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Home prices in Ontario continue to increase

By Sivapragasam

Home affordability for new home buyers is becoming a dream of the past as house prices in Ontario continue to rise based on demand and supply factors.

According to a Real Estate Board forecast, house and condo prices are likely to increase a further 12% this year. A reduction in the availability of homes for sale jacked up the prices by 18% last year as homeowners were reluctant to sell for fear of finding another home at a reasonable price that they could afford.

The demand from first time homebuyers has been on the increase lately as they were reluctant earlier to purchase due to the pandemic. Associated with this factor is the fear of a possible increase in the mortgage rates cou-

“Demand for housing isn’t going away and will likely accelerate”, says Real Estate Board

pled with an increase in immigration numbers.

Meanwhile, condo prices which were either stagnant or low earlier are also on the increase specially from those who cannot afford to purchase single homes



PM Modi unveils giant ‘Statue of Equality’ in remembrance of saint Ramanujacharya



The 216-ft statue is made of ‘panchaloha’, a combination of five metals and is among one of the tallest metallic statues in sitting position.

Full story on page 7...

Media mogul and former Toronto Star Publisher John Honderich passes away

By Siva Sivapragasam

He was passionately in love with Media and spent most of his working life as a newspaper man.

John Honderich, former Publisher of the Toronto Star, one of Canada’s leading newspapers, passed away recently due to a heart attack. He was 75 at the time of his death.

Born into a newspaper family, Mr. Honderich, always with his signature bowtie, was a legendary champion for journalism and journalists, and devoted to Canadian political life and social justice issues.

He began his life in the Media which he loved so passionately, as a copy boy and night reporter and ending as the Editor and Publisher of the Toronto Star. Mr. Honderich was a member of the Order of Canada and the Order of



Ontario. He was the 2019 recipient of the Canadian Journalism Foundation’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

He loved his city of Toronto and was always determined to find solutions to the problems the city was faced with through the pages of his newspaper.

“He was a larger - than life Torontonian who left us too soon”, Toronto City Mayor John Tory commented.

Indian subcontinent lost a truly great singer: Lata Mangeskar



Lata Mangeskar
(born Hema Mangeskar;
28 September 1929
– 6 February 2022)

Full coverage on pg 17...

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CANADA NEWS



Ontario Invests in Innovations to Help Control the Spread of COVID-19

Ontario Together Fund continues to support homegrown innovations and manufacturing of domestic medical supplies

January 27, 2022

Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

TORONTO — The Ontario government is supporting an investment of more than \$2.9 million by five local companies to strengthen manufacturing of domestic medical supplies and support the development of homegrown innovations to help control the spread of COVID-19. The province is investing more than \$1.54 million through the Ontario Together Fund (OTF).

“The Ontario Together Fund continues to support domestic businesses through targeted investments that allow them to develop their ideas and solutions to help us through the pandemic,” said Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. “Ontario is proud to support these five companies, and we thank them for their innovations that are enhancing the province’s capacity to meet ongoing demands on our healthcare system and prepare for future challenges.”

McArthur Medical Sales Inc. is a Rockton, Ontario-based company that has developed and commercialized three products to assist hospitals in reducing the transmission of COVID 19 — Flusso By Pass, Flusso TFI and EXHALO Shield. These devices are used in collaboration with oxygen therapy systems and mechanical ventilators to improve patient care and reduce the spread of COVID-19, among other airborne contaminants.

“Support from the OTF will allow us to increase production of our Respiratory Therapist invented devices that improve patient care and staff safety,” said Frank Fiorenza, RRT, Product Development Manager of McArthur Medical Sales. “These Ontario invented and manufactured medical innovations have now proven to have positive implications for patients and healthcare staff worldwide.”

McArthur Medical Sales is investing \$798,000 to purchase manufacturing equipment and machinery to increase production by five times current capabilities. Ontario is supporting the investment with a contribution of \$379,000

through the Ontario Together Fund.

“McArthur Medical Sales is one of many businesses that have stepped up to change their manufacturing operations to help in the fight against COVID-19,” said Donna Skelly, MPP for Flamborough-Glanbrook. “With this investment, the Ontario Together Fund is supporting our government’s ongoing response to the pandemic, while improving the province’s preparedness for future public health emergencies.”

AGS Zephyr Inc., a privately-owned Ontario-based company, founded by Sam Alesio, George Goto and Robert Sowka, specializing in air purification, is investing over \$350,000 into a novel air filtration project which will involve building prototypes, conducting trials and manufacturing the company’s Personal Zone Air Purifier (PZAP) product for restaurants, classrooms and commercial, industrial and retail applications.

