views on the situation on the border, the two countries said in the press release.

"The two sides agreed to follow the important consensus of their state leaders, continue their communication and dialogue, stabilize and control the situation on the ground, push for a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues in a steady and orderly manner, so as to jointly maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas," they said.

India and China fought a war in 1962 and the border remains undefined. India said Chinese troops had intruded deep into its side of the LAC last April, triggering the most serious stand-offs in decades.

China denied its troops had transgressed the LAC and accused Indian border guards of provocative behavior.

Via voanews.com

ty-Muslim region to counter a violent backlash from Kashmiris.

Pakistan condemned the moves as a violation of a decades-old United Nations Security Council resolution that acknowledges Kashmir as a disputed territory.

Islamabad swiftly downgraded an already strained relationship with New Delhi and demanded an immediate reversal of its Kashmir-related actions, fueling regional tensions.

Indian leaders dismissed the objections, saying revocation of Kashmir's autonomy and the communications clampdowns were part of efforts aimed at improving security and bringing economic prosperity to the violence-hit

scenic region.

India's Hindustan Times newspaper said the cease-fire agreement stemmed from "back-channel conversations" between National Security Adviser AjitDoval and his Pakistani counterpart, Moeed Yusuf, to ensure peace long the borders.

There was no immediate reaction available to the assertions in the Indian media. Earlier, Yusuf while commenting on Thursday's development, declared it a "victory" for Pakistan's peace diplomacy to secure the LOC cease-fire "to help end sufferings of civilians there."

Via voanews.com



India-China Border Disputes Persist Despite Troop Pullback

By Anjana Pasricha

February 22, 2021 10:57 AM

NEW DELHI - Artillery and tanks have rolled back, and Chinese and Indian soldiers have retreated from along the banks of Pangong Tso, a strategic Himalayan lake that straddles their border.

It is the biggest push to ease tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbors since Indian accusations of Chinese transgressions into its territory and a deadly clash in June led to a huge nine-month military build-up along their Himalayan border.

Announcing the “smooth” completion of the disengagement process, a joint news release by both sides called it a “significant step forward.”

But analysts caution that the troop withdrawal from Pangong Lake represents only a start of a potentially long process as soldiers from both sides remain massed along several other stretches of the Himalayan border. “It’s a first step, a tentative step,” according to Jayadeva Ranade at Center for China Analysis and Strategy in New Delhi. “It is aimed at defusing the tension which exists particularly at this point around Pangong.”

Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh told parliament earlier this month that other disputes remain to be resolved along the border known as the line of actual control, or LAC.

“There are still some outstanding issues with regard to deployment and patrolling at some other points along the LAC,” the minister said. “We will focus on these in future discussions.”

The most contentious dispute centers on a large strategic plateau of over 900 kilometers known as the Depsang Plains where the two Asian giants have also deployed a significant number of troops, according to analysts.

Following the disengagement at Pangong, negotiations on pulling back from three other so-called “friction points” where troops are still in close proximity have begun between military commanders. In the joint statement, the two countries said they will “push for a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues in a steady and orderly manner, so as to jointly maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas.”

Analysts warn however that the negotiations will not be easy as the months-long standoff has significantly damaged ties, particularly in the wake of the brutal clash last June in which 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers were killed. While India said the standoff was triggered by Chinese

intrusions into its territory, Beijing denied that its troops had transgressed the LAC and accused Indian border guards of provocative behavior.

“I would say that we will have to rebuild the relationship rather than take what existed forward,” according to Ranade. “The main point is what did the Chinese hope to achieve by their action, what was their intention? Certainly, those will be factors in the minds of the Indian planners and will ensure that we will be vigilant in future for Chinese actions.”

While the territorial differences between the Asian rivals may continue to simmer, economic ties could revive faster, according to analysts. Over the last two decades, India and China had put border disputes on the backburner and focused on building economic ties — in 2019 China emerged as India’s top trading partner with trade topping \$90 billion.

But the recent military standoff gave those ties a jolt. India has permanently blocked 59 Chinese apps including hugely popular ones such as Tik Tok, and put barriers to Chinese investment in sensitive sectors. The government announced initiatives to boost local manufacturing aimed at reducing reliance on Chinese imports. A leading traders organization vowed to boycott Chinese goods amid a burst of nationalist sentiment.

In the wake of the recent disengagement, trade experts in New Delhi expect the rhetoric to cool down and trade ties to get a boost.

“We have got really economically entangled with China just like most major economies,” points out Biswajit Dhar a trade analyst and professor at New Delhi’s Jawaharlal Nehru University. “Suddenly trying to move out of the Chinese ambit would be costly for India.”

Chinese goods, from mobile phones to ordinary household goods continue to flood Indian markets.

Many Indian industries such as pharmaceuticals and solar power remain critically dependent on Chinese components. More significantly, Indian exports to China grew last year.

“Indian industry is now looking at China as a market and China has offered India the market,” says Dhar underlining that there is a push to keep trade ties intact with Beijing. “Earlier the push came only from sectors dependent on imports from China. Now there are sectors like steel and others who are dependent on markets in China. So, there is going to be a substantially large constituency in India which will be seeking normalization of relations with China.”



This handout photograph released by the Indian Army on Feb. 16, 2021 shows People Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers and tanks during military disengagement along the Line of Actual Control at the border in Ladakh. (Indian Defense Ministry/AFP)



FILE - An Indian man speaks on his mobile phone in front of a shop selling OPPO phones, a Chinese consumer electronics company, in Noida, outskirts of New Delhi, India, June 18, 2020.

That means in the coming year political and economic ties between Asia’s two biggest countries could take

divergent paths.

Via voanews.com/

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To Give to the Destitute is True Charity:

Mills and Mills LLP hosts virtual Tamil Charities and Not-For-Profits Seminar to Promote Learning on Navigating the COVID Times

By **Harrish Thirukumar**

Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic was officially recognized in March 2020, the Canadian Tamil community and other communities have been living with a great deal of anxiety and uncertainty as to their social, economic and health prospects. It has become critical for everyone to have a sense of hope and to provide support to each other as we work together to overcome this public health situation by abiding by current public health guidelines. From there, we can emerge stronger and more resilient. This is something that the Tamil Charities and Not-for-Profits seminar hosted by Mills and Mills LLP, a Toronto law firm aims to cultivate for the Canadian Tamil community. Mills & Mills LLP is excited to host the first ever Tamil Charities and Not-for-Profits seminar on Thursday, April 8th, 2021 from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM.

This seminar will provide an opportunity for various professionals, directors, and volunteers from various different types of organizations to come together to learn from the firm's lawyers and from each other as well. Due to COVID, this year's event will be fully virtual and will include learning opportunities as well as a chance to network and connect with other charities and organizations in breakout rooms.

The event will be moderated by Nathaniel Balakumaran, an Articling Student at Mills & Mills LLP. As a member of the Mills & Mills LLP's Diversity and Inclusion committee, he consistently engages in promoting initiatives towards fulfilling this cause. During his LLM studies, he volunteered with a national non-profit organization, JusticeNet, where he recruited and persuaded practicing lawyers to join the organization's services to help provide equitable opportunities that promote economic inclusion to legal services. In his LLB studies, Nathaniel was appointed by the law school as a Student Support Community Officer. He led a team in organizing student events such as the Festival of Diversity, aimed at increasing student engagement and reinforcing a diverse learning community. His contributions earned him the Flare Ignite Enterprising Award for demonstrating excellent innovative and entrepreneurial qualities. Nathaniel believes in the strength of diversity for the community.

One of the speakers on the event panels is Reshma Kishnani, who is a Senior Litigation Associate at Mills & Mills LLP. She will be speaking about "Employment Law during COVID". With valuable trial and mediation experience from her litigator role, Reshma has represented a diverse range of clients before various levels of court, including administrative tribunals. She has counselled both employers and employees in contract negotiations, termination conduct, wrongful dismissal matters (including pregnancy and parental leave related terminations), and other employment-related matters governed by the Ontario Employment Standards Act, the Canada Labour Code, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Canadian Human Rights Act. At Mills & Mills LLP, Reshma continues to build upon her knowledge and experience in employment law, estates litigation, as well as commercial and contractual disputes with a view to expanding her practice in these areas. Reshma believes that the backbone of any community's charities and not-for-profits are their volunteers and employees.

Our final panel speaker is Taras Kulish, a Senior Charities Associate at Mills & Mills LLP who will be speaking about "Good Governance in Bad Times". In the Charity sector, Taras has extensive hands-on experience as a director, president, Country Director and now International Relations Volunteer for the

Canadian affiliate of an international NGO, which gives him insider knowledge about the challenges facing not-for-profit organizations in today's complex world. He represents numerous churches, mosques, synagogues and other faith-based groups as well as many other foundations and service organizations in the not-for-profit sector in Ontario. Taras is co-chair of the organizing committee and spearheads the annual Churches, Charities, Not-for-profit Knowledge Hub for Ukrainian Canadian Social Services – Toronto, Ukrainian Canadian Bar Association, and the Ukrainian Canadian Professional Business Association. He also brings over 20 years-experience to the Business Law Group at Mills & Mills LLP. Taras believes in the power of community.

The featured organization of this seminar is the Eekai Foundation, which represents and serves the Tamil community. The special guest will be Dr. V. Santhakumar, who is the Chairman of Eekai organization, a Canadian non-profit organization founded with a desire to unite those who believe in humanitarian efforts. It is a non-political, non-religious organization with a vision of openness, collab-

oration and complete transparency. Its objective is to become a hub for the numerous Canadian Tamil organizations and individuals who provide assistance to northern and eastern Sri Lanka as well as to empower Canadian Tamil youth.

Eekai Foundation believes "to give to the destitute is true charity. All other gifts have the nature of a measured return." According to Thiruvalluvar, a celebrated Tamil poet and philosopher in the Thirukkural, a classic Tamil language text.

This holds even greater relevance today for the many Tamil charities and Not-for-Profits assisting the Tamil community during this pandemic. The seminar organizers anticipate there to be a great representation of various charities and organizations in attendance. The organizers are excited to confirm that the Chief of Peel Regional Police, Nishan Duraiappah will be attending the seminar.

You can register to attend this first ever Tamil Charities and Not-for-profits seminar via Zoom at this link: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/tamil-charities-and-not-for-profits-navigating-the-covid-times-tickets-140083111357>

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BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS
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Tamil Charities and Not-for-Profits: Navigating the Covid Times



MODERATOR



Nathaniel Balakumaran,
B.Sc, LL.B, LL.M.
Articling Student, Mills & Mills LLP

SPEAKERS and TOPICS:



Reshma Kishnani, B.A., LL.B
Senior Litigation Associate, Mills & Mills LLP
Employment Law During COVID 19



Taras Kulish, B.C.L., LL.B
Senior Charities Associate, Mills & Mills LLP
Good Governance in Bad Times

Thursday, April 8, 2021 | 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

On the Zoom platform

by invitation and pre-registration

FEATURED ORGANIZATION:

Special Guest: Dr. V. Santhakumar, MD, CCFP, Chairman of Eekai Foundation
To speak on: **"Community Engagement During Covid Times"**



Following our speakers, we will host breakout rooms to provide an opportunity for questions and networking!

Please register through Eventbrite: **REGISTER**

For more information contact: Nathaniel.Balakumaran@millsandmills.ca

To register: tinyurl.com/2vtu4v9a



Statement by Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights 46th session of the Human Rights Council

Report of OHCHR on promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka (A/HRC/46/20)

24 February 2021

Full Text of Statement by Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Madam President,

This is a key juncture for the Council's engagement with Sri Lanka. As my report (A/HRC/46/20) indicates, nearly 12 years after the end of the armed conflict, domestic initiatives have repeatedly failed to ensure justice for victims and promote reconciliation. Despite commitments made in 2015, the current Government, like its predecessor, has failed to pursue genuine truth-seeking or accountability processes.

The impact on thousands of survivors, from all communities, is devastating. Moreover, the systems, structures, policies and personnel that gave rise to such grave violations in the past remain – and have recently been reinforced.

Addressing grievances and redressing past violations are critical prevention tools at the core of the Council's work. Our report highlights disturbing trends over the past year, which warn of a serious deterioration in key areas.

The space for civil society and independent media, which had grown significantly, is now rapidly shrinking.

The independence of the judiciary, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, the National Police Commission and other key bodies has been deeply eroded by the recently adopted 20th Constitutional Amendment.

The growing militarisation of key civilian functions is encroaching on democratic governance. The continued failure to implement comprehensive reforms – or to vet personnel – leaves in place security and military officers who have been implicated in alleged grave crimes and violations.

Tamil and Muslim minorities are being excluded by divisive and discriminatory rhetoric including from the highest State officials.

The policy of forced cremation of COVID-19 victims has caused pain and distress to the minority Muslim and Christian communities.

In other words, long-standing, structural and systemic issues persist in Sri Lanka, and now there are clear warning signs that past patterns of violations could be repeated.

Madam President,

Successive Government commissions have failed to credibly establish truth and ensure accountability. Indeed, the Government has obstructed investigations and judicial proceedings into emblematic human rights cases.

The latest commission of inquiry, appointed in January 2021 to review the findings of previous commissions, promises to repeat this cycle without meaningful result.

By repeatedly failing to advance accountability for past human rights violations committed, and by withdrawing its support for the Council's resolution 30/1 and related measures, the Government has largely closed the door on the possibility of genuine



progress to end impunity through a national process.

For these reasons, I call on the Council to explore new ways to advance various types of accountability at the international level, for all parties, and seek redress for victims, including by supporting a dedicated capacity to collect and preserve evidence and information for future accountability processes, as well as to support relevant judicial proceedings in Member States.

My Office stands ready to continue monitoring the human rights situation, including progress towards accountability and reconciliation.

Statement by Sri Lankan Minister of Foreign Relations Dinesh Gunawardena during the Interactive Dialogue on the OHCHR Report

(Text of Statement by Sri Lankan Minister of Foreign Relations Dinesh Gunawardena during the Interactive Dialogue on the OHCHR Report at the 46th sessions of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva).

Madam President,

Madam High Commissioner,
Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The OHCHR Report which is presented today, emanates from the Resolution 30/1 and 40/1, from which the Government of Sri Lanka announced its withdrawal of co-sponsorship, at the 43rd Session of this Council last year.

Sri Lanka rejects the High Commissioner's Report which has unjustifiably broadened its scope and mandate further, incorporating many issues of governance and matters that are essentially domestic for any self-respecting, sovereign country.

This is in complete violation of Article 2 (7) of the Charter of the UN that states: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state..."

The trajectory that has emerged with regard to the recommendations and conclusions reflects the preconceived, politicized and prejudicial agenda which certain elements have relentlessly pursued against Sri Lan-



ka. These recommendations are based on ill-founded allegations.

Sri Lanka categorically rejects the conclusions and recommendations in the High Commissioner's Report.

The call for asset freezes, travel bans, references to the ICC and the exercise of universal jurisdiction by individual States, based on evidence that up to date has been denied access to and retained by the High Commissioner's Office with some of it unreleased for thirty years, particularly in relation to a country like Sri Lanka which has consistently and constructively engaged with the UN and its mechanisms, points to a distinct and eminent danger which the international community as a whole need to take note of. Such unilateral actions by certain countries are unacceptable and a violation of the principles of natural

justice.

In addition to the progress made since last March, Sri Lanka has provided written comments on instances of erroneous information, misconceived and arbitrary assessments in the Report. It is regrettable that the High Commissioner's Office published its Report, accompanied by an unprecedented propaganda campaign on it and refused to publish our Comments on the report as an addendum. This has deprived Sri Lanka and members of equal visibility of Sri Lanka's views on the report.

Sri Lanka refutes the allegations that have been reproduced in the High Commissioner's report, from the highly contentious Report of the Panel of Experts (PoE) on Accountability and the Report of the High Commissioner's Office Investigation on Sri Lanka

(OISL), which have been rejected by Sri Lanka for reasons explained to this Council before. The contents of the Report which have been drawn from the said disputed reports are rife with factual inaccuracies that appear to equate atrocities committed by the LTTE, a terrorist organization proscribed internationally, with legitimate action taken by the government to safeguard the territorial integrity of the country and the right to life of our people.

Madam President,

Insistence on ever-expanding externally driven prescriptions, notwithstanding our continuous cooperation and engagement with this Council and all UN bodies, can pose numerous challenges and such processes could set a dangerous precedent affecting all member states of the UN.

We regret the disproportionate attention drawn to Sri Lanka by this Council, driven by political motivations. Sri Lanka calls upon the members of this Council that any resolution which is based on this Report, be rejected by the Council and be brought to a closure.

In conclusion,

We remain open to engaging constructively with the UN, including this Council, and the international community in mutually agreed areas, in conformity with the Constitution and in keeping with domestic priorities and policies.

Ayubowan



HEALTH & WELLNESS

VIRTUAL VALENTINE'S DAY CONCERT RAISES OVER \$150,000 FOR SHN FOUNDATION



Love Songs For Loved Ones
A Virtual Valentine's Day Concert in support of SHN Foundation

FUNDRAISING TOTAL

\$150,195

On Sunday, February 14, 2021, Scarborough Health Network (SHN) Foundation welcomed the community online for the Love Songs for Loved Ones event, a virtual Valentine's Day Concert in support of our local Scarborough hospitals and the courageous frontline health care workers. The virtual concert raised over \$150,000 to fund the highest priority needs across

disproportionately impacted the people of Scarborough and has seen SHN tackling among Ontario's highest case volumes."

Hosted virtually from Toronto's Aga Khan Museum, more than 200 audience members tuned in to hear beautiful love songs performed by more than 25 amateur and professional musicians. Proceeds from the event will help equip

Scarborough Health Network's Birchmount, Centenary and General hospitals.

"We are tremendously grateful to our generous donors and sponsors, and all of our supporters who tuned in on Sunday evening," said Alicia Vandermeer, President and CEO of SHN Foundation. "Your support is critical as we continue our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, which has

Scarborough's frontline workers with the critical tools and resources needed to continue serving our Scarborough community with exceptional care.