“The support provided by OTF will accelerate our product design development activities in addition to the ongoing collaboration with Mohawk College and McMaster University, both located in Hamilton,” said Sam Alesio, Co-Founder and CEO of AGS Zephyr. “AGS Zephyr’s PZAP is an effective filtration device that supports a multi-layered approach to reducing the transmission of viruses such as COVID-19 and influenza within indoor dining environments.”

The Ontario government is investing \$88,750 through the Ontario Together Fund to support the company during the development phase of their new product.

Synaptive Medical Inc. is a Toronto-based global medical device and technology company, and a leader in robotic surgical visualization. The company has invented a drape concept to help keep CT scanners free from patient contamination.

“Synaptive Medical is grateful for OTF’s support for us to create a drape to shield medical machines (MRIs, O-arm scanners and CT machines) from COVID-19 contamination and spread,” said Cameron Piron, President and Co-Founder of Synaptive Medical.

Synaptive Medical is investing



\$205,400 to adapt the current CT drape design into a prototype that is compatible with MRI and O-arm scanners to help shield them from patient contamination, including COVID-19. Ontario is supporting the investment with a contribution of \$153,300 through the Ontario Together Fund.

Mitchell Plastics is a North American auto-parts manufacturer headquartered in Kitchener. The company invested \$578,900 to retool a portion of its Canadian operations to manufacture nasopharyngeal swabs, which included converting a section of its facility into a clean-room environment. Ontario supported the investment with a contribution of \$434,200 through the Ontario Together Fund.

“Mitchell Plastics is proud to have partnered with the Ontario government to respond to the call to action to design and develop this medical device at a time of acute shortage and critical need,” said Tim Goldhawk, Managing Director of Mitchell Plastics.

The company can produce 400,000 nasopharyngeal testing swabs per month.

“The team at Mitchell Plastics is very deserving of our government’s investment as they’ve been a great contributor to the effort to meet the challenges of this pandemic,” said Amy Fee, MPP for Kitchener South-Hespeler. “Nasopharyngeal testing swabs are, and will continue to be, a vital tool that helps us control the spread of COVID-19.”

PAPP Plastics & Distributing Ltd. is a Windsor-based injection molded parts manufacturer with expertise in tier 1 automotive manufacturing, parts assembly and mold manufacturing. The company invested \$971,830 to repurpose one of its facilities to manufacture injection-molded nasopharyngeal swabs. Ontario supported the investment with a contribution of \$490,000 through the Ontario Together Fund.

“When governments called on manufacturers to help answer the COVID-19 emergency, Papp Plastics and our employees enthusiastically responded,” said George Papp, Co-Owner, COO/General

Manager of Papp Plastics & Distributing. “We designed parts, made face shields and with the Ontario government support, we were able to ramp up to enable production of millions of test swabs.”

Through this project, the company has the capacity to produce 1 million testing swabs per week.

Supporting innovative projects like the ones from these five companies are why Ontario has invested an additional \$50 million in the renewed Ontario Together Fund in 2021–22. The fund is continuing to support local innovators and businesses to further enhance Ontario’s domestic supply chain capacity, promote Ontario’s MedTech ecosystem and build up our manufacturing sector to ensure the province is well-prepared for future challenges.

The renewed Ontario Together Fund is focused on supporting homegrown manufacturing and innovation to combat COVID-19 and providing other goods critical to the health, safety, and security of Ontarians beyond this pandemic.

Since its launch in April 2020, the Ontario Together Fund has helped businesses with innovative ideas and solutions to retool or adapt their operations to produce supplies and equipment for the health care sector and frontline workers. Some successful Ontario Together Fund recipients include:

Kawartha Ethanol will expand local production capabilities in Havelock to manufacture high-grade, pure ethanol for hand sanitizers and disinfectants.

Abatement Technologies Ltd. will build a new facility in Fort Erie and purchase new equipment to expand its production of air purification and abatement products.

Empack Spraytech, a Brampton-based privately-owned family operated business, will manufacture more than 4 million surface disinfectant wipes in a new 100,000-square-foot Barrie manufacturing facility.

Healthy people are essential for a healthy economy. With Ontario’s ambitious rollout of vaccines and booster shot distribution continuing to increase, the government is taking further action to slow the spread of the highly contagious Omicron variant. Ontario’s Action Plan: Protecting People’s Health and Our Economy provides the resources necessary to finish the battle with COVID-19 and builds on the government’s record investments to protect health and jobs during the global pandemic.

Via news.ontario.ca

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INDEX FEBRUARY 2022

Main News:.....	1
Ads:.....	2
Canada News:.....	3, 5 - 6
Publisher's Info:.....	4
World News:.....	7 - 10
Health:.....	14 & 15
Feature:.....	16 - 29
Education:.....	30
Science:.....	31
Food:.....	36
CW:.....	34- 46
Ads:.....	47 & 48

February 14, 2022

Monsoon Journal Wishes a
Happy Valentine's Day

&

Happy Family Day, February 21, 2022

Wishes

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International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2022

Supporting Women and Girls in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields in communities throughout Ontario and across Canada

By **Harrish Thirukumar**

According to the United Nations, women and girls represent half of the world's population and, therefore, also half of its potential. Gender equality, besides being a fundamental human right, is essential to achieve peaceful societies. This includes a society where full human potential and sustainable development are realized. Moreover, it has been shown that empowering women spurs productivity and economic growth. This goes hand in hand with the importance of science, especially along with other fields including technology, engineering and mathematics or STEM. These have become increasingly fundamental to this economic progress.

In fact, science and gender equality are both vital for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Over the past decades, the global community has made a lot of effort in inspiring and engaging women and girls in science. Yet women and girls continue to be excluded from participating fully in science.

To achieve full and equal access to and participation in science for women and girls, and further achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, the United Nations General Assembly declared 11 February as the International Day of Women and Girls in Science in 2015.

The International Day of Women and Girls in Science, celebrated on 11 February, is implemented by UNESCO and UN-Women in collaboration with institutions and civil society partners that aim to promote women and girls

in science. This Day is an opportunity to promote full and equal access to and participation in science for women and girls. Gender equality is a global priority for UNESCO, and the support of young girls, their education, and their full ability to make their ideas heard are levers for development and peace.

Women and girls in science are not only beneficiaries here, but also agents of change, including in view of accelerating progress towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation). In that sense, the 7th International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly will focus on the following topic: "Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Water Unites Us".

The Congress will bring together women scientists and experts from around the world, senior government officials, representatives of international organizations and the private sector to discuss the importance of water in achieving the three pillars of sustainable development: economic prosperity, social justice, and environmental integrity.

Readers like yourselves interested in advancing the cause this day represents can register for this event here: <https://www.womeninscienceday.org/register-activity.html>

#February11 is celebrated globally in different ways, big and small. Moreover, this piece is to encourage all readers to explore other ways on how they can support collective and organizational efforts in supporting women and girls in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields in their communities throughout Ontario and across Canada.

Canada Historic Milestones

February 7, 1973

Canada establishes diplomatic relations with North Vietnam, which is at war with the United States. Canada has a policy of neutrality in this conflict, in line with its desire to act as an international mediator and promote peace in the world.



"You may not think you're going to make it. You may want to quit. But if you keep your eye on the ball, you can accomplish anything."

- **Henry Louis "Hank" Aaron**

(February 5, 1934 - January 22, 2021) American Baseball player (Milwaukee/Atlanta Braves)

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

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CANADA NEWS



Over 10,000 new affordable homes for Canadians

January 21, 2022

Ottawa, Ontario

Every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clearer than ever that affordable housing is key to Canada's recovery, as we rebuild an economy that works for everyone. That is why the Government of Canada will continue to support vulnerable Canadians and address rising levels of homelessness and housing needs in communities from coast to coast to coast.

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today announced that over 10,000 new affordable housing units will be created across the country through the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI), exceeding the initial goal of 7,500 new units. These housing units will help vulnerable Canadians and those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. A third of the units will support women or women and their children, and more than a third of the units will assist Indigenous Peoples.

The Government of Canada's \$2.5 billion RHI is helping vulnerable



individuals and families find a safe and affordable place to call home. These investments are helping grow the middle class and those who are working hard to join it by creating thousands of good jobs in the housing and construction sector, supporting our economic recovery, and building back stronger communities, while getting us closer to our goal of eliminating chronic homelessness in Canada.

The government will continue working with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, Indigenous governing bodies, as well as stakeholders and organizations to quickly create more homes for people in need of housing. Together, we will make safe and affordable housing a reality for people across the country.