"This community support is crucial to our hospital's ability to care for the community, and we are extremely appreciative for the love the Scarborough community – and beyond – showed us on Sunday evening," said Ryan Baillie, Vice President, Community Development with SHN Foundation. "Thank you to everyone who spent their Valentine's Day with us raising valuable funds for our Scarborough hospitals and to Floors at Work, M&S Quality Produce, Canadian Guardian, the Aga Khan Museum, and all of our sponsors who generously supported this event."

To view a full list of the performers and sponsors or make a donation, please visit shnfoundation.ca/love-songs-for-loved-ones-event/.

If you would like to watch the concert, a recording is available online at <https://shnfoundation.ca/lovesongs>.

SHN REFLECTS ON ONE YEAR OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

It's difficult to believe that we have been living through the COVID-19 pandemic for over a year. It's even more difficult to adequately thank and appreciate those who have been fighting tirelessly to curb the spread of the virus and care for those impacted.

Impact on our Community

Since SHN identified our first COVID-19 patient in late February of 2020, our courageous frontline team members have been making immense sacrifices to make sure our community is taken care of. Our hospitals have tackled among the highest number of COVID-19 cases in Ontario, and our community is disproportionately impacted by the virus. Many Scarborough residents are frontline and essential workers themselves, and put the safety of others above their own. Unfortunately, this comes at a cost of higher rates of COVID-19 infections.

Based on statistics published by Toronto Public



1,687

COVID-19 patients treated



13,000

vaccinations administered



170,000

tests performed around Scarborough

Our Response

However, even with the odds stacked against us, we have been fiercely resilient.

"To say this was a challenging year would be an understatement – and yet, I've never been more inspired by our team," said Elizabeth Buller, SHN President and CEO.

"Our health care workers have made enormous personal sacrifices to make sure patients have access to compassionate care and testing, without hesitation. Their selflessness and desire to help others is the reason we've been able to withstand this pandemic as well as we have and stay 'Scarborough Strong.'"

Since the onset of the pandemic, SHN has implemented hospital-based and pop-up assessment centres so our community (particularly our most vulnerable neighbourhoods) has quick, local access to testing. We've supported staff and residents at some of the hardest-hit long-term care homes, and provided increased mental health and wellness support to our team members. We've innovated to provide virtual care whenever possible and facilitate patient-family visits using video calls. Delivering exceptional care drives all of our decision-making.

Your Generous Support

You – our community and supporters – also stepped up in an unprecedented way to support the work of our community hospitals.

"We couldn't do all of this work without

Scarborough behind us every step of the way. We're grateful for this support and I'll never forget how this community rallied together to make sure we have what we need to be successful in the

REFLECTING ON ONE YEAR OF COVID-19



fight against COVID-19," added Buller.

During the first wave of COVID-19, SHN Foundation received over \$2.7 million in donations from over 3,500 donors, including a staggering \$500,000 from Scarborough's own Abel Tesfaye, a.k.a. The Weeknd. In addition to monetary donations, we had:

What's Next

As SHN continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic, we are looking forward with hope as people continue to follow public health guidelines and more vaccines become available. SHN has already administered over 13,000 vaccinations to long-term care home staff and frontline SHN team members. We will continue to be at the forefront of health care, by providing vaccines for the entire Scarborough community once they become available.

The ongoing support of our community has encouraged us to continue fighting the pandemic, and our staff are extremely grateful for the love they've received over the last year. By donating to SHN Foundation, you are helping to ensure we can keep Scarborough healthy by treating COVID-19 patients and funding critical renovations, upgrades and equipment purchases across our Birchmount, Centenary and General hospitals.

Visit [SHNFoundation.ca/DONATE](https://shnfoundation.ca/DONATE) to make your gift today, and be part of Scarborough's brighter, healthier future. Click here to view our COVID-19 impact report.

Health, 83% of the COVID-19 cases in Toronto (from mid-May to mid-July) were individuals from racialized communities – although these communities make up only 52% of the population.

Scarborough had double the share of COVID-19 cases in Toronto across every ethno-racial group – except white – compared to the overall Toronto population. Scarborough also saw hospitalization rates and ICU admission rates that were four times higher, and death rates that were two times higher.

Many Scarborough families live in multi-generational households, which increases the risk of COVID-19 transmission and accounts for a quarter of all cases. Our community also has a higher rate of chronic illnesses, such as chronic kidney disease, than the general population. The virus has a greater impact on these patients and puts them at higher risk for serious complications.



401,000

PPE supplies donated



33,100+

meals donated to frontline staff



\$192,000

raised on our single largest day of online giving in history

HEALTH & WELLNESS



Dr. Natalie Ho, Cardiology

5 Questions With...



February was heart month, a time to bring attention to and think about our cardiovascular health. Heart disease affects over 2 million Canadians and is the second leading cause of death in Canada. SHN is home to North America's largest regional, community-based cardiovascular rehab service. This six-month program helps to improve our patients' quality of life through supervised exercise, education and guided lifestyle change.

We sat down with Dr. Natalie Ho, a cardiologist with SHN, about the importance of cardiovascular health and how SHN is contributing to healthier hearts for Scarborough.

1. February was heart month. What advice would you give to people to look after and improve their cardiac health, especially during the pandemic?

During the pandemic, a lot of people became more sedentary due to working from home and sitting in front of a screen for most of the day. As we all know, proper exercise and movement is so important for your overall health and heart health, but some people let this slip during the lockdown with gyms being closed and not being able to go outside during the cold winter months. We have to exercise, both for the benefit of our physical and mental well-being. I would recommend balancing appropriate social distancing and public health protocols with our health, and this might mean getting creative with how you move. Some things you can do to take care of your heart and your health during COVID-19 include:

1. Get creative with your workouts – walk up and down your stairs, bundle up and go for a walk outside or do body weight exercises at home in a safe area.

2. Eat nutritious, home-cooked meals.
3. Avoid eating quick, processed foods with added trans fats and salt.
4. Try to limit your alcohol intake and find an alternative outlet for stress relief.

5. If you're working from home, put some boundaries around your work schedule. This might include going for a walk in place of your normal commute time.

2. SHN is home to North America's largest regional, community-based cardiovascular rehab service. How important is this program for treating patients with cardiovascular disease, and how has SHN continued to treat these patients during COVID-19?

A lot of our cardiovascular programs were able to quickly pivot into a virtual environment, including phone calls and virtual video appointments. These programs continue to allow us to keep a pulse on our patients. Other helpful programs that we have utilized include home visits for bloodwork and telehomecare, which allows remote patient monitoring of key vital signs.

Our cardiac rehabilitation programs in particular moved very quickly to a virtual platform. Our team connects with patients virtually and can prescribe exercise and wellness routines to keep them on track after they've had a cardiac event.

Additionally, the arrhythmia service has been able to utilize remote monitoring of implantable cardioverter defibrillators and other implantable devices to detect irregular heartbeats or arrhythmias and potentially reduce the number of times patients need to travel to the clinic for an appointment.

3. In 2020, SHN launched the Cardiac Amyloidosis Clinic at our General hospital. What makes this clinic so

special to SHN, and how can it contribute to a healthier Scarborough?

The field of cardiac amyloidosis has exploded in the last several years. Cardiac amyloidosis, which is a condition where abnormal proteins (amyloid) deposit in the heart tissue and make it difficult for the heart to work properly, has historically been hard to diagnose with no available treatments.

As a result, patients were often diagnosed very late in the disease course and ultimately had very poor prognosis. However, in the last few years, with the development of non-invasive imaging tests, we can now detect the disease without invasive testing and there are new medications being developed that can improve patient's quality of life and potentially their and life expectancy with cardiac amyloidosis.

We have also discovered that this disease is much more prevalent than we thought and is in fact a common cause of heart failure. This disease has various types and depending on the type of cardiac amyloidosis, can affect different ethnicities to varying degrees. This is important, especially given how multicultural and diverse the population that we serve in Scarborough is. Furthermore, our clinic will provide patients with local testing and diagnosis, which can save patients a trip to downtown Toronto.

4. You've been with SHN for 3 years now. What makes our Scarborough community so special?

Since I've been here I've been incredibly moved by our patients – our multicultural and diverse community show such special gratitude toward their health care providers. I wasn't used to seeing this before starting at SHN.

There's always a special relationship that develops between me and my patients. They come from all walks of life and don't take their health care for granted – they will overcome hurdles such as transportation or mobility issues to make their appointments

every single time and are always very thankful. I'm also touched by the sense of community and family. Patients will often come to appointments with their families who are extremely supportive, and will help overcome any language barriers if they are present.

5. Donors and our community of supporters help to ensure we can continue providing exceptional care. What would you say to encourage our community to support our Cardiac Program?

Heart disease is a large part of medicine, and as our patients are living longer and surviving longer after cardiac events, the prevalence of people living with heart disease is increasing. Caring for our patient's cardiac health directly impacts their quality of life. The field of cardiology is shifting toward preventative medicine and specialized clinics to hone our expertise and understanding of specific disease processes.

We have a great cardiovascular program at SHN and a great group of physicians, nurses and health professionals with specialized skills. When patients come to our cardiac program, few of them need to be referred out as a lot can be done right here at one of our SHN hospitals. The support of our donors has helped spearhead many specialized clinics to help our patient's specific needs.

I would encourage our community to support our cardiac program because while we are a leader in cardiac care, there are some clinics and procedures that I would like to see offered by SHN that would really catapult us to the forefront of cardiology and help us provide complete cardiac care to our community.

SHN is proud to have dedicated physicians like Dr. Ho caring for our Scarborough community. To learn more about our cardiac programs visit SHN.ca/cardiac.

To donate to SHN Foundation and support heart health in Scarborough, click here.

SCARBOROUGH ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS LAUNCH NEW AWARDS PROGRAM TO RECOGNIZE LOCAL HEROES DURING PANDEMIC

• The nomination process opens today, and submissions are encouraged from the community

After hearing numerous stories about individuals, community groups and businesses stepping up to help others in need during this public health crisis, the leaders of Centennial College, Scarborough Health Network (SHN), Toronto Zoo and University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) are launching the Scarborough Hero Awards. This new awards initiative aims to recognize those who have gone above and beyond to serve the local community in very substantive and impactful ways.

In 200 words or less, community members are encouraged to nominate a #ScarbTOHero deserving recognition for the extraordinary actions they have taken in the past year to support the community during COVID-19. Nominees can be an individual, group, business or organization residing or working in the Scarborough community. Nominations are now open for the following seven award categories:

1. Community Action/Service – Recognizing those who set-up/ran food banks, shelters, mask and other personal protective equipment distribution, etc.
2. Health – Honouring the valour of frontline health care workers, including, but not limited to hospital, long-term care, and public health personnel
3. Education – Celebrating those who engaged in trans-

forming learning experiences for students in Scarborough and beyond

4. Environmental – Recognizing those responsible for keeping outdoor spaces accessible and safe for Scarborough residents, while also nurturing natural habitats and wildlife

5. Good Neighbour – Celebrating those who put their own needs aside to help others, such as supporting neighbours and vulnerable individuals in need of medication, supplies, and groceries

6. Outstanding Youth Leader – Celebrating youth 19 years and under who went out of their way to make a difference within their community

7. Outstanding Organization/Business Leader – Recognizing local organizations/businesses and/or their leaders who went above and beyond to serve their clients and/or support the local community

Each nomination will be subject to a screening process involving representatives from Centennial College, Scarborough Health Network, University of Toronto Scarbor-



Nominate your
#ScarbTOHero today!

Visit ScarbTOHero.com for more information.



ough and the Toronto Zoo. Once the pool of nominations has been distilled to a maximum of five nominees per category, a jury panel consisting of the Scarborough City Councillors will step in and determine the ultimate winners for each category. In addition, representatives from the local Scarborough Business Association, Scarborough Community Renewal Organization and the Rotary Club of Scarborough will also assist with determining the winners in the business and community categories.

The nomination process closes at 11:59 pm on March 21, 2021, and the winners will be announced at an event at the Toronto Zoo on Saturday, April 17, 2021, at 9:00 am pending public health guidelines.

For more information please visit: www.scarbtohero.com



SPECIAL FEATURE

The U.S. Presidents who have been impeached



by Raymond Rajabalan

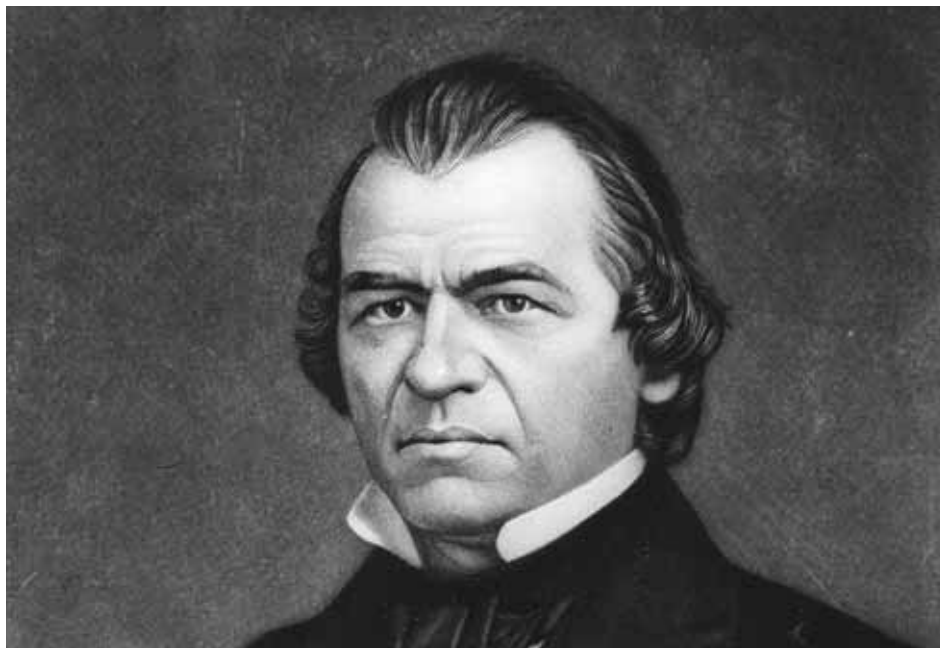
impeached twice.

Donald Trump became the third President in American history to be impeached and the first President to be

What is impeachment?

Impeachment means charges of misconduct made against the holder of a public office.

Impeachment is very rare in the U.S.'s nearly 250 years of history, and none of the three men to have faced it — Presidents Bill Clinton, Andrew Johnson and Donald Trump — have been removed from office. (However, after Clinton and Johnson were impeached, both of their parties lost the



Lincoln's successor President Andrew Johnson of Tennessee

next Presidential election.

Conditions for Impeachment

To be impeached, a President or other federal official must have committed one of the violations described by the Constitution as "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

However, history shows that if a President is to be impeached, the biggest factor may be political will — whether members of a President's own party are willing to turn against him, and whether enough members of Congress believe that trying to remove the President is worth the risk of losing popular support.

Impeachment

– A two part process

Impeachment alone isn't the only step to take a President out of office, but is actually the first part of a two-pronged process.

To impeach an official, the House of Representatives must pass articles of impeachment, which formally accuse the President of misbehavior. Once the House votes to impeach, the Senate must hold a trial to decide if the President should be removed from office.

Past presidents who have been impeached

Here's what you need to know about the Presidents who have been impeached — and why they stayed in office.

Andrew Johnson

Why was Johnson impeached?

The aftermath of the Civil War set the stage for the first impeachment of a U.S. President. After President Abraham Lincoln's death, he was succeeded by his Vice President, Andrew Johnson.

Johnson was a pro-Union Democrat who had refused to secede from the Union along with his state, Tennessee, during the war. However, he was also a racist who favored a lenient approach to Reconstruction, the process of bringing the states of the Confederacy back into the nation. He clashed

with Congress throughout his term, vetoing bills he felt were too harsh on the South — including the Freedmen's Bureau of Acts, which gave displaced southerners, including African Americans, access to food, shelter, medical aid and land.

This approach put him at odds with Congress. The final straw came when he replaced Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, a Lincoln appointee who sided with the Radical Republicans, a faction of the party that favored enfranchisement and civil rights for freed African Americans.

Congress produced 11 articles of impeachment, which alleged that Johnson had violated the Tenure of Office Act — a law intended to limit presidential power to remove federal appointees from office — and had found a replacement without consulting the Senate. Johnson was impeached by a two-thirds super majority of the House, and the case moved to the Senate for trial. Years later, the Supreme Court determined that the act was unconstitutional.

Why wasn't Johnson removed from office?

When he was tried in the Senate, Johnson ultimately held onto his presidency by a single vote, after seven Republicans decided to vote with Senate

Democrats to keep him in office.

Johnson's defense argued that he hadn't appointed Secretary of War Stanton in the first place, which meant that he wasn't violating the Tenure of Office Act. They also claimed that Johnson intended to push the Act before the Supreme Court.

Historian Hans L. Trefousse argues that the Senators who voted against removal decided that Johnson was being pushed out of office for political reasons: "[The weakness of the case convinced many that the charges were largely political, and that the violation of the Tenure of Office Act constituted neither a crime nor a violation of the Constitution but merely a pretext for Johnson's opponents.]"

This result set a major precedent for future presidential impeachments: that Presidents shouldn't be impeached for political reasons, but only if they commit, as the Constitution stipulates, "Treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

Bill Clinton

Why was Clinton impeached?

Like Johnson, President Bill Clinton had stirred up a lot of anger in Congress. After his affair with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky became public in January 1998, Clinton at first adamantly denied to



President Bill Clinton

federal investigators — and the public — having had "sexual relations" with her.

The articles of impeachment alleged that Clinton had perjured himself by lying to investigators about his relationship with Lewinsky. They also said that he had obstructed justice by encouraging White House staff to deny the affair.

Why wasn't Clinton removed from office?

The outcome of Clinton's trial reinforced the precedent that Presidents should only be removed from office only in limited circumstances. While many Senators agreed that Clinton had behaved badly, they ultimately decided that his misconduct wasn't at the level of "high crimes and

misdemeanors."

Experts say that the effort to remove Clinton from office was doomed because public opinion turned against removing Clinton from office. In fact, Clinton's job-approval rating peaked during the week of the impeachment, according to Gallup.