Via pm.gc.ca

Restaurants Canada Statement in response to the ongoing protests in Ottawa

PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 2, 2022

On Monday, Jan. 31 restaurants and other foodservice businesses across Ontario were given the green light to reopen for indoor dining after weeks of suffering under another round of lockdown — unfortunately for many Ottawa businesses their right to reopen has now been delayed by ongoing, disruptive protests.

Restaurant operators in Ottawa's downtown core have been instructed to remain closed to avoid threatening behaviour from demonstrators, dashing their hopes of reopening and recovering from the devastating losses they've endured over the past month.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic started, Ontario's foodservice sector was a \$37 billion industry, directly employing more than 450,000 people, providing the province's number one source of first jobs and serving more than 9 million customers every day. Ontario's restaurants are now struggling to recover more than 50,000 jobs and at least \$20 billion in lost revenue



due to the ongoing economic and public health crisis.

The current protests in Ottawa are only adding to the unprecedented challenges of the city's hardest-hit businesses, depriving restaurants of their freedom to welcome back their customers and adding to the massive debt they've been accumulating from lost revenue, lost inventory, and repeated reopening and rehiring costs.

The outcome has been continued

Ontario Helping More Communities Protect Against Racism and Hate

Province doubling investment in grant program to support more local projects



January 31, 2022

Citizenship and Multiculturalism

TORONTO — The Ontario government is helping more communities combat racism and hate by doubling its investment in the Anti-Racism Anti-Hate Grant Program. An additional \$1.6 million in funding will help support more community-led public education and awareness projects, bringing the total funding for the grant program to \$3.2 million over two years.

"By supporting the important work in our communities in the fight against racism and hate, we are strengthening our commitment to a more equitable Ontario," said Parm Gill, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism. "Doubling our investment in the Anti-Racism Anti-Hate Grant will also protect our progress in improving outcomes for those facing racism and hate across the province."

The Ontario government developed the Anti-Racism Anti-Hate Grant in

collaboration with community partners for local projects that increase public education and awareness on the impact of racism and hate, in all its many forms. These grants will support eligible organizations, including community-based and not-for-profit organizations, to lead initiatives that help build capacity, connect communities and deepen understanding to address the impacts of racism and hate.

In September 2021, the government announced \$1.6 million for the program. Grants of up to \$40,000 over two years for independent projects and \$100,000 over two years for partnerships between two or more organizations have been awarded to 32 new community programs.

New applications are being accepted until February 14, 2022 for a second round of grants totalling up to \$1.6 million. Existing eligible applicants will be automatically considered for the additional funding. More information on the reopening of the program is available on the grant webpage.

Via news.ontario.ca

harm to already struggling small business operators, tons of lost food and employees that are not able to come back to work.

Enough is enough. Ottawa's local restaurants deserve the right to reopen their doors and bring in busi-

ness. Restaurants Canada is calling on the protest organizers and public officials to let foodservice workers get back to their jobs and allow businesses to begin to recover from this unnecessary attack on their freedoms.

Via restaurantscanada.org

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CANADA NEWS

Statement by the Prime Minister on Chinese New Year

February 1, 2022
Ottawa, Ontario

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement on Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival:

“Today, Chinese communities in Canada and around the world will celebrate the start of the Spring Festival and welcome the Year of the Tiger.

“Chinese New Year is a time to reflect on the challenges and successes of the past year and look to the future with optimism, joy, and hope. Traditionally, families and friends come together to celebrate new beginnings with family meals, fireworks, and the traditional lion dance. While festivities will look different again this year, as we continue to follow public health guidelines to ensure everyone’s safety, we can all find inspiration in the bravery, resilience, and strength the tiger symbolizes. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, these are values that have guided Cana-

dians through difficult times, and I know they will keep inspiring us as we move forward.

“The Spring Festival is also an opportunity for all of us to recognize the many contributions that Canadians of Chinese descent have made – and continue to make – to our country, and to learn more about their rich cultures, customs, and traditions. Canada’s diversity is our strength, and together we will continue to build a better, fairer, and more inclusive country.

“On behalf of our family, Sophie and I wish health, happiness, and good fortune to everyone celebrating the Year of the Tiger.

Xīn Nián Kuài Lè! Sun Nin Fai Lok!”

Via [pm.gc.ca](https://www.pm.gc.ca)



Ontario Helping Tamil Students Succeed

More Learning and Mental Health Supports for Ontario Students



January 31, 2022
Education

TORONTO — The Ontario government is supporting Tamil students with targeted mental health and wellness programs and resources. This investment, announced by Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, joined by Raymond Cho, MPP for Scarborough North and Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, Vijay Thanigasalam, MPP Scarborough – Rouge Park and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Transportation, Logan Kanapathi, MPP Markham – Thornhill, Aris Babikian, MPP Scarborough – Agincourt, and Christina Mitos, MPP Scarborough, during Tamil Heritage Month, reaffirms the province’s commitment to learning recovery and ensuring every student in Ontario can reach their full potential.

Ontario is providing \$48,950 to the Canadian Tamil Academy, a not-for-profit organization that works to preserve and cultivate the Tamil language, culture and history within Canada. Funding will go towards providing Tamil students with information and resources to address mental health issues, cope with stress, build resilience and implement self-care strategies, while reducing the stigma around mental health in the Tamil community.

“I am incredibly proud of Ontario’s Tamil community and continue to stand with their children and families

as they heal from the darkness of the Tamil genocide,” said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. “Through our partnership with the Canadian Tamil Academy, we will help to reduce the stigma around mental health and provide Tamil students with access to supports so that they can reach their full potential.”



as they heal from the darkness of the Tamil genocide,” said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. “Through our partnership with the Canadian Tamil Academy, we will help to reduce the stigma around mental health and provide Tamil students with access to supports so that they can reach their full potential.”

This new investment is part of the Priorities and Partnerships Funding COVID-19 Equity Supports, which funds various initiatives that help promote a positive and supportive school climate, support healthy relationships, and address bullying and cyberbullying.

Ontario is committed to supporting its Tamil community. On May 6th 2021, MPP Thanigasalam received all-party support for his private member’s bill to officially recognize the week of May 11th to May 18th as Tamil Genocide Education Week. MPP Thanigasalam’s bill, which Minister Lecce spoke in favour of, encourages Ontarians to learn more about the atrocities that were committed against innocent Tamil civilians during the civil war in Sri Lanka between 1983 and 2009

Via news.ontario.ca

But with proper anticoagulation, you can still minimize your risk of stroke, the most dangerous complication of this abnormal heart rhythm. (Courtesy: Harvard Medical School)

Health Beat



Atrial Fibrillation (Irregular heart beat)

Diet, exercise, and other lifestyle factors are known to affect your risk of heart disease. The major risk factors for heart disease, as well as the condition itself, are all closely linked to the risk of developing atrial fibrillation. Can a heart-healthy lifestyle prevent atrial fibrillation? Can it reduce symptoms?

There’s preliminary evidence that managing the risk factors for heart and blood vessel disease may improve the long-term outlook for people with atrial fibrillation. On a practical level, that could mean fewer episodes of a-fib and improvements in symptoms—in short, a better quality of life for you.

Focus on heart health - Healthy Living

The ability of lifestyle change to reduce the burden of atrial fibrillation remains an active area of research. In the meantime, take steps to live a healthy and active lifestyle, in addition to medication and other standard a-fib treatments:

- If you smoke, quit.
- Control high blood pressure.
- Get treatment for sleep apnea if you have it.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Don’t drink alcohol, or consume only in moderation.
- Keep your cholesterol and triglycerides within a healthy range.
- Get regular exercise.
- Get recommended vaccinations for the flu and pneumonia, especially if you have heart disease.
- Make sure to also ask your doctor or pharmacist about any new medications, including over-the-counter remedies and herbal supplements. Sometimes these can interact in a harmful way with warfarin, direct oral anticoagulants, or rhythm-controlling drugs.

Although your ability to prevent or treat atrial fibrillation with a healthy lifestyle has limits, most people are able to control bothersome symptoms long-term with medication, procedures, or both. That said, some people run out of safe or effective options, in which case the a-fib will become permanent.



Toronto isn’t Toronto without *Us*.
Donate to Scarborough Hospitals at LoveScarborough.ca.





Donation of Medical Equipment by the Sri Lankan Community in Saudi Arabia



The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Saudi Arabia facilitated the donation of a consignment of medical equipment valued at SLRs 1.2 Million for hospitals in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka Cultural Forum collaborated with the Sri Lankan community residing in Saudi Arabia to donate the medical equipment.

The donation was presented at a symbolic ceremony held at the Foreign Ministry in Colombo. Foreign Secretary Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage handed over the donation to

State Minister of Production, Supply and Regulation of Pharmaceuticals Prof. Channa Jayasumana and Secretary of the State Ministry Dr. R.M.S. Ratnayake.

Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Saudi Arabia P.M. Amza and the staff of the Embassy coordinated the dispatch of the medical equipment by courtesy of Sri Lankan Airlines.