Donald Trump

Why was Trump impeached?

First Impeachment of Trump

President Donald Trump was first impeached on Dec. 18, 2019, on two charges: abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

These two charges against the President stem from a July 25 phone call with the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky. The content of the call first came to national attention after a whistleblower filed a report expressing concern that Trump had pushed Ukraine to investigate an energy company for which the son of his political rival, former Vice President Joe Biden, sat on the board. At around that time, the Trump administration also withheld military aid from Ukraine, and Ukraine was working to secure a meeting between Zelensky and Trump.

Testimony by current and former

U.S. government officials in Fall 2019 fleshed out a narrative about how officials affiliated with the Trump Administration — including his personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani and E.U. ambassador Gordon Sondland — urged Ukraine to conduct that investigation, as well as one into the debunked theory that Ukraine interfered in the 2016 election.

The Democrat-led House Judiciary Committee, in outlining its case against the President, said that Trump had "betrayed the nation by abusing his high office to enlist a foreign power in corrupting democratic elections," and tried to interfere with Congress' Constitutionally protected power to impeach a President.

The legislators also argue that Trump's misconduct continued during

SPECIAL FEATURE



the impeachment inquiry. They allege that he attempted to interfere with the investigation by ordering Executive Branch officials not to comply with Congressional subpoenas for testimony and documents.

According to the articles of impeachment approved by Congress, these charges fall under the “high crimes and misdemeanors” provision of impeachment power—which, many constitutional experts say, is not necessarily about breaking the law, but rather about having violated the public trust.

Second Impeachment of Trump

The second impeachment of Donald Trump the 45th president of the United States, occurred on January 13, 2021, one week before his term expired. Ten Republican representatives voted for the second impeachment, the most pro-impeachment votes ever from a president’s party. This was also the first presidential impeachment in which all majority caucus members voted unanimously for impeachment.

The House of Representatives of the 117th U.S. Congress adopted one article of impeachment against Trump of “incitement of insurrection”, alleging that Trump incited the January 6 storming of the U.S. Capitol. A single article of impeachment charging Trump with “incitement of insurrection” against the U.S. government and “lawless action at the Capitol” was introduced to the House of Representatives on January 11, 2021.

The House impeachment managers formally triggered the start of the impeachment trial on January 25 by



Former President Donald J. Trump

delivering to the Senate the charge against Trump. The trial in the Senate started on February 9. At the trial, the first of its kind for a departed U.S. President, 67 votes or a two thirds majority was needed to convict Trump. Ultimately, 57 senators voted “guilty” and 43 senators voted “not guilty”, resulting in Trump being acquitted of the charge on February 13, 2021.

Why wasn’t Trump removed from office?

On Feb 5, 2020, Trump became the third president in U.S. history to be impeached by the House and then acquitted by the Senate. His acquittal came on a near party-line vote, reinforcing divisions at the end of a bitterly partisan process. The Senate voted 52-48 to acquit Trump on abuse of power and 53-47 to acquit him on obstruction of Congress; Sen. Mitt

Romney, a Republican from Utah, was the only senator of either party to break ranks, voting to convict Trump on the abuse of power charge.

Trump was impeached for the second time after he lost the November 2020 Presidential elections and once again was acquitted.

Other Presidents also faced impeachment threats

Given that only three presidents have ever been impeached, more of them have faced Congressional calls for impeachment than one might expect.

John Tyler

The first President the House of Representatives moved to impeach was John Tyler. After succeeding President William Henry Harrison, who died after just one month in office,

Tyler vetoed legislation backed by his own Whig Party and that Harrison had promised to support. The Whigs kicked Tyler out of their party, and the House received a petition for a resolution asking him to resign or else face the possibility of impeachment. Yet Congress ultimately didn’t pursue an impeachment.

Richard Nixon

The President best known for coming to the brink of impeachment — but not actually getting impeached — was Richard Nixon. During the Watergate scandal, the House Judiciary Committee filed three articles of impeachment against the President for “high crimes and misdemeanors.” However, Nixon resigned his office on Aug. 9, 1974, before the impeachment could move forward.

In recent American history, Presidents from Herbert Hoover to Barack Obama have faced discussion, ranging from credible to dubious and politically charged, of their impeachment. And even at moments of great popularity, all Presidents will know, in the back of their minds, that impeachments are, however rare, a possibility — which is just what the Constitution’s framers intended.

“A good magistrate will not fear them,” said Elbridge Gerry of impeachments, at the Constitutional Convention. “A bad one ought to be kept in fear of them.”

Adapted from an article by Tessa Berenson Time Magazine and completely revised.



SPECIAL FEATURE

Words of Peace

A Revolution for Peace

“Let’s spark a revolution for peace that makes a difference in this world. Why not every country, why not you, be part of the movers and shakers of this possibility.”



I really hope, like that first flight of 21 seconds and 120 feet that changed the world, that what gets launched out of this platform is truly revolutionary, and it makes a difference for the people of this world.

And more than anything else, all I want you to do is think about something that I may have inspired in you. Give it a thought, because how many people do you think looked at those Wright brothers and said, “this isn’t going to work”? But these two guys only knew how you

Before the Wright brothers took their first flight, people thought it was impossible. But with persistence, it became a unique moment in time - and the world has never been the same...

work with bicycles. They were bicycle repairmen. They were tinkerers. They had an imagination and they did not understand the word “no.” Regardless of how many people told them, “No, no, no.” They didn’t acknowledge the word “no.” That’s called persistence.

They made this little machine

that was incredibly flimsy. And I’m sure there were people, when this thing finally took off, who closed their eyes and said, “Oh God! They’re going to kill themselves.” This had never been done. This was a unique moment, but it happened. And the world has never been the same.

Please don’t underestimate

the power of being here today. Let’s spark a revolution for peace. Let’s spark a revolution for kindness. Let’s spark a revolution that makes a difference in this world. Not only in this country. Why not every country? Why not ... why not you, who are sitting here, the participants? Be the makers, movers, and shakers of that incredible, incredible possibility.

- PremRawat

www.timelesstoday.com



"No Comment"

- A book focusing on the hilarious side of the UN

Author: Thalifdeen – Former UN Bureau Chief IPS

Reviewed By:
Roderic Grigson

MELBOURNE — The United Nations is an institution mired in politics focusing primarily on military conflicts, civil wars, economic sanctions, peacekeeping, plus sustainable economic development.

But there is also a lighter side to it, which is brilliantly laid out in a new book released last week on Amazon and titled "No Comment and Don't Quote Me on That", with a subtitle: "From the Sublime to the Hilarious: Over 40 Years of Reporting from the United Nations".

It takes years to write a good book, and in this insightful memoir, Thalif Deen, a former UN Bureau Chief and Regional Director at Inter Press Service (IPS) news agency, gives us a riveting memoir filled with observations that come from 40-years of stalking the halls and corridors of the 'glasshouse by the East River'.

Told through a series of news stories, interviews, anecdotes, and personal recollections, No Comment is held together by flashes of surprising humour and an overarching third world focus and point of view.

It comes as no surprise that some of his stories were picked up at the Delegates Lounge, a well-known watering hole for UN delegates from around the world who attend UN conferences.

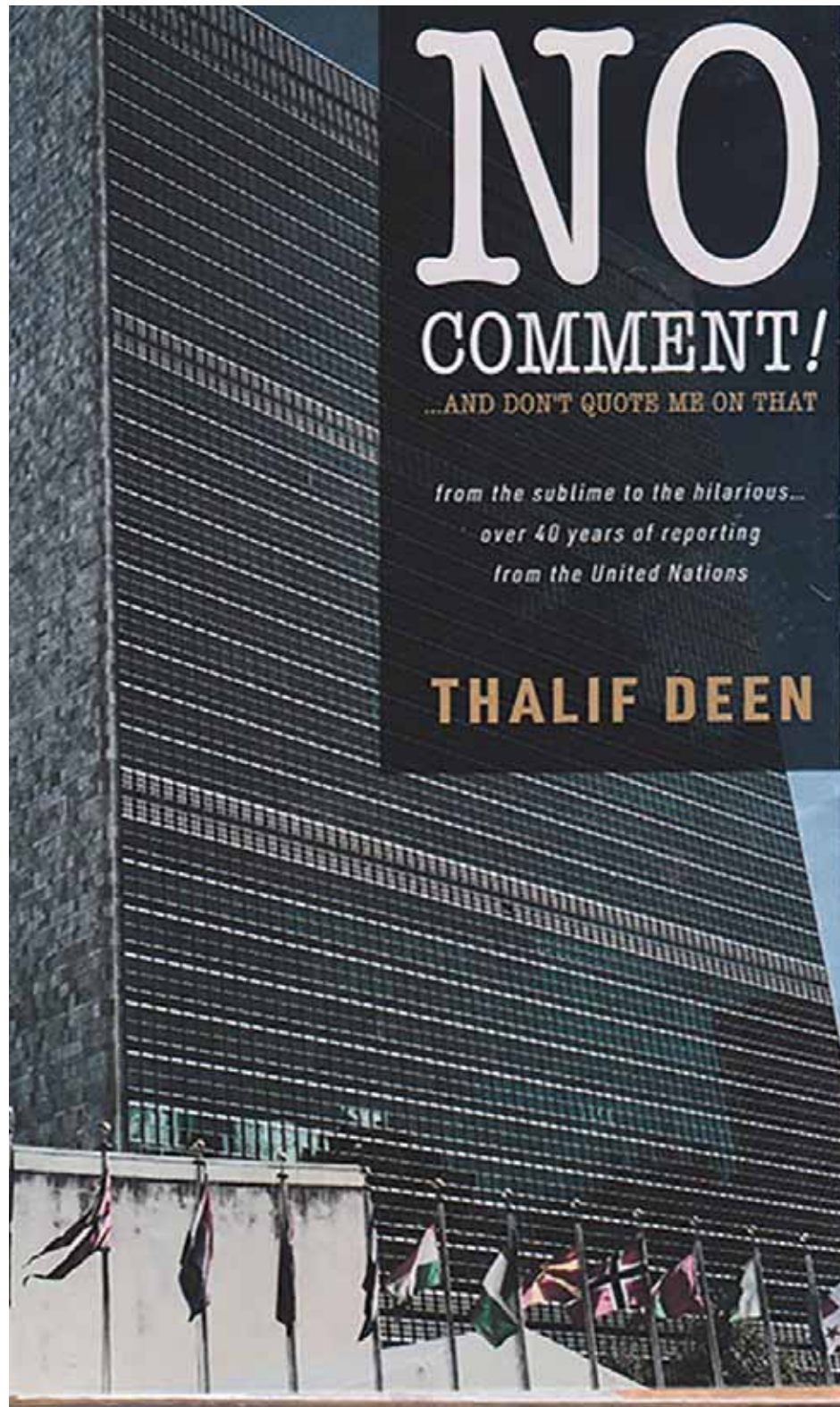
Though its scenes are scattered, they are individually memorable, evoking amazement and laughter in the same breath. Deen has always been a raconteur, often entertaining guests at various functions and parties with stories from his vast array of yarns, and this comes through his narrative in abundance.

Deen surprises the reader with an unaffected insider view of international reporting, recounting his stories with freshness and colour. A longstanding columnist for the Sunday Times, UN correspondent for Asiaweek, Hong Kong and Jane's Defence Weekly, London, his firsthand experiences add importance to his common-sense take on global diplomacy.

The book's title is taken from an encounter Deen had with a diplomat at the UN building. Generally, most ambassadors and diplomats do not tell UN correspondents either to go to hell or heaven – but avoid all comments on politically sensitive issues with the standard non-excuse: "Sorry, we have to get clearance from our capital".

But often that "clearance" from their respective foreign ministries never came. Still, it was hard to beat a response from a tight-lipped Asian

Thalif Deen: Sri Lanka's only "Permanent" Representative at the UN



diplomat who told him: "No comment" – and as an after-thought, added: "And Don't Quote Me on That".

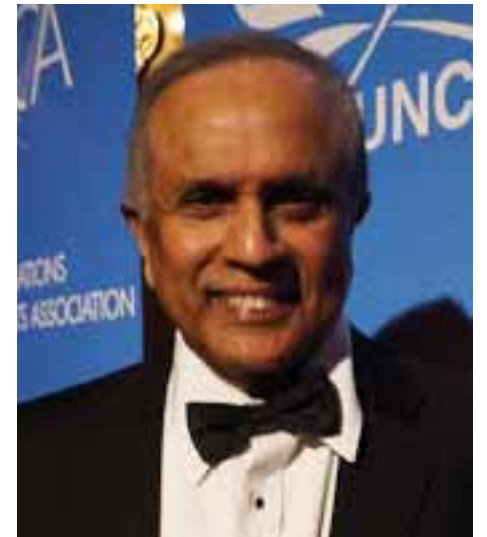
It is a gift that he has now written his long overdue memoir. Blessed with a robust sense of humour, Deen gives us the real scoop on headline stories with both wit and intelligence, a perspective that comes from mining his dog-eared reporter's notebooks, of which he assures me, there are over a hundred.

It is also the story of how Deen did it. A former information officer at the UN Secretariat in New York in the mid-1970s, Deen has covered virtually every major UN conference on population, human rights, the environment, sustainable development, food secu-

rity, humanitarian aid, arms control, and nuclear disarmament in the past 40-years.

Working at the UN during the most dramatic events of our time — from the pursuit of war and peace in the Middle East to the humanitarian disasters in Africa and Asia, this book provides an insider's view on what went on behind the 'glass curtain' during a period of extraordinary turbulence.

Deen, a Fulbright scholar with a master's degree (MSc) in Journalism from Columbia University in New York, was born and educated in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). A student of Zahira College, Colombo, he graduated with an Economics degree from the



University of Ceylon at Peradeniya. He became the first student from Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) to gain admission to the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia.

He completed his studies before embarking on his remarkable career 'reporting from the United Nations', first as a UN Information officer, a UN correspondent for Janes Defence Weekly and finally as a UN correspondent and bureau chief at IPS.

Possessed with the curiosity, nimbleness of mind and openness to change, Deen stands out among veteran correspondents for the range of his experience and his gift as a storyteller. An eyewitness to history being made at the highest levels, with this unique perspective, Deen brings to life scenes from the past and present.

Ambassador H.M.G.S. Palihakkara, a sharply-witty former Foreign Secretary and a one-time Permanent Representative to the UN, once paid him an ultimate compliment, when he said in an email message: "Permanent representatives are never permanent. Sri Lanka's only Permanent Representative at the UN is the IPS UN Bureau Chief Thalif Deen." He said Deen had survived about 20 Sri Lankan Permanent Representatives (PRUNs) – some of them transiting through New York.

He is a splendid companion as I can personally attest to after working with him in New York in the '70s and '80s. One thing I most admire about him is that he has always remained true to himself, his principles, career, and origins. He is someone with genuine bonafides as a journalist and an unassailable commitment to the profession's enduring values.

No Comment is a dizzying text, part memoir, part discourse on international reporting reality from a third-world perspective.

The book is available on Amazon.

The link follows:

<https://www.rodericgrigson.com/no-comment-by-thalif-deen/>



SPECIAL FEATURE



CHILAPATHIKARAM

By: Kumar Punithavel

There are five great epics in ancient Tamil literature which are collectively called Aymperumkaapiyam meaning five great epics. They are Chilapathikaram, Manimekalai, Chivagacinthamani, Valaiapathi, and Kundalakesi. It is interesting to note that each title of the epics is different jewelry worn by Tamil women, implying they are beautifying mother Tamil. Chilambu is the anklet worn by women. It hints that the weight of Ma Tamil's weight is carried on Chilapathikaram and it is the oldest, dating about two thousand years. Chilapathikaram was authored by Ilanko Adikal, a prince turned Jain recluse.

The story is that of Kannaki a chaste woman, daughter of a wealthy business man, marries Kovalan a business man too and leads a peaceful life in Poompuhar, then coastal capital of Chola kingdom. Her life goes astray by the association of Kovalan with dancer Madhavi. When Kovalan realizes his folly and returns, both wanting to resurrect their life in Madurai, the capitol of Pandiyam dynasty. Kovalan went out to sell an anklet of Kannaki to start a business, but was wrongfully accused of stealing the queen's anklet and beheaded. Kannaki a quiet house wife outraged, went to the emperor's court and established her husband's innocence. On realizing his folly of wrong judgment, the emperor and the queen both fell dead on the throne in front of their court. It implies in those times, an average citizen could go to the emperor's court and challenge the judgment, and was able to get redress.

The widowed Kannaki's wreath made her curse the entire city of Madurai by her chastity and Madurai was burnt completely. Later Kannaki left the city wailing, "I entered this city by the eastern gate with my husband, and now leaving it by the western gate alone". As the tradition of that time Kannaki resolves to sit facing north starving, and die.

Chera prince, who had accepted the life of a recluse, adopting Jain religion and took the hermitage name as Illango Adikal heard about Kannaki's heroic act of faith. He resolved to make a monument of words, writing the great Chilapathikaram. His elder brother the Chera crown prince took it to his task, to go north all the way to Himalayas and brought stone from there, overthrowing the Himalayan king and built a monumental temple for Kannaki.

On mentioning the incidence of his brother going to Himalayas, the author mentions:

கயலெழுதிய இமைய நெற்றியின்
அயலெழுதிய புலியும் வில்லும்

Meaning adjoining to the imprint of carp is engraved are the tiger and bow. The carp fish is the logo of Pandya dynasty, tiger and bow being the logos of Chola and Chera dynasties. This implies all three royalty of Tamil dynasties had traveled two thousand miles and extended their authority

up to the Himalayan region. An interesting clue is found in this epic is about Tamilian numerals. In those time they must have referred to nine as thondu (தொண்டு). This could be inferred from the poet referring to 11,991 as twelve thousand less thondu (தொண்டு). In the epic he says 'தொண்டு மீண்ட பன்னிராம்'. This makes sense for all the other numbers that comes later like ninety in Tamil is thonooru (தொண்ணூறு), and nine hundred is tholayiram 'தொளாயிரம்' and so on in numerical names.