**Foreign Ministry
Colombo**

PM Modi unveils giant 'Statue of Equality' in remembrance of saint Ramanujacharya

Hyderabad, February 5: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated a 216-ft statue of Ramanujacharya here and highlighted the 11th century saint's message of equality of all.

The 'Statue of Equality' commemorates Ramanujacharya who promoted the idea of equality in all aspects of living, including faith, caste and creed.

Modi, who was on a half-day visit to the city, participated in worship at the venue at Muchintal on the outskirts of Hyderabad.

The Prime Minister participated in the 'Purnahuti' of 'Vishwakshena Ishti Yagya'. The Yagya is for fulfilment of goals.

He offered the 'sankalpa' of the Yagya for the 'Amrit Sankalp' of the country and dedicated the yagya to 130 crore countrymen.

Tridandi Srimannarayana Chinna Jeeyar Swamy of Sri Ramanujacharya Ashram conceptualised the statue.

Ramanujacharya demonstrated that social progress and remaining true to one's roots can go hand in hand, Modi said.

"In today's world, when it comes to social reforms and progress, it is believed that reforms will take place away from the root. But, when we see Ramanujacharya, we realise there is no conflict between progressiveness and antiquity. It is not necessary to

go far from your roots for reforms. Rather, it is necessary that we connect with our real roots, become aware of our real power," he said.

Ramanujacharya is giving the message of equality in the form of a grand Statue of Equality, he said.

He emphasised that the country today is working collectively for development of all without discrimination and social justice for all so that those who have been oppressed for centuries become partners in the development of the country.

Schemes like Pucca houses, Ujjwala connections, free medical treatment up to Rs 5 lakh or the free electricity connections, Jan Dhan accounts, and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan have strengthened Dalits, the backward and the deprived, he said.

Describing Ramanujacharya as a shining inspiration for the unity and integrity, he said the saint was born in the South but his influence is on the whole of South to North and East to West.

He said the freedom struggle was not just a fight for power and rights. In this fight, there was a colonial mindset on one side, and the idea of live and let live on the other, he said.

On the one hand, it was a hysteria of racial superiority and materialism and on the other hand, it was a belief in humanity and spirituality. And

Sri Lankans living in KSA donate medical equipments



The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Riyadh coordinated the shipment of medical equipments to Sri Lanka with the support of Sri Lankan Airlines on 20 January 2022.

These equipments are donations by the Sri Lankan community living in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which was coordinated and facilitated by Sri Lanka Cultural Forum in Riyadh on the request of the Embassy. The donation included nine units of Mini

Oxygen Concentrators which worth around 1.2 million Sri Lankan rupees.

The Embassy greatly appreciates the noble gesture of Sri Lankan community in KSA and the Sri Lanka Cultural Forum in Riyadh for the timely donation that would help to save precious lives in Sri Lanka during these difficult times.

*Embassy of Sri Lanka, Riyadh
news.lk*



Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveils the Statue of Equality, a 216-foot tall statue of 11th-century saint Ramanujacharya, in Hyderabad. PTI

in this battle, India and its tradition were victorious, he said.

On the richness of the Telugu culture, he spoke about 13th century Kakatiya Rudreshwara Ramappa temple in Telangana recently being declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Pochampalli in the State being recognised as the best tourism village by the World Tourism Organisation.

Modi also spoke about the glorious contribution of the Telugu film industry which is making its presence felt globally and much beyond Telugu-speaking areas.

The statue is made of 'panchaloha', a combination of five metals: gold, silver, copper, brass, and zinc and is among one of the tallest metallic statues in sitting position.

It is mounted on a 54-foot high base building named 'Bhadra Vedi'. It has floors devoted for a Vedic digital library and research centre, ancient Indian texts, a theatre, an educational gallery detailing many works of Sri Ramanujacharya.

Ramanujacharya worked tirelessly



for the uplift of people with the spirit of every human being equal regardless of nationality, gender, race, caste or creed.

The inauguration of the statue is a part of the 12-day Ramanuja Sahasrabdi Samaroham, the ongoing 1000th birth anniversary celebrations of Ramanujacharya.

Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy, Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan, religious guru i Tridandi Srimannarayana Chinna Jeeyar Swami were present on the occasion.