The author has extensively discussed about music in this epic. He uses the word paani 'பாணி' for the rhythm made by clapping the palm, and the same rhythm by taping the leg as thalam 'தாளம்'. The word thaal (தாழ்) in Tamil means leg. Thus, the difference between the two types of beats. He goes on to give instruction to the future musicians regarding the accompanying sound artists. He says the accompanying music must be like kite bird (புருந்து) and its shadow. Like the shadow that rises and lowers behind the bird the accompanying artists music must rise and lower according to the singer.

This epic, is the one that used the word Tamil-Nadu first. He says, தென் தமிழ் நாட்டுத் தீதுதீர் மதுரை', meaning; 'Fault dispelling southern Tamil Nadu'. Illango Adikal had coined the word around two thousand years before the modern name was given to it.

In any story there is bound to be a turning point. In Chilapathikaram the turning point is the great fair at Poompuhar called Indra Viza. Kovalan was with his lover, in the shore of confluence of River Kaveri and the great ocean. He watched the way river Kaveri which had made whole of Chola kingdom futile and merged with the ocean. Realizing the emperor had traveled far north up to Ganges conquering many countries, without becoming mad at him she had made fertile his kingdom and protecting his citizenry.

He contemplates about his loving wife Kannaki and his concubine Madhavi. He compares Madhavi to Ganga and Kannaki to Kaveri. He feels the magnanimity of Kannaki forgiving him, and feels sad and angry with himself realizing his folly. He sings:

திங்கள் மாலை வெண்குடையான், சென்னி செங்கோல் அது ஓச்சிக்
கங்கை தன்னைப் புணர்ந்தாலும் புலவாய் வாழி காவேரி
கங்கை தன்னைப் புணர்ந்தாலும் புலவா தொழிதல், கயற்கண்ணாய்,
மங்கை மாதர் பெருங்கற்பு என்று அறிந்தேன் வாழி காவேரி

Meaning of the above Tamil verse is as follows: Chola king who has a royal canopy like the famed moon, stretched his scepter to the Ganga stream to merge with her, you never loathed him Kaveri. Carpe like eyed Kaveri! I realize your magnanimity while he mingled with Ganga, was due to the great celibacy of a young woman's virtue.

Madhavi, mistook the meaning of the above verse and thought, Kovalan was singing the song having another woman other than Kannaki in his mind.

She did not fathom he was referring to his wife Kannaki who was magnanimous to forgive him, and she sang a song, as if she too was thinking of another man. By her haste, they parted ways. It was the turning point in the epic. Kovalan returns to his wife to start his life again, where he was wrongfully accused and given death sentence in Madurai.

There is a tendency for the scholars who came down from the north India try to prove, all Tamil literature originated from Sanskrit. They had gone to the extent to say Kannaki is part Tamil and part Sanskrit. Their logic is Kan + Aki =Kannaki. Kan (கண்) is the Tamil word for eye and Aki is the Sanskrit word for fire. As Kannaki caused the Madura to destroy in flame they suggest that name was given. But it was the name given to her by parents on birth. Because she had beautiful eyes, her parents named her Kanazhaki meaning Kan + Azhaki (கண்+அழகி). The sound 'ழ' got dropped, to get the name to be Kannaki. Illango Aadikal when describing Kannaki's eyes says "கயல் நெடுங்கண்ணி and கயற்கண்ணி". The meaning of the word is beautiful long round eyes in the shape of a carp fish. The Goddess of Madurai is called Menakshidevi. Meen (மீன்) in Tamil is fish, and Achi (ஆட்சி) in Tamil is eyes. In Tamil frequently a beautifully rounded eye is compared to a Carp fish, thus the name. Kannaki is a pure Tamil word Kanazhaki (கண்ணழகி) meaning one with beautiful eyes became as Kannaki. It is a pure Tamil word Kanazhaki became Kannaki.

The Jain hermit Illango Aadikal though a recluse, had left a great treasure for the Tamils to enjoy. There were three women in the epic. First of course is Kannaki who fought to restore the husband's innocence and finally took away her life seated facing north to be reunited with her husband. Madhavi a dancer by profession who lived with Kovalan as a mistress, on his abandoning her, as she was already pregnant continued living as a Buddhist nun bringing up her daughter Manimekalai as a Buddhist nun too. The story of which is narrated in the epic Manimekalai another great epic of Tamil. Thirdly the Pandya empress too died when her husband died out of guilt and lost honor. Chilapathikaram is a great epic with insight of the great Tamilian way of life two thousand years ago.

The King of Ceylon at that time Gajabahu, attended the installation of Kannaki's stone sculpture for worship. To this day the worshiping of Kannaki is done in Ceylon during Esala festival. It reminds the Thirukkural couplet # 50 which says;

He who shares domestic life, by household virtues graced,
Shall, mid the Gods, in heaven who dwell, be placed.

வையத்துள் வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்பவன் வானுறையும்
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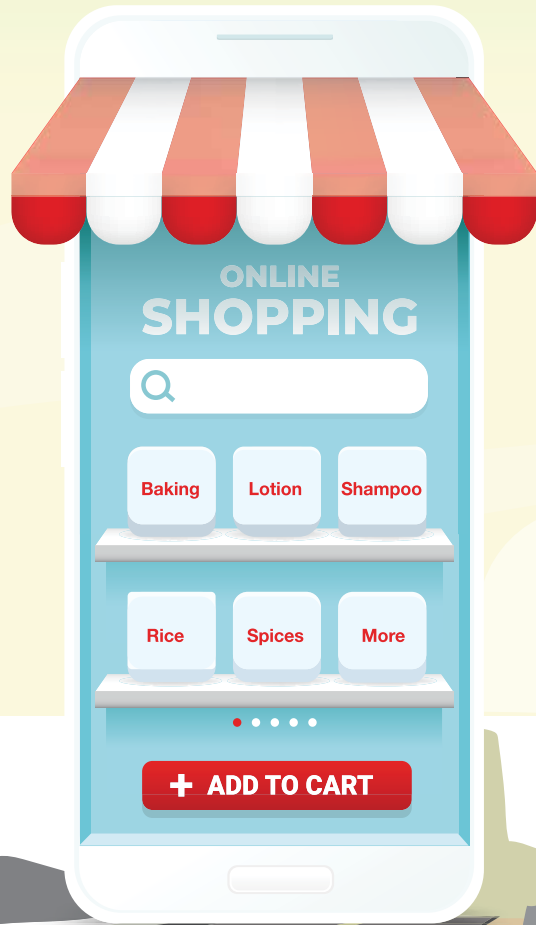
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— THE PALMYRA PALM —

The wonder palm with multifarious uses



Man climbing palm tree to collect toddy

By: J A Rajah

Palmyrah palm is a common palm found in the North and to some extent in the eastern parts of Sri Lanka. There are an estimated 11 million trees most of them are found in the provinces of Jaffna, Mannar, and Killinochchi. It is found in almost every home in rural areas and has become a symbol of Tamil culture. It has a variety of uses. They are a source of timber, roofing, leaves for roofing, fencing, material for handicrafts, fiber for making ropes, and sap for drinking. The kernel of the Palmyrah fruit (Nungu) is eaten as a delicacy and a favorite of the young children in Tamil homes. The juice of the palmyrah tree is tapped and fermented to produce toddy—a popular alcoholic drinks in the Northern provinces of Sri Lanka. One could find several huts where it is sold to the public—Anaik-

out by crazy toddy drinkers. P.K refers to the 'pamparakannale' song they sing after taking toddy. There are several young lads who make special trips to enjoy the toddy season in Jaffna from Colombo and other areas in the south. The young palmyrah roots are high in calcium and are eaten as a snack and ground (dried roots) to make flour for porridge called 'Kool'. Kool parties are common in Sri Lankan homes and it is a special supplement at liquor sessions. Even in Toronto, the root flour is got down by enthusiastic consumers for use at these sessions. Jaggery is also made from unfermented palmyrah toddy, called 'Karupanni'. 'Karupanni' is a very sweet drink that is used as a curative for those suffering from Measles, Chicken-pox, and smallpox. 'Pinnadu' is another snack made from palmyrah fruit extract and sold in markets. Now is available in Tamil grocery shops in Toronto.

The extract of the palmyrah fruit is also available in Tamil grocery stores and some of our people use it to make panangai paniyaram or snack. It is also sold in Tamil restaurants here. The palmyrah palm has also found a place in Tamil culture as the proverb: "Thinnaithunnai nanmai pettal athaip panaithunai ahak krutha vendum" - If any one grants you a millet size of goodness, you must consider it as big as a palmyrah palm.

The Palmyrah Development Board promotes a range of products from shopping bags to other handicraft products used commonly in Tamil homes. Some of the products are 'Ummal', 'Kadakam', 'Paai', 'Peddi'. These are containers used for a variety of purposes. 'Ummal' is used for buying fish in the market.

'Paai' is a mat used for sleeping in village areas. It is also laid to seat visitors at village homes. 'Kadakam' and 'Peddi' are containers used to keep rice, flour, and other such dry food materials. Palmyra palm is such a valuable tree that



Palmyra palm Fruit

in places like Delft and other village areas they were given as dowries for girls when they get married. The variety of its uses has made it such a valuable asset that rural people used it as an investment for newly married couples. Its trunk is used as a well-sweep by farmers to draw water from wells to irrigate their plants. Two or three guys get on to the top of the 'Thula' to draw out the water in large quantities to direct water to the fields. The planks made out of the tree are used in housing construction. The roof frame is made of these planks and in some cases, palmyrah leaves are used to cover the roof. Masons and workmen who build houses also use palmyrah planks to make ladders to climb up and engage in building work.

A large number of palmyrah trees were destroyed during the civil war during the confrontation between the Sri Lankan army and the militants. The public cut down trees to build bunkers to protect themselves from cell attacks and bombings. After the war was over there were efforts made to replant them in some areas. The Department of Agriculture of the Provincial government was engaged in the replantation work. Now that the Provincial governments are not functioning the Palmyrah Development should be able to take over the project and plant palmyrah seeds wherever they are needed. It is indeed a life-giving palm for the people mainly in rural areas.



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EXPERIENCING COLD WINTER

C. Kamalaharan



I see through my windows
Snow flurries settle on willows
A fantastic sight never to be missed
During early morning cold mist

Snow flurries on trees in bloom
Appear enchanting during zoom
Just before the images are picked
And the camera is instantly clicked

To witness the early morning snow flakes
One should hurry out sooner he awakes
Snow flakes falling throughout the night
Provide in the morn a delightful sight

Dazzling sights of snow flurries
Dispel ones immediate worries
As he trudges through heavy snow
Ignoring cold winds severe blow

Snow drives youths down memory lane
As they relive their past in lighter vein
And reminisce their wandering childhood
With peers in the neighbourhood

Winter snow associated with cold
Is an unwelcome visitor to the old
Whose body appears weak and frail
And all his activities seem to fail

Their only option is return to the homeland
Which is undoubtly their promised land
Reunite with peers during their childhood
And settle happily in the neighbourhood



SPECIAL FEATURE

RECTITUDE OR DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE



By: J.A. Rajah

Greatest of all virtues is the justice that gives its fair due, impartially, positively, and helpfully to all sections of the people. A just man's acquisitions will go down to his heirs, without waste and so protect them. Even if it can be put to good use, wealth acquired by unfair means is best renounced all at once. In short ill-gotten wealth should be shunned.

*“Thakkar thahavilar enpathu avaravar,
Ecchathat kanappadum”*

The just and the unjust come to be known by the reputation they leave behind. The Bible confirms this idea in its verse: ‘You will know them by their fruits; are grapes gathered from

thorns or figs from thistles?’. Loss and gain come about as a result of one's own previous actions but unswerving rectitude of mind is the ornament of the great. If one's mind deviates from rectitude and contemplates evil deeds, the inevitable consequence will be to ones' own ruin. In the eyes of the wise men of the world, the low estate of a just man is no disgrace. To hold the scales even and fair is the ornament of those who seek perfection in their rectitude. If the mind is free from bias, the words uttered are bound to be fair. If the traders guard other people's interests as their own, their trade will surely flourish. The Bible underlines this idea with the words: ‘A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight’.

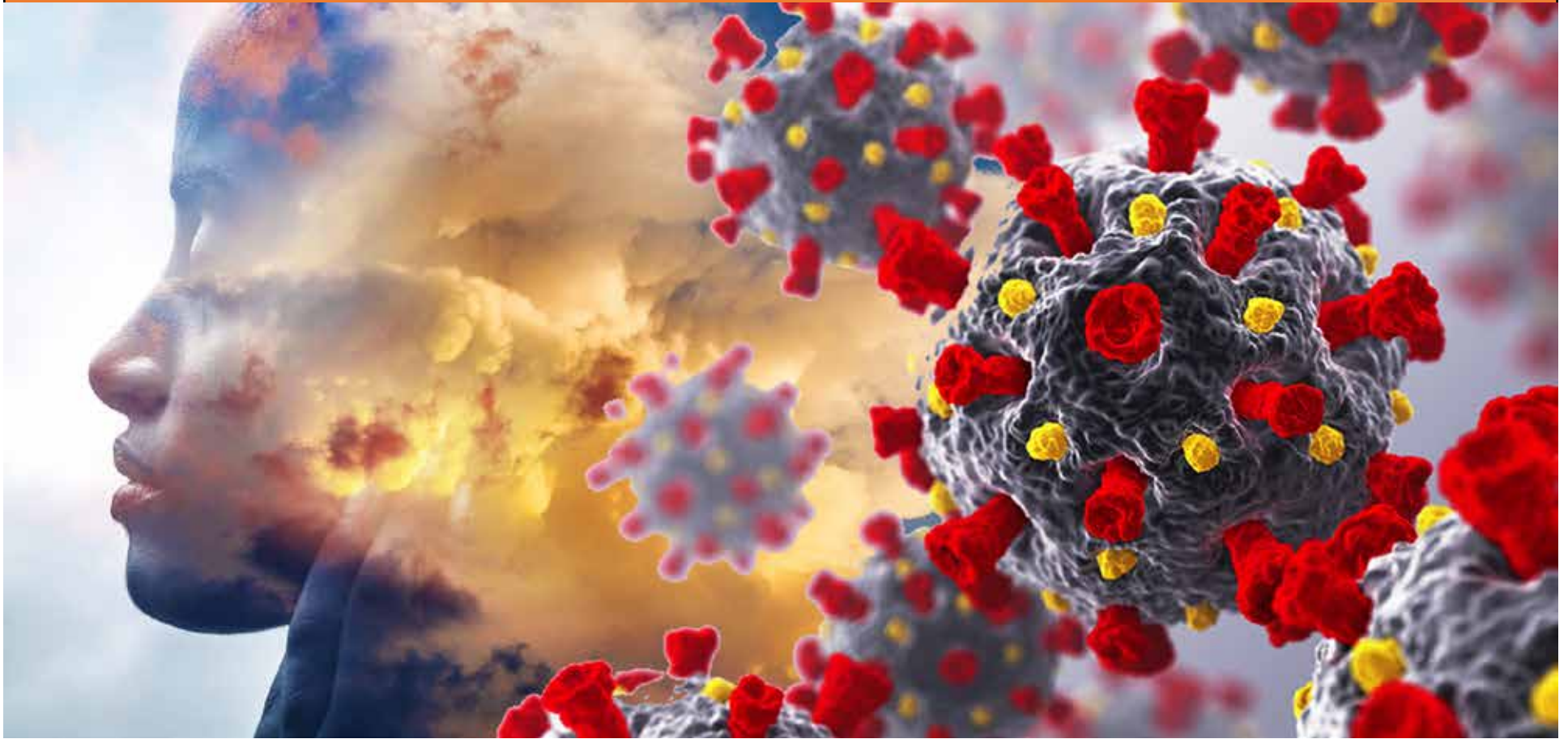


Valluvar's Views





Seeking Divine Protection in this Era of the Pandemic



By: J.A. Rajah

A. The Adverse effects of Covid-19:

The impact of Covid -19 is adversely affecting the life-style of the people. They have been subjected to some restrictions. They have to stay alone most of the time and such a scenario has caused a lot of depression and pain of mind. Many have complained of depression. It has forced them to find other virtual ways of reducing their loneliness and deprivation. It is the inmates of the long-term care homes that are mostly affected by the Covid epidemic. Many have become victims. They are also left alone without any one visiting them. During the pre-epidemic times, their relatives and friends visited them. The front-line workers in hospitals also become vulnerable to speedy infections. They have to sacrifice themselves in the middle of their service. Many of them have

resorted to social media to reduce their worries. The social media settings like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, links, and tiktok are absorbing most of their productive times. People unable to meet personally are resorting to video conferencing and zooming to realize their objectives. It has resulted to create an unhealthy mental state in the addicts. Some of them become subject to cybercrimes.

B. Seeking Divine Protection:

People belonging to shades of religious affiliations seek the help of God in times of trouble. In these times of the pandemic people always seek divine guidance and protection to stay out of trouble. When they hear continuous stories of people becoming victims of the virus they are driven to utter craziness. In India, we see large number of people attending Hindu and Muslim temples. They even

discard the restrictions to go in large numbers to places of worship. News variants of Corona virus reported in countries like U.K, France, South Africa and the US have accelerated the spread of the virus. Attempt at vaccinating the infected have not reached the expected results. There is scarcity of vaccines and countries like the U.K, US and India are spending a lot of money to produce and distribute the vaccines. There are fears in some counties about the effectiveness of vaccines. Canada has not still got enough vaccines to immunise all its people. Ebola in South Guinea, food crisis in Sudan, power, water and gas shortage in Texas are adding to the gravity of the situation. Besides all these the devastating effects of climate change in places like California, Iceland and several other problems are adding to the problems all over the world.

In these uncertain times, there are greater demands on the clergy to organize prayer meetings,

worship services and video conferencing for discussions. People gather lot of comfort and peace of mind through prayers and meditation. Pastors repeatedly refer to the Covid situation in their sermons. People feel safe and protected when they commune with God for consolation. In a recent sermon, a Pastor based his message on Psalm 27 and asserted that 'God will set us high on the rock', 'we should seek His face', 'we should wait on the Lord, 'the Lord should be our light, 'God is our salvation,' God is our stronghold', God is our strength' and stronghold', and 'God is our shield'. Jesus grants protection to all those who seek Him. His grace will take us through the pandemic and enable us to lead safe lives. The words of the Tamil lyric: 'kalangidathe, nee thavithidathe, naan kaakum thevan enrarea' ensures the provision of God for our protected life on earth. Jesus said, "Do not despair, do not tremble, I am the God that protects you".



The Evolution of the Computer

By: Mithusha Partheepan



The computer is an invention that has changed people's lives immensely. We rely on this piece of technology so much and it can be found everywhere, including railway stations, airports, shops, offices, hotels, schools, colleges, and much more. It can not only be used for schooling and research purposes, but also for watching movies, talking to others, playing video games, etc. The evolution of computers has come a long way from just being a gigantic box, with no internet, in the early 1940s. There are many inventions that have changed the possibilities that can be attained, but the computer, I believe, has revolutionized the way humans think and further enhanced their innovations to better society.

Before computers were invented, newspapers were how everyone knew about current events and issues around the world. There was no such thing as e-mail, so communication between people were done by handwritten letters. People had to wait a very long time to receive a reply, especially if they lived very far apart from the sender. When schools had homework, students didn't have the luxury to research on computers. They had to get all their information from library books and physical research journals and publications.

The first ever idea of a computer was theorized in 1822 by an English mathematician and inventor, Charles Babbage. He made a calculating machine to compute tables of numbers. It was funded by the government, but it unfortunately failed. In 1936, Alan Turing, a British scientist and a pioneer in computer science, developed a machine, similar to a computer, to break down German code during World War II. He also laid the groundwork for modern computing and had many innovations of artificial intelligence. In 1937, J.V. Atanasoff, a mathematician designed a computer that could simultaneously solve twenty-nine equations. This became

the first ever computer to retain information on its main memory. In 1958, a computer chip was invented to retain more memory than the computer Atanasoff and his graduate student made.

In 1964, Douglas Engelbart made a prototype of the modern computer with a mouse and graphical user interface. This is the first ever computer to be used by scientists and mathematicians. It then became accessible to the general public even though it was an expensive possession. The computer then began to undergo rapid development. In 1971, Alan Shugart and a team of engineers invented the "floppy disk", which allowed data to be shared among other computers. It was used as storage to keep documents and photos. On April 4th, 1975, Paul Allen and Bill Gates offered to write software for a computer company, Altair Engineering. After they were successful, they both formed their own software company – Microsoft.

In 1976, Steve Jobs founded Apple computers and created the first ever single-circuit board. Within the first decade of the 2000s, Facebook and Youtube were founded. Apple also introduced the Macbook Pro. Microsoft launched Windows 7, which offers most of the features that computers have today. Internet giant, Google, also released the Chromebook, which offered students a laptop with minimal programs that were just enough to complete most basic tasks, such as word processing, creating presentations, doing research, etc.

People who live in today's world have a computer to help them out with difficult tasks. Computers provide applications, such as Skype, Zoom, Google Meet to communicate with others. This is an extremely useful tool for us now because we are in lockdown and most public spaces are not accessible to the public. Everyone must take extra precaution when interacting with others. Education has moved online, therefore, relying heavily

on the computer. The computer has made learning much more efficient and has allowed students' education to continue without much interruption. Computers are also a tool which can be used to make profit, like creating your own business, buying and selling stocks, or selling items on Amazon.

Briefly to conclude, computers are an amazing invention that has revolutionized the previous decades

and will continue to revolutionize the future. In the beginning, the functions of a computer were very limited. It was only able to do certain things when programmed to do so. However, in modern times, almost everything can be done through a computer quickly and efficiently. The evolution of the computer will not stop and will continue to progress and improve as the years go by, to benefit society.



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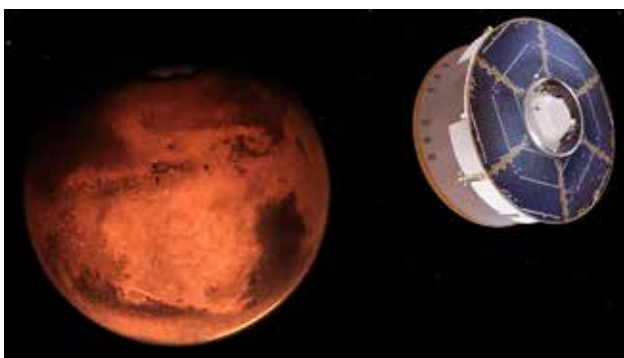


PERSEVERANCE ROVER LANDED SUCESSFULLY ON



Indian-American NASA's Scientist Dr. Swati Mohan Hand Behind the Mars Landing

By OUE Research Institute



On February 18, 2021, the Perseverance rover (formerly called Mars 2020) became the first artificial object to land on Mars since the insight Mars lander in 2018. It was the first rover landed since Curiosity touched down in 2012. Perseverance is the largest, most advanced rover NASA has sent to another world. It traveled 472 million km – over 203 days – to get to Mars. Confirmation of the successful touchdown was announced at mission control at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California, USA.

Dr. Swati Mohan

Dr. Swati Mohan led the team that developed a technology called 'Attitude Control System Terrain Relative Navigation,' which helped the rover land accurately at the calculated spot. 'Touchdown confirmed and ready to begin seeking the signs of past life,' announced Dr. Swati Mohan, head of guidance, navigation, and control operations at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in California.



It is very challenging work, better known as "seven minutes of terror. But Dr. Mohan, 38, responsible for landing the spacecraft after a seven-month, 300-million-mile journey, there was the additional responsibility of commentary. She was hyper-aware, so from the last 10 minutes on, there was no script. She had to look at the data coming down and translate and was very much on edge, trying to anticipate the next item that would show up and hoping that was what she wanted to see. She was delighted by the social media reaction to her "bindi." "Wearing a bindi for me is a part of my identity and a common occurrence. I have been wearing it since I was a child," says Mohan.

Earths & Mars Facts

Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun. It is named after the Roman god of war. The landmass of Mars is very similar to Earth, but you could jump three times higher than you can here due to the difference in gravity (Mars's gravity is 3.711m/s², and Earth's gravity is 9.8 m/s²). Mars is considered to be the second most habitable planet

Earth's is rich in nitrogen and oxygen. The atmosphere has evolved: evidence on the surface suggests that Mars was once much warmer and wetter. Earth's atmosphere is 78% nitrogen, 21% oxygen, 1.0% argon, 0.04% carbon dioxide, and small amounts of other gases. It also averages about 1% water vapor. Mars' atmosphere, however, is 95% carbon dioxide, 3% nitrogen, 1.6% argon, and it has traces of oxygen, carbon monoxide, water, methane, and other gases, along with a lot of dust.

Understanding if life could have ever existed in such conditions is one of Mars exploration's hot topics. On Earth, living organisms release much of the planet's methane. It is also the main component of naturally occurring hydrocarbon gas reservoirs, and a contribution is also provided by volcanic and hydrothermal activity. Natural biology's critical role in Earth's methane production, confirming methane's existence on Mars, and distinguishing between its potential sources is a top priority.

Has anyone visited Mars?

No human has ever set foot on Mars. The Soviets first started sending Unmanned space probes to Mars in the 1960s. The first successful space probe to orbit Mars was Nasa's Mariner 4; This happened in 1965. Soviet probes landed on the Red Planet's surface in 1971. Since numerous spacecraft have been sent to explore Mars, we will have to wait longer to send a person. NASA has its sights set on putting a man and the first woman on the Moon in 2024. After this mission, the Red Planet will be on the agenda, and we could see a human on Mars sometime in the 2030s, according to current estimates.

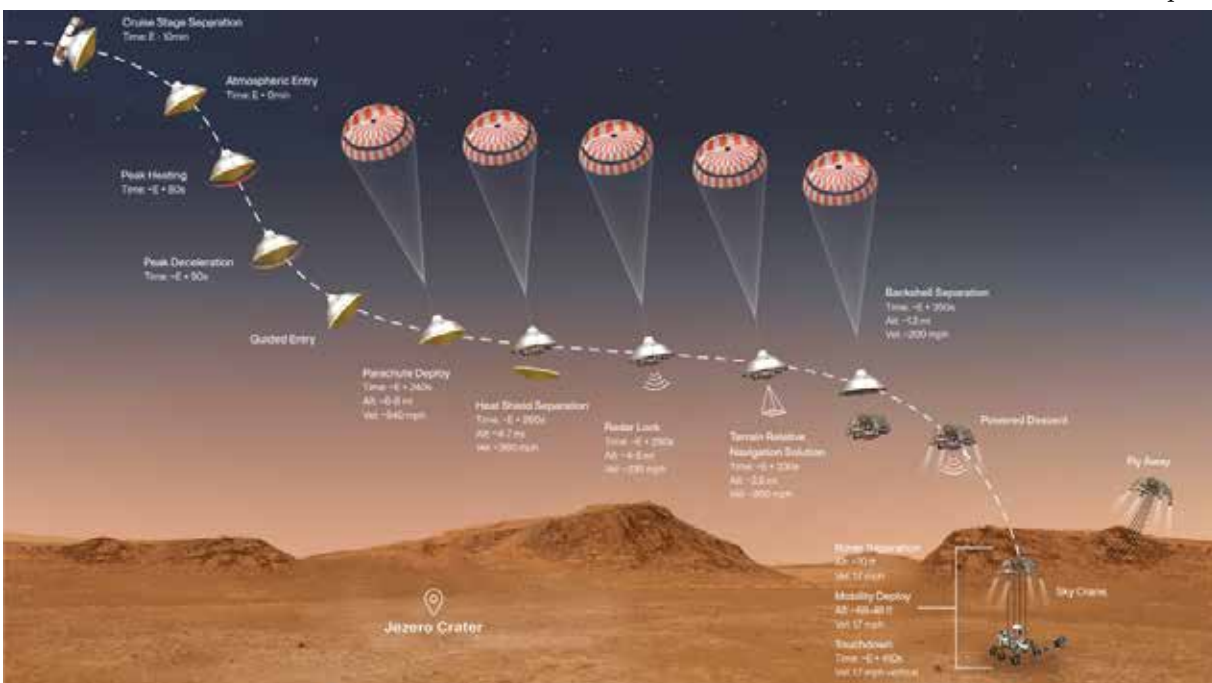


Is Mars suitable for life?

Currently, no hard evidence of past or present life on Mars has ever been found. There is evidence to suggest that the dry planet once had surface water and maybe habitable conditions. However, just because Mars has habitable conditions doesn't automatically mean there was or is life there.

Humans might have to live in domes if they colonized the planet. Mars is the second most habitable planet in our Solar System, after Earth. It is not extremely hot or cold and thought to have enough gravity for the human body to adapt. However, there is no free oxygen in the atmosphere, so humans wouldn't breathe unless they had their oxygen supply. Humans would also need to wear a pressure suit. The soil is toxic, water is limited, and you would need protection from radiation and the cold. Any life we have on Earth would be in some form of the protective bubble if it wanted to survive on Mars. Some scientists think we could change the planet's atmosphere, so it was more habitable.

Scientists ask questions, make detailed observations and develop a hypothesis. They design the Perseverance Rover and send for the experiment's mission and try to answer their questions, and test their hypothesis. From the pieces of evidence and investigation results, scientists conclude.



The Mars Landing

Perseverance set down in Jezero Crater, just north of Mars' equator. Space engineers refer to it as seven minutes of terror. But the rover hit the Martian atmosphere traveling at almost 19,000 km/h, streaking across the sky as its protective heat shield helped slow it down. Then, at an altitude of about 1.5 km, the descent module fired its engines, while a new terrain relative navigation system kicked in to identify a safe landing spot. Essentially, it scanned and analyzed the terrain below, then matched it up with maps in its database to prepare for a touchdown. A 21-meter diameter parachute is deployed to slow the craft further, bringing its descent to a crawl. Finally, the hovering-landing sky crane system began its task of lowering the rover the rest of the way to the ground for a soft, gentle landing called Touchdown.

after Earth. It takes 687 Earth days to orbit the Sun. There have been 39 missions to Mars, but only 16 of these have been successful.

The distance between Mars and Earth depends on where the planets are in their orbits of the Sun. Mars, also known as the Red Planet, should be around 55 million kilometers away from Earth at its closest, and the furthest is 400 million kilometers away from our planet. It is more complicated because space is continually changing as the two planets rotate around the Sun. Its orbital period is equivalent to 687 Earth days, with a Mars day lasting 24 hours and 39 minutes.

Earth & Mars Atmosphere

Mars is about half the Earth's size by diameter and has a much thinner atmosphere, with an atmospheric volume of less than 1% of Earth's. The atmospheric composition is also significantly different: primarily carbon dioxide-based, while



Uncomplicate your will

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

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

Wills are no different – they can be as straightforward or complicated as we want them to be. But in situations where there are multiple beneficiaries or unique circumstances, getting the right advice at the beginning is key to reducing headaches down the road.

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

It is not absolutely necessary to have a lawyer prepare your Will, but it is highly recommended. You should

also create a Living Will and a Power of Attorney that designates person(s) of your choice to make financial and health related decisions on your behalf should you become too ill to do so on your own. Generally speaking the purchase of Will kits and Power of Attorney kits at various retail stores or on line is NOT recommended, as it is easy to make mistakes. A holograph Will is one prepared by you in your own handwriting and signed by you without witnesses. Such a Will can raise many problems and should be avoided except in an emergency. The bottom line: When it comes to Wills, professional advice is well worth the cost.

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

Other examples include certain beneficiaries residing in a different jurisdiction that contain different tax regulations. Or a beneficiary has a disability and receives social assistance – receiving a lump-sum of money could cut them off from that assistance, so depending upon which province they live in, structuring the will so the inheritance is received in a



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trust (specifically a Henson trust) can ensure the money is protected while still receiving government benefits.

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

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

The correct way to create a will is to start from scratch. Avoid pre-prepared will kits. It's not that the wording in those kits is incorrect, but rather they

don't fully prepare people for what they may or may not need. This can result in a situation that becomes more complicated. Therefore, the assistance of a well-qualified lawyer – specifically one who has their Trust & Estate Practitioner (TEP) designation – in drafting your will can help to ensure your situation is being handled properly.

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

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How to Grow Your Business and Be Debt Free

How to grow your business: they're a lot of strategies you can in growing your business which if adhered to, you will pay up your debt and grow your business debt-free.

Debt is an essential part to grow your business. A business loan, line of credit or a business credit card can help your company in diverse ways. However, too much debt can stop cash flow and put your business at risk. Hence the less you owe, the more you have to reinvest in your business.

1) Marketing your business:

is the ultimate leverage. Many markets remained grounded in one-dimensional thinking habit and this is not good in the growth of a business. Marketers have the potential to significantly grow any business because marketing itself is a thing of the mind which you must have passion for. Understanding yourself evident truth is the key to making leverage and massive business growth.

2) Increase your ideas:

you have to constantly generate different marketing approaches to win the heart of your

customers because as a marketer, you can never run out of ideas.

3) Take Inventory of Your Debt:

Sort all of your debts by interest rate and monthly payment. This includes payments on business loans, lines of credit and business credit cards as well as outstanding payments due to vendors. This process can help you prioritize which debts to tackle first. Some experts recommend starting with the highest-interest-rate debt.

4) You must be persistent:

in marketing persistence almost always pays off. Marketing can leverage losing or blind ideas into something more spectacular if you have what it takes to make it happen.

5) You must be creative:

you must use multiple methods of marketing to grow your business because having or relying on just one or two marketing methods to keep your business stable, tends to keep your business resting on a shaky support which can endanger the growth of your business and it may your

initial (working) capital.

However, if your business is doing well with a single marketing strategy, it is advisable to establish more avenue of making income, for example, you can add direct sales letter, print ads, form joint ventures or implement a strategy to get free publicity using the press release and other promotional methods. You can also start following up sales letter mailings with phone calls. Limiting your business to just one or two marketing methods may expose your business to the dangers of business insecurity which could lead to you getting into debt. You have to learn to diversify in your marketing strategies so that if a method is not good enough or is not yielding much returns (profit) you can switch over to other methods.

When you develop multiple methods of marketing, you not only stand to make more money and more sales but you protect your business against failure or bankruptcy.

Above all, if you have acquired a debt (loan) to run such a business you will pay up on time and your creditors will not have the cause to any form of stress.

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TAPIOCA VADE

Necessity is the mother of invention
Very tasty tapioca vades being currently sold at the Kilinochchi Ammachchi.
Ulundu vades are not feasible anymore at the fixed price of Rs.20 per vade the women are not allowed to increase.
I used to feel sorry buying ulundu vades from them at a time when ulundu was 1500/- per kilogram. They can't change the prices but they changed the recipes. Very nicely too.
Have no complaints as a customer. Hope this becomes a staple.
The provincial ministry of agriculture set up these businesses for the women - it's a very useful venture, and they generally earn well with it. Prices are centrally controlled - I'm not sure if by ministry officials or someone else. Need to check.



Like Comment Share

DECLARE LOVE


That's quite a bold step a young man in Kilinochchi has taken to declare his love :)
We don't know his name though. Only hers.
What's the idea.
Not entirely sure about his boldness - he didnt leave his name, just hers.
In a romance resistant culture like ours where the parents are very strict especially with their daughters, the girl could potentially get in trouble.
Kilinochchi parents are a little more free than the paragons of supposed virtue in Jaffna though, so here's hoping she doesn't



Like Comment Share

PURE AND SIMPLE


I'm addicted to minty stuff - from toffees to hair oil.
So when I came across this minty face powder that promised to be cooling on my face, I just had to buy it.
Even better that its labelled a men's product.
Ladies- a hat tip. Always go for the mens products, from razors to cosmetics. It's always cheaper AND better.
Only problem - I got this free pack of fair & handsome, apparently specially formulated to break through "tough Male skin" with it. What'll happen to my soft female skin if I wear it? They first targeted only women. Then found mem were applying their wives or sisters' products - so marketed it to them too. Lol. Read a few years ago of some African activists trying to stop it because people were harming their skin with bleaching products.
It's the same here too.
Many of these products are harmful to the skin.
All I had to do was pick up and read the blue lid products price, sitting next to the puny, pink lid product's price. Even so I'm ashamed to say it took me years of buying stupid pink razors before I even tried the large blue ones - so much bigger, better and cheaper. Same goes for everything from mens face-wash to deos. I'd buy men's pants if I could but sizes are a problem. I want those deep pockets. Ours have minuscule pockets or just thread sewn in to look like pockets. Its Male dominance and subjugation of women, pure and simple.