PTI



India Projects Strong Economic Rebound After Pandemic

February 01, 2022 9:22 AM

by Anjana Pasricha

NEW DELHI —

India's government has pledged to spend billions of dollars on public infrastructure to reboot an economy that is bouncing back from the massive contraction it suffered during the novel coronavirus pandemic. But concerns remain about an uneven pace of growth that has seen big businesses flourish but its vast unorganized sector struggle.

Asia's third largest economy is projected to grow at 8% to 8.5% this year, according to government figures.

The strong economic recovery began last year despite a deadly second wave of COVID with growth estimated at 9.2% in the financial year that will end in March.

"The economy has shown strong resilience to come out of the effects of the pandemic with high growth," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

She announced that the government would spend \$2.7 billion to build highways and \$6.4 billion on housing for the poor. It will also expand rail networks, ports and airports, manufacture energy efficient trains and extend credit guarantees to small businesses.

Sitharaman said climate action is a priority and promised to focus on electric mobility and solar power in a bid to reduce the country's carbon emissions.

"I am conscious of the need to nurture growth through public investment to become stronger and more sustainable," Sitharaman said.

Economists have welcomed the government's decision to step up spending. "The decision to increase public investment to 2.9% of gross domestic product, is rock solid and good news and should attract private investment into infrastructure," says Santosh Mehrotra, a human development economist and author of the book "Reviving Jobs: An Agenda for Growth."



Commuters travel on a crowded local train in Mumbai, Feb. 1, 2022

said as she presented the country's annual budget Tuesday. "However, we need to sustain that level to make up for the setback of 2020-21."

The budget increases spending to \$533 billion in the coming year from \$477 billion.

According to the finance minister, the new investments would help create six million jobs over the next five years.

Mehrotra however points out that this fails to address the scale of the challenge India faces. "The unemploy-



A daily wage worker carries sacks of vegetables on a bicycle during early morning in Mumbai on Feb. 1, 2022.



Indian daily wage laborers wait to get hired in Mumbai, Feb. 1, 2022. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government announced a series of investments to shore up spending in infrastructure projects in its annual budget, ahead of key state elections



A construction worker fixes a window in a housing complex for people under the economic category of Below Poverty Line in Kolluru, on the outskirts of Hyderabad Feb. 1, 2022.

ment crisis we face is huge. Five to six million people join the labor force every year. That is on top of the unemployed we already have. That number was 30 million in the year 2019 and it has only grown post the pandemic by another 10 million," says Mehrotra. "And we also have millions who want to come out of agriculture into non-farming jobs."

The unemployment challenge was underlined last week by violent protests by job seekers that erupted in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Several economists point out that while India's economy has rebounded, growth has not percolated down as its vast informal sector, which provides most livelihoods, continues to reel under the impact of long shutdowns imposed when infections spiraled during the last two years. Tens of thousands of small enterprises have shut down. That has widened income

inequalities with an estimated 80% of households losing incomes during the pandemic.

But there is optimism as a third wave of the pandemic driven by the omicron variant begins to recede. India's vaccination program has made significant progress since July last year — 75% of adults are fully inoculated. That is creating confidence in opening most sectors of the economy.

"The economy is in a good place to grow strongly into the next year or two," the finance ministry's principal economic advisor, Sanjeev Sanyal, said while presenting the country's economic survey on Monday.

India's economic growth two years into the pandemic is seen as the fastest among major economies in the world. The revival comes after its economy shrank in 2020 by 6.6% — the sharpest dip in 40 years that came after a long and stringent shutdown.

India also said the country's central bank will introduce a "digital rupee" this year using blockchain technology, becoming one of the first major countries to do so and said it will levy a 30% tax on income from virtual digital assets.

Via voanews.com



Teleworking during COVID: Risks, benefits and steps to a 'new normal'

2 February 2022

Health

More than two years since COVID-19 began disrupting office life around the world, crucial changes are needed to safeguard health while teleworking, two UN agencies said on Wednesday.

In a new technical brief on healthy and safe teleworking launched on Wednesday, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) outline the health benefits and risks of remote work arrangements along with the measures needed to accommodate both the shift, and the ongoing digital transformation.

"The pandemic has led to a surge of teleworking, effectively changing the nature of work practically overnight for many workers", said Maria Neira, WHO Director, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health.

Upside

Among the benefits, the report says, are an improved work-life balance; opportunities for flexible working hours and more physical activity; reduced traffic and commuting time; and a decrease in air pollution across urban areas.

These can all improve physical and mental health, and social wellbeing.

Moreover, teleworking can also lead to higher productivity and lower operating costs for many companies.