Like Comment Share

SRI LANKANS I KNOW AND LOVE

My father passed away on this day 4 years ago.
I don't post about it anymore because I don't want to blight celebrating lovers with my grief.
But a junior from the Sri Lanka College of Journalism who visited us just before he passed and interviewed him posted a snippet about him today that I didn't know about.
Apparently this was a favourite song of his - Buddham Saranam Gachami by Mohideen Beg.
Since I didn't grow up here I didn't know about this song or even the singer.
Just as Valentines Day comes to a close, I get a profound Valentines Day Gift of Love - listening to a Buddhist devotional song sung by a Muslim, a favourite of an atheist from a Hindu background, and his daughter just discovered it thanks to a Sinhala friend.
This is the Sri Lanka and the Sri Lankans I know and love. Thank you so much for this Shivanthi Fernando:
"04 years since Sanmugam sir left us. Sanmugam Muththulingam is the father of Thulasi sister of our media college. Sanmugam sir couldn't do that even though he often called his friends parents father, mother, uncle because he was a university of knowledge. Sanmugam Sir is one among those who went to Maldives and returned back to his country after doing teaching work in Yudha Wakawanuwa. He was also a fan of Gamini Fonseka who adored Mohideen Beg's singing Buddhan Saranang Gachami. Last time when I went to Jaffna, I and Indunil met him at Jaffna Hospital. One month later he left us and I still couldn't go to Jaffna after that. Sanmugam Sir is a person who gave many information about those who have been engaged in poetry and art works since before the war. A valuable character in the memory."



Sanmugam Muththulingam with Rangan

BUSINESS IDEA

Ladies, a great business idea.
Sell a ladies line of pants with deep pockets.
It'll be a guaranteed best seller.
No-one has ever thought of it before.
Good listening skills to women complaining all the time result.
Given companies do so much research on consumer needs, I'm still waiting to hear why they keep selling women's pants with insults for pockets despite women vociferously demanding pockets for decades. Growing up, I read a lot of jokes about women needing handbags while men went free handed - as if women were so vain they were packing unnecessary items especially cosmetics in their handbags.
Since I didn't grow up around ladies wearing pants,
I didn't realise what the problem was until I started wearing them.
Except they give men what they want, never women what they want.
That so many companies put in tiny pockets or thread stitched to look like pockets into women's pants is not an accident.
They just don't want to give us pockets despite our demanding for it. High time women started clothing compa-

nies and did it themselves.
Once we have choice and show our consumer buying power, the rest will follow.
Right now, because they are all ignoring us, we have no choice but to buy their pants or stitch it ourselves - I do know women who get their clothing stitched with pockets. It's rather sad, everytime a woman manages to get clothing with pockets, she will always boast about the pockets - because its so rare.
Cant always wear cargo pants out and about - especially while going to work.



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GENIE SISTERS SAMAYAL SANTHAI



Welcome to our recipe corner! We sisters will entice you with recipes that we have fallen in love with and teach you a little Tamil along the way, as all the ingredients will have their Tamil names. Both of us love to cook and we have developed very different styles. Niranjini has a very refined palate and cooks more contemporary world cuisine with an Asian touch. Rajini is a seasoned homemaker who loves making traditional dishes for her friends and family. Follow us on Instagram: @ninjaeatsfood and @tamil_food

Eat more, learn more!

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

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

Satay chicken bites

As we come to the anniversary of this global pandemic, I see that most people are feeling fatigue of some form or the other. As we wait for life to resume to normalcy, this is a recipe that will lift your spirits and hopefully, we'll all be able to share a few bites with our loved ones.

Ingredients:

- ✓ 500g boneless chicken, cut into small pieces
- ✓ 2 ½ tbsp mild curry powder
- ✓ ½ tbsp fish sauce
- ✓ 1 tbsp sesame oil
- ✓ ¼ tsp turmeric
- ✓ ¼ cup coconut milk
- ✓ 2 tbsp light soy sauce
- ✓ 3 cloves of garlic, finely minced
- ✓ ½ tbsp grated ginger
- ✓ 1 tbsp lime juice
- ✓ 1 tbsp chilli garlic paste
- ✓ 2 tbsp chunky peanut butter
- ✓ 2 tsp honey
- ✓ 1 tsp salt

Method:

Mix all the ingredients together and let the chicken marinate with it all, ideally overnight, but at least half an hour before cooking. There are two ways you can cook this dish. First is to heat up a non-stick pan and add the marinated chicken. Let the chicken cook through, mixing it every 5 minutes or so for 10-15 minutes (depending on the size and cuts of your meat) The second is to lay it out on a baking tray and cook it under the grill, again turning every 5 minutes or so to cook evenly. It really is that simple! Garnish with sliced spring onions, or rings of red onions, and dig in.

Try making this recipe this month and

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



2021 COOKING CLASSES

Interactive group cooking classes

- 2 Jan Sambhar
- 10 Jan * Sweet and savory pongal
- 16 Jan Rasam
- 30 Jan Salmon and chicken sambal
- 13 Feb Nasi Goreng
- 27 Feb Chicken curry
- 13 Mar Chicken Biryani
- 27 Mar Kurma
- 10 Apr Puliyodharai
- 24 Apr Mango curry

Email: Tamilfoodclasses@gmail.com to book a spot

Classes are CAD \$30-\$40/ GBP £20-£30 per session | Limited spaces only

Classes will be morning sessions conducted online

*This will be an afternoon session (3-5pm EST)



MARRIAGE BUREAU

(CHRISTIAN NON R.C.) (Sri Lanka)

There are so many Christian parents who are living in sorrow that their children are unable to get their partners in life and that their marriageable age has passed. Some have even left their spiritual faith due to this reason. By the grace of God there is a good opportunity for you to select the partners through this Marriage Bureau (International). This is only an introducing Christian ministry. This is being handled with extreme confidentiality by one person only. Therefore, if you want to find a suitable partner, contact the number given below or send an email to obtain an application form.

Mrs. Swarna Edwards

Mobile No: 0775561219 (Whatsapp no)
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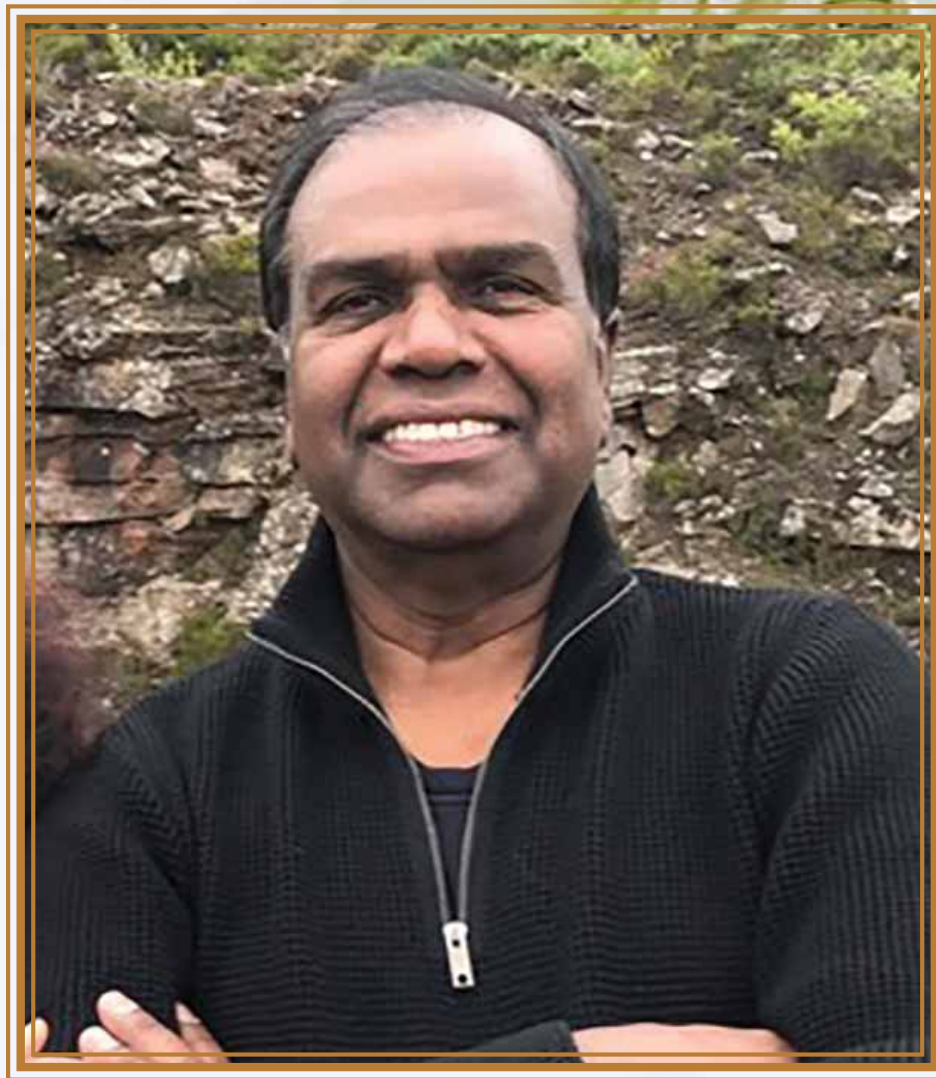


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OBITUARY



DR. CHRISTY NAVANEELAN

Dr. Christy Navaneelan of Cornwall; age 69 years, passed away peacefully at the Ottawa Civic Hospital on Thursday, February 25, 2021 surrounded by his loving and affectionate family. Christy was the beloved husband of Dr. Rachel Navaneelan, loving father of Tanya Navaneelan and Anthony Navaneelan, both of Toronto. Brother of Xavier, Joyce, Louis, Bishop Justin, Janet and Jovitha, and brother-in-law of Sivakumar, Rani, Sivananthan, Sivanes, and Ranjan. Cherished uncle of Ramani, Vasanthan, Rajeevan, Joanne, Janice, Sarah, Justin, Neil, Nicola, Rosie, Andrew, Premilla, Siva, Jack, Havishmi, Shan, Saku, Harikesh, and Anjali. Dear son of the late Gnanapragasam and the late Emily Bastiampillai.

The family wishes to extend their thanks to the staff at the Queensway-Carleton Hospital and the Ottawa Civic Hospital for their compassion and excellent care.

A private chapel service was held at Wilson Funeral Home 822 Pitt St., Cornwall (613-938-3888) on Saturday, February 27, 2021.

As expressions of sympathy memorial donations to the Canadian Liver Foundation would be appreciated by the family.

The family of Dr. Navaneelan would like to thank all relatives and friends who attended the funeral, sent messages of condolences and floral tributes at this time of their grief during the bereavement. They would also like to express their thanks to Wilson Funeral Home for the services rendered.

"His Life was gentle. The elements were so mixed in him that Nature would one day stand up and tell the whole world Here is a Man" – William Shakespeare

COMMUNITY WATCH

Achievements

Anusha Srijevanathan contributes \$10,000 for UFOT Tamil Chair establishment in memory of her uncle Dr. Perumainar Sivanesarajah

Ms. Anusha Srijevanathan has donated \$10,000 for the establishment of the Tamil Chair at the University of Toronto in loving memory of her uncle, the late Dr. Perumainar Sivanesarajah.

Her uncle was an ardent lover of Tamil arts, music, and literature and was very influential in encouraging the same appreciation within his niece.

As an alumni of U of T, Anusha is

excited to support the University and this drive as a way to honour her uncle's impact on her life.

Anusha is Executive Vice President at Benevity, a Canadian software technology.



Canadian Tamil Teen Maitreyi Ramakrishnan of Sri Lankan origin named 100 Next in Time Magazine



By Siva Sivapragasam

Canadian Tamil teenager Maitreyi Ramakrishnan who beat about 15,000 auditioners to be selected for Netflix comedy series "Never have I ever", has been named by the prestigious Time Magazine's 100 Next.

Ramakrishnan is from Mississauga, Ont., and plays the leading role of a first-generation Indian-American

dealing with the death of her father and the hormone-fuelled challenges of adolescence.

While she is of Tamil descent from Sri Lanka, with her family coming to Canada as refugees due to the civil war in Sri Lanka, Maitreyi has said that she identifies as Tamil Canadian and not Sri Lankan due to the war's impact on Sri Lankan Tamil civilians. She began acting in school plays in Grade 10 and graduated

Appointments

Mississauga's former Mayor Hazel McCallion has been named to the Order of Ontario

The Order of Ontario is the province's highest honour. It honours individuals whose exceptional achievements have left a legacy in the province, in Canada and beyond. Members of the Order of Ontario come from all walks of life, represent diverse fields of endeavour, and have played an important role in shaping the province.

The longest-serving mayor in the history of the City of Mississauga, Hazel McCallion served as the fifth mayor from 1978 to 2014. She is a fearless trailblazer and ceiling-breaker for women in hockey, women in politics, political leaders, and seniors.

Known lovingly as "Hurricane Hazel," she is now the first Chancellor of Sheridan College. She celebrated her 100th Birthday recently.



Yogeswari Patkunarajah, has been appointed as a member of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry

Yogeswari Patkunarajah, a former Mayor of Jaffna, has been appointed as a member of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry to investigate into human rights violations, serious violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and other such offences in Sri Lanka.



Saliya Pieris appointed President of Bar Association of Sri Lanka

Saliya Pieris served as the first Chairman of the OMP established in terms of 2015 Geneva Resolution meant to promote post-war national reconciliation. Pieris served as a member of the Human Rights Commission under the leadership of Dr. Deepika Udagama before receiving appointment as Chairman, OMP.

Pieris was Deputy President of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka from 2015 to 2017. He played a significant role during the protests against the impeachment of Justice Shirani Bandaranayake.

The new BASL Chief is a lecturer in law and has contributed many papers and articles on law and politics. Saliya



Pieris P.C. is an Eisenhower Fellow and is an alumni of the Dealing With the Past (DwP) Programme, Switzerland and IVLP, USA.

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from Meadowvale Secondary School. She made the decision to pursue an acting career in her last year at Meadowvale and got the role in Never Have I Ever less than a year after. She deferred her acceptance to the theatre program at York University in Toronto, which she had initially planned to attend the fall after she graduated high school, so she could shoot Never Have I Ever in Los Angeles.

"I want other Tamils all over the world to feel pride that Tamil people are making it," Ramakrishnan told NOW magazine.

"What's most extraordinary about Maitreyi is that when you're with her, you think you're simply talking to a cool, smart teenager, but later, when you see her work onscreen, you realize you were actually interacting with a great artist at the beginning of her journey." Says Mindy Kaling who is an actor, writer and producer and the co-creator of Never Have I Ever"



A Captain and a Brahmin Boy

By Somasunderam Rameswaran

“Reverend...”

Sellamma’s trident voice echoed in that temple. Thulasisankar, who was sixteen years old squatting in the sanctum of the temple was engrossed in the task of bathing the statue of Pillayar and did not hear Sellamma’s call.

“Reverend...”

Her call came forth again at a moment when Thulasisankar stream of thoughts was interrupted... And now the call fell on his ears.

He turned back uninterestingly and looked in the direction of the voice.

Sellammah stood there with a tray full of offerings for the pooja.

Thulasisankar got up. Then looking at Sellammah irritatingly told her. “There is enough time for the pooja to commence. You may go now and come later.”

“I know that. I came to hand over this to your father, the chief priest.”

“Keep it there.”

“Where to keep it, son? It’s not proper to place it on the ground. Why don’t you keep it on the pantry?” Sellammah said politely.

“You can’t do anything on your own.”

Thulasisankar stepped down from the sanctum grumblingly, wiping his hands on the vetti.

Sellammah glanced at Thulasisankar with brimming love. Smiling amenably she inquired, “Thulasi, aren’t you going to school today?”

“No”, he replied unenthusiastically.

“Why son?”

Thulasisankar did not respond

“Tell me why son..... Oh! I know, I know..... You sat the ordinary level examination. Isn’t it so? Did you fare well?”

“Not so bad”, he replied.

“Will you get eight distinctions?”

Thulasisankar was upset over this question. All this time he spoke irritatingly and halfheartedly. Now his face became grim. His eyes expressed despair.

“Was there proper environment for me to study? My elder brother died. Mother too died. Elder sister quarreled with brother-in-law and had come back home. Father who should have acted with courage and sense of responsibility behaves like a child. Was this all? There was no light. And curfew too was in force. Could anyone do his studies in a situation like this?”

Sellammah did not say anything.

She had her eyes fixed on him and allowed some

“If I send my wife to cook for you all, who will cook for me?” He spluttered. Then he left loose all the respectful words at his command and bade an ignorant good bye to Thulasisankar.

time to pass.

Then as it reminding herself of something she asked, “Is Yoges back with you all?”

“Yes...”

Sellammah put forth a long breath.

“Your father going beyond his means provided thumping dowry to find a bridegroom for your sister Yoges. All for the pomp of a white collar

job. But, what use? Everything is now a waste. Unfortunate girl. A disrupted life for her at this young age.”

As Sellammah proceeded to lament this way the nerves underneath Thulasisankar’s eyes showed a tremor.

“If I see that fellow...”

“Who?”

“My brother-in-law, Yoges’ husband... I will...” His voice went up several octaves. But, he did not put forth the remainder.

Sellammah glanced at him silently, did not utter word.

“That fellow will be made to pay for every drop of tear that my sister sheds...” Thulasisankar cried, consternation writ large on his face.

“How?” Sellammah asked perplexed.

“I’ll tell you how when the time comes... Not now.” Thulasisankar said decisively.

“Alright, I want to go home. Hold this tray. Tell your father to do an archana for pooram constellation.”

Sellammah stretched the tray.

The grimacing in Thulasisankar’s face disappeared slowly. “Who in your family was born in Pooram constellation?”

“Why? It is Indran.”

“How is Indran getting on? Is he still in Germany?”

“Yes. Was he your class mate, or...”

“No. He was my elder brother’s class mate.”

“Your brother also met an untimely death.”

“Yes...”

Thoughts about his brother crept into Thulasisankar’s mind.

Four months back Thulasisankar’s elder brother left the village after raising a loan of five lakhs of rupees on the mortgage of their house. Soon there after his corpse was one of the several that were seen floating in the seas of Kilali. News of his death came as a rude shock to Mangalanayaki, Thulasisankar’s mother. She scorned frequently by the trauma of that gruesome thoughts. Loud cries and lamentation were daily occurrence.

Unable to bear the sorrow, she even attempted to take her life by self immolation. She never became normal thereafter. Lamentation and mournful cries continued for a month. She was sleepless and eschewed food. Then she fell sick and became bed ridden. No one was near her to nurse her. She could not cook meals for Thulasisankar and others.

Sunderarajah Sarma tried his hand at cooking for two days. But, the meals were not palatable and they all had to remain with half filled stomach.

No one came forward to cook meals for them, according to the requirements of their custom. Thulasisankar couldn’t bear up this situation. He went looking for his elder sister, Yoges. Her husband was a stubborn man.

“If I send my wife to cook for you all, who will cook for me?” He spluttered. Then he left loose all the respectful words at his command and bade an ignorant good bye to Thulasisankar.

When Thulasisankar stepped out of his sister’s house, he heard his sister weeping bitterly. He came back home and was on empty stomach the whole day. Thoughts about his sister plunged him in sorrow.

He had sorrowful reminiscence of his sister’s



hints about cruel treatment by her husband.

“Why does your husband beat you?”

Thulasisankar had once asked his sister.

“All because of the dowry. He always complains that the dowry given to him is not enough.”

“A petty clerk. Isn’t the dowry we gave him enough for him?” Thulasisankar had asked her scornfully.

After that incident it was one Seethadevi who cooked for them. They had to be contended with a cup of coffee or tea in the morning hours. For the night what remained of the sweet meats made for the temple helped them to fill their stomach. Thulasisankar’s hunger was never saturated. He was eternally hungry and frequently experienced giddiness. Once he swooned and fell down.

Sunderarajah Sarma looked up helplessly when the doctor who examined Thulasisankar told that he was weak and must be given nutritious food.

Thulasisankar’s condition did not improve. He was weak and lifeless.

Mangalanayaki never recovered. During her last days she was on liquid foods. One day when Thulasisankar was away from home at school and Sunderarajah Sarma had gone to the market, Mangalanayaki had breathed her last. Thulasisankar who rushed home with his uncle could see only the body of his mother. He could not bear it up. He was shocked and felt claustrophobic. And his eyes fixed on the dead body of his mother. Unable to bear the sorrow he wanted pour down tears and bring down the liveries of his heart. But, he had hard hatredness that moment. He remained thin without a drop of tears.

On the funeral day Thulasisankar was moving like a machine, till his mother’s body was removed to the cemetery for cremation. When the pyre was set on fire, the flames rose high and with it gushed all the sorrow in his heart. He could not control himself any longer. Crying loudly he rolled on the ground.

Just one month after that Yogeswary arrived

SPECIAL FEATURE



home with injuries on her hands and legs.

"I have to come to stay home. I will not go back."

Thulasisankar flabbergasted and shocked stood stalled like a pillar.

The demise of Thulasisankar's elder brother followed by his mother death and the pitiful scene of his sister remaining single at home... all had sown seeds of hatred in him.

Once later Thulasisankar went to his brother-in-law and pleaded with him to take back his sister. Raising firewood at him the brother-in-law chased him away.

This incident aggravated the hatred germinating in him.

Thereafter wherever he went, he beat up trees on the way side with a stick which generated a kind of joy in him.

As days passed he grew to bring a sadistic pleasure in him. He was driven to the cruel acts of stoning stray dogs, cats, and cattle once he enjoyed seeing the next door cat killed by consuming milk poisoned by him. And again a stray dog was beaten up with an iron rod and left with a broken leg. In doing all these, he derived immense pleasure.

Gnanalinga Sarma who observed and heard of all this act of his grandson Thulasisankar with a sense of sorrow and worry came to a decision. He got Thulasisankar before him.

"Thulasi, why are you torturing these poor speechless animals?" He asked him openly.

"What are you saying grandpa?" Thulasisankar asked pretending to be innocent.

"I have been observing your ways for some time. You have been torturing all kinds of innocent creatures, dogs, cats, cattle. You poisoned and killed the next door cat. Do you take pleasure in their pain? Why are you behaving like this?" The grandfather crooned softly.

Thulasisankar never expected these words full of accusations in a soft tone to come from his grandfather. He first tried to deny them. But, pressed hard he admitted the truth. His eyes were dim with tears.

"Tell me what is in your mind. I'll provide a remedy." Gnanalinga Sarma said.

He pointed and said: "I don't know grandpa. Whenever I see these animals I am furious. That is why I beat them up and I poison them."

"Thulasi, you are a small child. It is a sin to torture these innocent creatures. What wrong have they done to you? Is it because they cannot turn back and question your atrocity that you are doing this to them?"

Thulasisankar remained speechless.

"Was it after the death of your elder brother you have turned like this?"

Gnanalinga Sarma asked Thulasisankar sympathetically.

"Yes, Grandpa why did they kill my brother at all?"

Gnanalinga Sarma gave his grandson a gentle stroke to console him. "Thulasi, That is karma. Neither you nor I could have prevented it. It is destined that your brother should die at that young age. Similarly your mother. You now looked forward to live in the way that has been designed for you. Live an honest and clean life. Give greater emphasis for lone than to greed."

Gnanalinga Sarma's words were clear and simple. Yet, Thulasisankar could not grasp its essence fully. Nor was he able to analyze and accept it. Whenever occasion arose he reminded himself of it and debated it within himself. He could never come to a decision. Nor was he able to give up his cruel habits.

"What are you thinking about so deeply?" Sellammah cut Thulasisankar's frail thought and brought him back to the real world.

"I was thinking about my brother."

Thulasisankar mumbled in a weak and faint fond.

"If your brother had not been killed he would now be in Canada, isn't it?" Sellammah questioned.

"Yes, we lost our brother and also the money."

"Is the house still bonded in mortgage?"

Thulasisankar emitted a long breath. "You know we have to pay six and a half lakhs with interest.

Only then we can release the house from the mortgage... Could this be done in our life time?"

"No, How could you?" Sellammah inquired.

"Elder brother did a foolish thing. My mother warned him not to go. But, he did not heed the warnings." Thulasisankar replied in distrust.

"Do children listen to their parents now a days." Sellammah then looked at the sanctum. "You do your job, son. I am getting late. I'll not be there for the pooja. Tell your father to do archani for

"My elder brother was killed. My mother became insane over it and she too died and elder sister is separated from her husband and living with us."

Pooram constellation." So saying Sellammah left the place.

Thulasisankar proceeded to the pantry with the tray. Leaving the tray there he came back to the sanctum. He looked at the Pillaiyar statue for a while. Many feeling gathered in his mind. Anger, irritation, fury denotation all caught up on it.

The figure of his deceased mother and brother was projected in his mental vision. He became incensed. His blood was boiling.

Right at that time a dog had came and was wagging its tail strolling at the door step. Thulasisankar sprung and picked up a stone. The dog seeing it, took to its heels.

Laughter gushed from within. And Thulasisankar laughed loudly. Then the thunder of a 'bomb' was heard at a distance. As such things were recurrent common it never disturbed his mind. But, that day it was a continuous one exploring of bombs was heard repeatedly and there was rush of the vehicles.

"Those fellows are coming.... those fellows are coming..." People were seen running in all directions screaming.

Has the army come out of the camp? Thulasisankar posed for a moment in fear. But, he did not allow the fear to grip his mind. He continued with his job at hand.

He then heard the front door being knocked at.

Who could that be? Thulasisankar wondered? May be some one seeking refuge in the temple. Is it not the temple that had given refuge to so many people on so many occasions? Some refugees may have this time too, he thought to himself.

Thulasisankar did not sort out things with clarity. He ran towards the front door and opened it. Gosh! The military troops stood there. Quite contrary to his expectations his blood froze for a moment. He then attempted to close the door in state of confusion. But, the captain amidst the troop blocked it with his right foot.

Thulasisankar frowned at the captain in anger. The captain took no notice of it and gave Thulasisankar a scornful look. He then pointed his gun straight at Thulasisankar's face. Thulasisankar's body tormented. Heart was beating with unseen speed. All this for a few seconds. He then ran towards the sanctum screaming "aiyo". He could run only a few feet. The rattle of the gun fire shook the temple walls. He then stopped and turned back and looked at the captain.

Captain was holding the gun to the air. It was emitting smoke.

Fear gripped, Thulasisankar. He was shredding.

Captain gave him signal to come.

Thulasisankar was afraid to go towards him. He stood there and looked at the captain fearfully.

"Come here you fellow." Captain thundered

Thulasisankar turned his eyes in all directions

and looked at the captain. He took a few steps forward and then stopped.

"Come here you fellow", the captain roared once again.

Thulasisankar's heart was beating fast. He did not advance. He feared being shot at.

Captain was losing his patience.

He pointed the gun once again straight at Thulasisankar face.

Yet, Thulasisankar remained there without moving an inch.

Thoughts of his elder brother and mother occurred in his mind. He felt as if he was being called by them.

Captain became grim faced. He placed his index finger on the trigger of the gun.

Thulasisankar closed his eyes and held his fist tight and stood with his chest erect.

A few minutes passed. He expected bullets to pierce his body. But, nothing happened.

Thulasisankar opened his eyes.

He saw the captain smiling at him amiably and calling him, "Come here..."

Thulasisankar remained where he was.

"Come my dear boy..." Captain called him with the movement of his eyes.

It was like a brother elder to him calling him 'thamby'. He walked towards the captain.

"Come soon." Captain shouted in Tamil.

Thulasisankar went near the captain and had a good look at him.

A six feet stature. The captain gave a pampering pinch on Thulasisankar's cheek. It reddened.

Captain looked at him interestingly.

"Are you not afraid son?"

"No."

"Why?"

"I am not afraid of anything now."

"Why is that?"

"I am disgusted with life."

"At this age?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"There are many reasons".

"Tell me everything one by one."

"My elder brother was killed. My mother became insane over it and she too died and elder sister is separated from her husband and living with us."

"You father?"

"He is alive. But, he behaves irresponsibly. He only knows to conduct poojas. Nothing else. After mother's death he doesn't do that even properly." Thulasisankar continued rather naively.

"How did your brother die?"

"He was shot and killed at Kilali."

"Oh!" Captain did not speak further. His face displayed sympathy.

"I feel sorry for you..."

Captain did not say anything. He moved away from that place. Other troops followed him.

Thulasisankar stood near the door and watched them going without an eyelash.

Sunderarajah Sarma came dashing.

"Thulasi, did those fellows do anything to you?" He asked hurriedly.

"No appa. That captain is a good person. He spoke to me nicely."

"What did he say?"

"Not much." Thulasisankar glossed over. At this moment Gnanalinga Sarma came there.

He patted his grandson with affection. "Thulasi, what happened?"

Thulasisankar recited the incident. "When the captain called me I did not go. You know how angry he was. I thought he will shoot me. But, he didn't do it. Why grandpa? Why didn't he shoot me?" Thulasisankar asked innocently.

Gnanalinga Sarma smiled gently. "As for the captain, you were a speechless innocent creature like cats, cattle and dogs. It is perhaps for that reason you were spared by the captain although he was angry."

Thulasisankar never ill-treated animals thereafter.



SPECIAL FEATURE

THE BHAGAVAD GITA : Guide to Eternal Message of Spiritual Wisdom and Life-Lessons

Compiled by : **KIDAMBI RAJ**

Introduction

Bhagavad Gita is the sacred *song of God* composed about 200 BC and forms a section of the sixth book of the Mahabharata, an important Sanskrit epic in the Hindu tradition that recounts a lengthy struggle and brief war between two sides of the Bharata family, the Pandavas and the Kauravas over their kingdom of Hastinapura. Incorporated into Mahabharata and contains a discussion between Krishna and the epic's hero Arjuna on human nature and the purpose of life.

Bhagavad Gita is a well-known gospel. Bhagavad Gita presents a synthesis of Hindu ideas about dharma, theistic bhakti, and the yogic ideals of moksha. The text covers jnana, bhakti, karma, and Raja Yoga (spoken of in the 6th chapter) incorporating ideas from the Samkhya-Yoga philosophy.

Srimad Bhagavad Gita is a divine song sung by Lord Krishna. The Gita gives you the unique way of life that eases off your tension and you enjoy a happy life. Gita, apart from being a religious scripture, is a scripture of life as well. It is a way of life based on faith and devotion. The moral message of Bhagavad Gita is that, either you can perform your actions with attachment thinking that you are the doer or you can perform the same without attachment by thinking that God/ Nature (Prakriti) is performing the actions. Considered to be a doctrine of universal truth, Bhagavad Gita has long been influencing people not only in India but around the world also. The Bhagavad Gita teaches us various important principles that relate to work, life, religion, philosophy and spirituality.

Very few might have not heard the name, Bhagavad Gita, for it is almost universally accepted as a scripture, not merely in a sense of holiness or sanctity from the point of view of a religious outlook, but as what has been regarded as a guide in our day-to-day life, which need not necessarily mean a so-called religious attitude of any particular denomination. The Bhagavad Gita is also considered as an essence of all the scriptures - *Sarva-Sastramayi Gita*. It is said many a time that all the Sastras, all the lessons that we can have anywhere can be found here in some form. Bhagavad Gita should be taken as Rajaji said, as a scripture of Hinduism complete in itself and not as a mere episode in Kurukshetra Battle in Mahabharata. The divine message of Bhagavad Gita is universal. Its inspiring appeal is to all humanity.

Bhagavad Gita says that one need not worry about the future nor should pay attention to the past. It says that one has

control only over the present and so, should live the present to the fullest. Bhagavad Gita is such an important scripture that it can help us to get out of the cycle of birth and death. Anyone who recites Bhagavad Gita with devotion will go to the spiritual world at the time of death. ... The Bhagavad Gita is so powerful that even by repeating half a sloka, one can go to the spiritual world.

Importance of Bhagavad Gita in This Day and Age

Bhagavad Gita gives timeless wisdom as it relates to the challenges, trials and tribulations one faces in one's own life, so that one can live a life that is fearless, full of purpose and deep happiness. The eternal wisdom of Bhagavad Gita covers areas like, Peace, Freedom, Happiness, Love, Destiny, Fearlessness, Being Spiritual but not Religious and on Karma.

On Peace: We all want peace in the world, in our community and in our family and we have all heard that peace begins with each one of us. But we do not know how we embody that peace we seek. In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna directly speaks about the need for peace, saying clearly that there is no happiness without peace. He also, lays out the path of attaining that supreme, spiritual peace that we long for.

On Freedom: We read about freedom, we dream of freedom, hope for freedom, we may even fight for freedom but do not understand what freedom really is? Why is it that even when we free ourselves from one form of oppression, we simultaneously entrap ourselves in another one of bondage? Can we ever actually free ourselves? In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna examines the bonds that enslave the soul and shines a light on achieving ultimate freedom by living a spiritually inspired life through its wisdom.

On Happiness: Everyone naturally desires happiness and to be happy is part of our intrinsic nature, yet it seems that we cannot have happiness without distress. We regularly experience that there is no pleasure without pain. Any happiness that comes our way also seems fleeting, dissolving like mist as we grasp it. In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna offers a unique perspective on happiness, illuminating the path to living a life full of deep, transcendental joy.



On Love: Love is the topic of endless, movies, poems, books and songs. It is our highest source of happiness and the cause of our deepest misery. We long for it, pursue it, hold it tightly and mourn in passing. It is our greatest need and it is at the very essence of who we are. Bhagavad Gita speaks of a love that never withers with the passing of the time, that endures beyond death itself. In Bhagavad Gita, we uncover the secret of the greatest love of all.

On Destiny: What is my destiny? Is it controlled by the stars? Is it divinely ordered? Or is it simply an arbitrary course of events? Furthermore, is destiny set in stone; a fixed series of events that are inevitable, or do we play a role in determining our future and can we change our destiny? In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna examines the natural laws that determine destiny, and uncovers the keys that allow each person to break free from fate and set their personal course for freedom.

On Fearlessness: What are we afraid of? We have so many fears, large and small. Fear of the dark, fear of loss, fear of death. The crippling shadow of fear follows us through life, sometimes lurking at the edge of our consciousness completely overwhelming us. Fear holds us back from living a full and happy life. Is there a way to live fearlessly? Like a beacon shining in a dark night, Bhagavad Gita illuminates the path to freedom from the most dangerous fear.

On Being Spiritual but not Religious: In the world today, many people have rejected religious dogma and organized belief systems. Yet we find ourselves with a God-shaped hole in our hearts and a longing for connection with something or someone greater than ourselves. In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna speaks to this modern dilemma. Unlike religion, which involves belief in a particular faith, the process of yoga as taught in Gita, requires a person to embark on a

SPECIAL FEATURE



personal spiritual voyage of discovery and experience direct perception of the truth.

On Karma: Most people have at least a passing understanding of the concept of karma. The idea that what you do to others will come back to you, may have encouraged you to modify your behaviour with the idea of attracting more good karma than bad karma. But did you know that even “good karma” has a serious downside? If even good karma is not desirable, how can we live in this world without creating karma? In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna teaches the yogic path of Karma yoga, also known as the “art of all work”, whereby you can achieve complete freedom from all karma.

One legend says that the famous 18 steps leading to the sanctum sanctorum of the famous Sabari Ayyappan temple represents the 18 chapters of Bhagavad Gita. The final 18 steps leading to the sanctum sanctorum rightly making it the Moksha Sanyaasa. Given below are some of the notable verses of this sacred hymn of spiritual wisdom and life-lessons.

Chapt. 2 - Verse 12:

*Na Tvevham Jatu nasam Na Tvam Neme Janadihipah
Na Caiva Na Bavisyamha
Sarve Vayam Atah Param*

Certainly, never at any time, did I NOT exist, Nor you, Nor all these kings. And Certainly Never, shall we cease to exist in the future. (God and all of us existed all the time and will exist for ever. The Spirit or *Atma* is permanent, much different from the body).

Chapt. 2 - Verse 38:

*Sukha dukkhe Same krutva
Labhalabhau JayaJayau*

*Tato Yuddhaya Yujuyasva Naivam
Papam Avapsyasi*

Being equally poised in happiness and unhappiness, Profit and loss, victory and defeat;

Thereafter prepare to battle and in this manner, you will not incur sinful reaction. (Don't get over excited in happiness, profits or victory; or dejected on loss or defeat. Face life in a poised way).

Chapt. 2 - Verse 47:

*Karmanya Evadikaras te ma phaleshu
Kadachana*

*Ma karma-phala-hetur bhur ma sango
stva akarman*

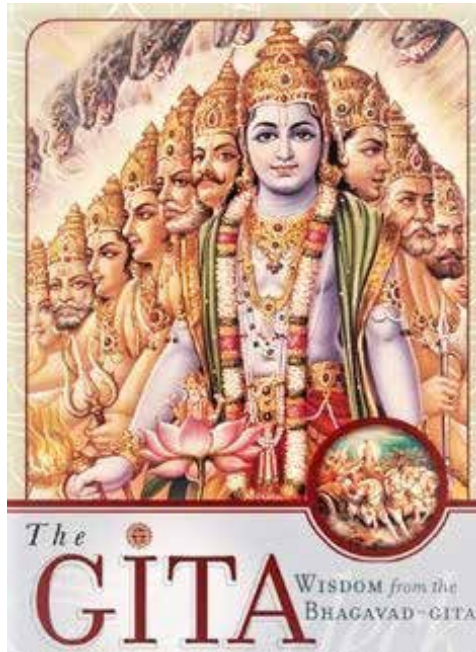
You certainly have the right for prescribed activities; but never at anytime in their results. You should never be motivated by the results of the actions, nor should there be any attachment in not doing your prescribed activities.

Chapt. 4 - Verse 7:

*Yada hi Dharmasya glanir bhavati
bharata*

*Abhyukthanam adharmasya
tadatmanam Srujami aham*

Whenever and wherever a decline of righteousness and predominance of unrighteousness prevail, at That Time I MANIFEST Myself personally, O descendant of Bharata!! Says God Krishna!!!

**Chapt. 4 – Verse 8:**

*Paritrnaya Sadhunam vinasaya Cha
Dushkrutam*

*Dharma-Samsthapanarthaya
Sambhavami Yuge*

For the protection of good persons (devotees) and annihilation of miscreants and to fully establish righteousness, I appear in millennium after millennium.

Chapt. 9 – Verse 26:

*Patram Pushpam Phalam Thoyam yo
me bhaktya prayachati*

*Tad Aham bhakti-upahrutam asnami
prayatatmanaha*

Whoever with loving devotion offers unto me, a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I affectionately accept that devotional offering from that pure hearted being. (simple but loving offerings please me).

Chapt. 18 – Verse 66:

*Sarva Dharman Parityajya Mam ekam
Saranam vraja*

*Aham tvam sarva-papebhyo
mokshayisyami ma suchah*

Give up all kinds of righteousness and surrender unto me exclusively; I will deliver you from all sinful reactions; don't worry in despair. (In essence, no need to confuse over which path of righteousness to choose etc., and just surrender unto me totally. I will protect you from all, including your predisposition).

This is what the world-renowned intellectuals of varied fields had said about BHAGAVAD GITA

Lord Warren Hastings**(1754-1826)**

First Governor General of the British India
I do not hesitate to pronounce the GITA as a performance of great originality, of sublimity of conception, reasoning and diction almost unequalled; and a single exception amongst all known religions of mankind.

Wilhelm von Humboldt**(1767-1835)**

Minister of Education and the founder of the Science of Linguistics The GITA,

the most beautiful, perhaps the only time philosophical song existing in any known tongue – the deepest and loftiest thing the world has to show.

Ralph Waldo Emerson**(1803-1882)**

Greatest Amer. Author, Essayist, Lecturer and an Unitarian Minister
BHAGAVAD GITA was the first of books; it was as if an empire spoke to us ... the voice of an old intelligence, which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us.

Henry David Thoreau**(1817-1862)**

Greatest American Philosopher, Writer and a Social Critic
In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonic philosophy of the BHAGAVAD GITA, in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial ... even our Shakespeare seems sometimes youthfully green and practical merely!

Swami Vivekananda**(1863-1902)**

Great Yogi, Philosopher and a charismatic orator
BHAGAVAD GITA is a bouquet composed of the beautiful flowers of spiritual truths, collected from the Vedas and the Upanishads.

A.G. George Russell**(1867-1935)**

Eminent Poet, Artist and a leading figure in the Irish Literary Renaissance
The BHAGAVAD GITA and the UPANISHADS contain such god like fullness of wisdom on all things that I feel, the authors must have looked with calm remembrance back through a thousand passionate lives, full of feverish strife for and with shadows, ere they could have written with such certainty of things which the soul feels to be sure.

Mahatma Gandhi**(1869-1948)**

Father of Indian Nation, Philosopher and Writer
The BHAGAVAD GITA calls on humanity to dedicate body, mind and soul to pure duty and not to become mental voluptuaries at the mercy of random desires and undisciplined impulses.

Swami Aurobindo**(1872-1950)**

A Yogi and a Great Philosopher
BHAGAVAD GITA is a true scripture of the human race, a living creation rather than a book, with a new message for every age and a new meaning for every civilization.

Hermam Hesse**(1877-1962)**

German Poet and Novelist and a winner of Nobel Prize for Literature in 1946
The marvel of BHAGAVAD GITA is its true beautiful revelation of life's wisdom, which enables philosophy to blossom into religion.

Albert Einstein**(1879-1955)**

Greatest Scientist, Philosopher & Nobel Prize for his Theory of Relativity
When I read BHAGAVAD GITA and reflect about how God created this universe, everything else seems so superfluous.

Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan**(1888-1975)**

Philosopher, Educationist and President of the Republic of India
The chief problem facing us today is the reconciliation of mankind. BHAGAVAD GITA is specially studied for this purpose, as it attempts to reconcile varied and apparently antithetical forms of the religious consciousness and emphasizes the root conceptions, which are neither ancient nor modern, but belong to the very flesh of humanity, past, present and future.

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru**(1889-1964)**

First Prime Minister of India
BHAGAVAD GITA deals essentially with the spiritual foundation of human existence. It is a call to meet the obligations and duties of life; yet keeping in view the spiritual nature and grander purpose of the universe.

Aldous Huxley**(1894-1963)**

Noted English Novelist, Critic and Philosopher
BHAGAVAD GITA is the most systematic statement of spiritual evolution of endowing value to mankind. It is one of the most clear and comprehensive summaries of perennial philosophy ever revealed. Hence its enduring value is subject not only to India but to all humanity.

Juan Mascara**(1897-1987)**

Eminent Scholar and taught at Oxford University
The greatness of BHAGAVAD GITA is the greatness of the universe, but even as the wonder of the stars in heaven only reveal itself in the silence of the night, the wonder of this great poem only reveals itself in the silence of the soul.

Julius R. Openheimer**(1904-1967)**

World's greatest Physicist & known as Father of the Atom Bomb
The juxtaposition of western civilization's most terrifying scientific achievements with the most dazzling description of the mystical experience is given to us by BHAGAVAD GITA, India's greatest literary monument.

Robert-Pol Droit**(1949- ...)**

Eminent French Writer and Philosopher
The Greeks loved Indian Philosophy so much that Demetrios Galionos even translated BHAGAVAD GITA. There is absolutely not a shadow of doubt that the Greek knew all about Indian Philosophy.



DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION

Durham Tamils Association Serving Our Community



DTA SERVING DURHAM TAMILS DURING THESE UNPRECEDENTED AND CHALLENGING TIMES

Durham Tamils Association is always looking for ways to help our members, youth, and

our seniors. During this pandemic period and this winter, we are continuing to provide free virtual activities almost every day. Thank you to our fantastic volunteers who do not expect anything and are serving the community voluntarily. DTA is truly grateful for your continued support. Also, DTA's Tamil school continues to provide virtual Tamil classes for our students.

Durham Tamil Association Virtual Valentine's Day & Family Day Celebration

During this program, people came and sang a song, told poems, and gave warm Valentine's & Family Day wishes. Everyone participated in games and enjoyed the program. To participate in the games, they brought their own devices. It was happy to see a lot of families virtually and the program went very well.

Durham Tamil Association is helping to fundraise for Tamil Chair

Tamil School

Durham Tamil Association's Virtual Tamil school has been running very successfully. As per many requests, we started some additional new Tamil classes.

- Ages 4 & up
- Tamil Credit Course
- Teens & Adults

Please register online at durhamtamils.org

Fill out the form and provide your information under "Virtual class registration".

This is a great initiative as Durham Tamil Association represents the Tamil Community of Durham. We are very proud to help to raise funds for this amazing initiative.

More detailed information can be found on our website. Please visit <https://www.durhamtamils.org/tamil-chair-fundraiser.html> for more details.

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 our sponsors for your 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 YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIQinT8OO0o>

DTA's Free Drop-in Virtual Homework Club

JK, SK & Grade 1-8

subjects: Math, Language Arts, French, Science, History Etc...

Drop-In Time: Monday to Friday (time may wearable)

This session is not limited to Homework help, but also for additional help on other subjects that volunteers may help with. A big thank you to our youth volunteers.

Register online: durhamtamils.org

DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION

DROP IN Free VIRTUAL HOMEWORK HELP!

SCIENCE | MATH | FRENCH | LANGUAGE ARTS

REGISTER ON LINE www.durhamtamils.org

HISTORY | Grade 1 - 8

Monday To Friday

Additional Activities : Short story making, etc

Mon - 5:30-6:30pm Thu - 4:30 - 5:30pm

Tue - 7:30 - 8:30pm Fri - 6:00 - 7:00pm

Wed 7:30 - 8:30pm

DTA's Presents ESL classes For Adults

English as a second language

Register Online: durhamtamils.org

Instructor: Abirami Srichandradas

Register ASAP and classes will begin soon.

DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION PRESENTS!

English as a Second Language

adult esl

FREE

TEACHER - ABIRAMI SRICHANDRADAS

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

ESL CLASSES FOR ADULTS

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

CLASSES WILL BE HELD WEEKDAYS AFTER 7PM

DAY - TBA

TIME : TBA

REGISTER NOW!

www.durhamtamils.org

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ONLINE VIRTUAL ZOOM

TAMIL CLASS

இரண்டாவது மொழிக்குரிய கற்பித்தல் முறையில் தமிழ் மொழி வகுப்புகள் ஆரம்பம். இணைந்து கொள்ள விரும்புவோர், தொடர்பு கொள்ளவும்.

NEW TAMIL ONLINE VIRTUAL ZOOM CLASSES ARE STARTING

Register Online [website: durhamtamils.org](http://www.durhamtamils.org)

Fill out the form and provide your information under "Virtual class registration"

Email: info@durhamtamils.com

Dear Parents,

We truly realize the importance of our children learning their mother tongue. In an effort to sustain our Tamil ethnicity, culture and language among our young Canadian born children, we are introducing TAMIL LANGUAGE CLASSES. Tamil will be taught as a Second Language, so our English-speaking children will be able to learn, understand, speak and write Tamil with ease. Don't miss out on this great opportunity.

அன்பான பெற்றோர்களே! உலகில் உள்ள ஒவ்வொருவரும் தமது மரபுவழி மொழியைக் கற்பது அவர்களது பிறப்புரிமை, அது அவர்களைத் தன்னம்பிக்கை கொண்டவர்களாக உருவாக்கும். ஆங்கிலத்தை முதன் மொழியாகவும், பேச்சு மொழியாகவும் கொண்டு வாழும் எமது கனடா வாழ்ப் பிள்ளைகளுக்குத் தமிழ் மொழியை இரண்டாவது மொழிக்குரிய கற்பித்தல் முறையைப் பின்பற்றி தமிழ் மொழி வகுப்புகள் ஆரம்பமாக உள்ளன. இணைந்து கொண்டு பலன் பெறுங்கள்.

COMMUNITY WATCH

Durham Tamils Association Serving Our Community



DTA SERVING DURHAM TAMILS DURING THESE UNPRECEDENTED AND CHALLENGING TIMES

DTA's Seniors

DTA is 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 Armchair, Crafting Classes (including free craft items), and much more for our seniors. DTA is here to support you in any way.

If you want to participate in our programs, please check our monthly calendars. Please register for virtual Seniors programs at durhamtamils.org



Durham Tamil Association

Seniors program: Travel around the world from the comfort of your Armchair

நாற்காலியில் இருந்து உலகம் முழுவதும் பயணம்

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Hosted by: **Vijay Sarva**

Every Tuesday
TIME: 5:00pm-6:00PM



Meeting ID: 814 0796 6251
Passcode: 344982



DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION

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FRIDAYS 7:30- 9:00 PM
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DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION

Free Virtual Chair Yoga For seniors

Mrs. Vana Dineshkumar
Experienced and well-known Yoga Teacher

Fridays 10:00- 11:30

- REGISTER @ DURHANTAMILS.ORG





DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION


Free Virtual Mat Yoga For Adults

Mrs. Vana Dineshkumar
Experienced and well-known Yoga Teacher

Sundays 10:00- 11:30 AM



REGISTER @ DURHANTAMILS.ORG



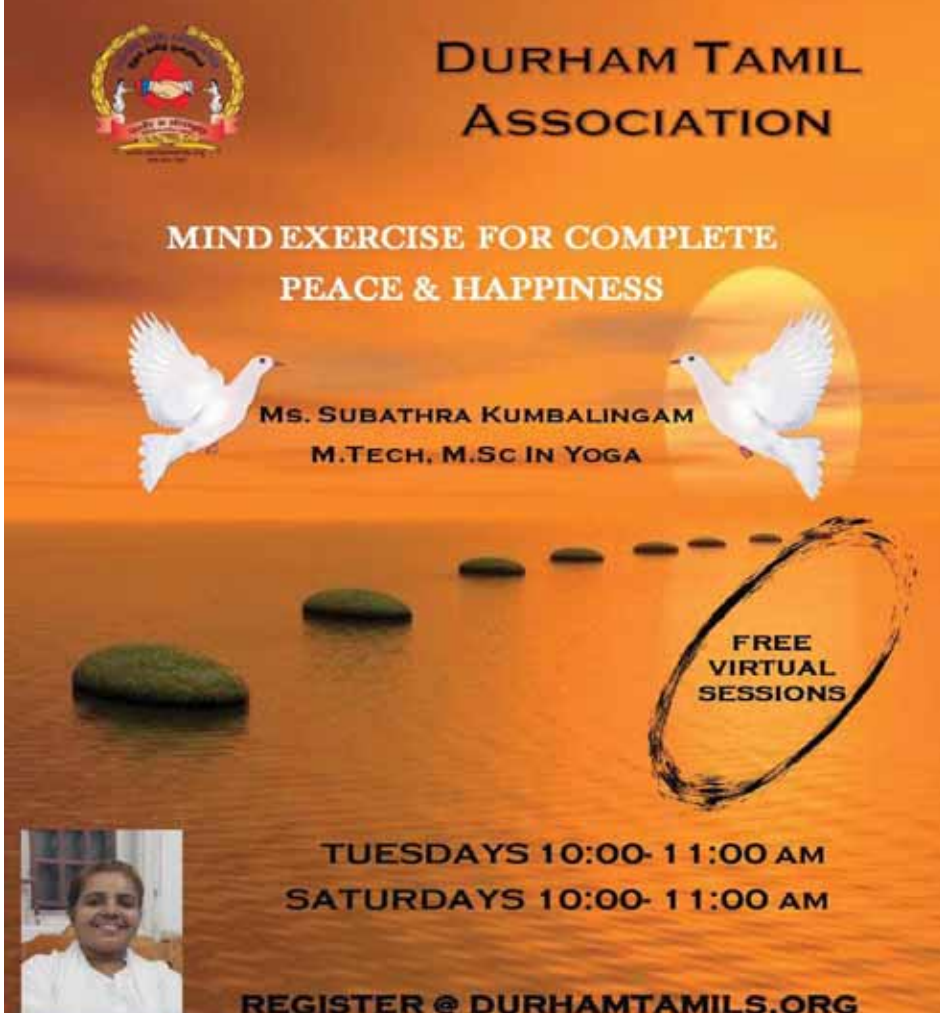
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MS. SUBATHRA KUMBALINGAM
M.TECH, M.SC IN YOGA

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SATURDAYS 10:00- 11:00 AM



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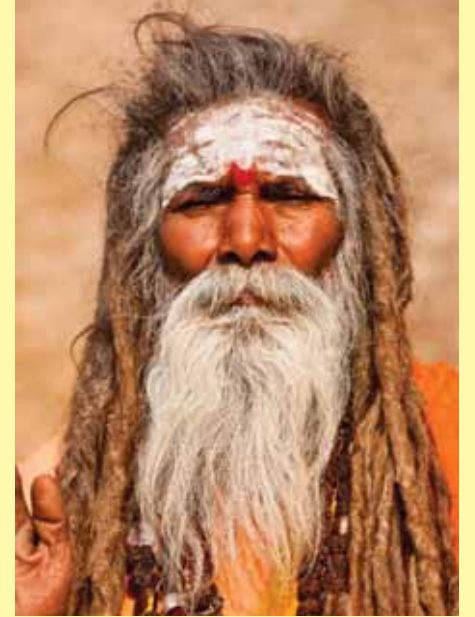
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இன்ப துன்பங்கள், நன்மை தீமை பற்றி விபரம் குறுவார்



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- ➔ ஜாதகம் பார்த்து, குறிப்புப் பார்த்து ஆரோக்கியம், மனநிம்மதி, லக்ஷமி கடைச்சம் கிடைக்கவும்,
- ➔ இராசி, நட்சத்திரம் பார்த்து நடந்தது, நடப்பது, நடக்கப்போவது பற்றிச் சொல்லப்படும்.
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