Downside

However, the report warns that without proper planning, organization and health and safety support, teleworking can lead to feelings of isolation, burnout, depression, eye strain, increased alcohol consumption and unhealthy weight gain.

"Which way the pendulum swings, depends entirely on whether governments, employers and workers, work together, and whether there are agile and inventive occupational health services to put in place policies and practices that benefit both workers and the work", said Dr. Neira.

Settling into a 'new normal'

As both companies and employees alike have experienced the benefits of home and hybrid work, the Director of ILO's Governance and Tripartism Department, Vera Paquete-Perdigão, said that they are "here to stay and will likely increase after the pandemic".

"As we move away from this 'holding pattern' to settle into a new normal, we have the opportunity to embed new supportive policies, practices and norms to ensure millions of teleworkers have healthy, happy, productive and decent work", she said.

Occupational health services should be providing provide ergonomic, mental health and psychosocial support to



© UNICEF/Bruno Amsellem/Divergence

Anne-Lise, a journalist teleworking for TV channel Euronews in Lyon, France, with 3-year-old daughter Violette keeping close



World Bank/Henitsoa Rafalia

A father takes care of his young child while working from home in Madagascar.

teleworkers using digital telehealth technologies, the report says.

For example, employers should put measures in place to ensure that personnel receive adequate work-related equipment; relevant information and training to reduce the psychosocial impact of teleworking; and establish the "right to disconnect".

Meeting needs

The report outlines the roles of governments, employers, workers and health services at workplaces to promote and protect health and safety while teleworking.

It also offers practical recommendations for the organization of telework that meet the needs of both workers and businesses, such as developing individual work plans with clear priorities, timelines and expected results.

The agency advice calls on businesses to develop special programmes for teleworking that combine measures for managing work and performance, using effective digital platforms.

Via news.un.org

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Putting an end to India's oxygen crises

31 January 2022

Health

Scenes of relatives desperately trying to find oxygen supplies for hospitalized COVID-19 patients in India last year, alerted the world to an acute, deadly problem. Yet that was not this first time the country's hospitals have been hit by a shortage of the life-saving gas, prompting the question of whether there will be enough supplies, when the next major health crisis hits.

In May 2021, India's hospitals were at breaking point. The country found itself at the epicentre of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and one of the biggest challenges was providing enough medical oxygen for the sickest patients, unable to breathe unaided, as demand rose ten-fold.

By the end of April, there were just under 18 million confirmed cases, and over 200,000 deaths.

'Out of stock'

Some hospitals posted "oxygen out of stock" signs, whilst others asked patients to search for treatment elsewhere.

As news organizations published stories about patients dying from a lack of oxygen, family members decided to take matters into their own hands, hunting for canisters that might save the lives of their loved ones.

To many observers, the crisis seemed to indicate a lack of planning on behalf of the authorities, not least because this was far from the first time that medical oxygen had been scarce during a health crisis, even during the present pandemic.

Just a few months earlier, in September 2020, the country had already found itself in a similar situation: as case numbers soared, medical oxygen production failed to keep pace, amid an exponential growth in demand.

And many people remembered that 70 children had died at a government-run hospital in Uttar Pradesh due to a lack of oxygen in 2017, when a supplier stopped delivering canisters, after complaining of unpaid bills.

India's huge size, and the way its oxygen production industry is set up, were also identified as key factors. Only a small number of India's hospitals have the facilities to produce the gas in-house, and the rest depend on deliveries from private companies.

Oxygen production plants are concentrated in the industrial belt of eastern India, meaning that cryogenic trucks, specially designed to carry liquid oxygen, have to travel long distances to reach regional suppliers, which transfer the gas into smaller containers for delivery to hospitals.

Emergency measures

The Indian Government, the UN and other humanitarian organizations, responded to the emergency in a variety of ways.

Additional tankers were airlifted from abroad, tankers used for liquid



© UNICEF/Ronak Rami

Two workers set up the oxygen cylinders for treating patients with respiratory diseases, in India.

argon and nitrogen were converted to carry oxygen, and the railways innovated to introduce special "Oxygen Express" trains.

Industrial oxygen was diverted from steel plants to hospitals and the procurement and distribution of oxygen concentrators was stepped up.

The UN focused on getting hold of essential equipment such as concentrators, ventilators, and oxygen-generating plants, as well as implementing other measures to reduce the rate of serious case numbers, speeding up the rollout of vaccination programmes, and improving testing facilities.

no one is deprived of this life-saving product?

These questions were tackled in January by Ramana Gandham, Rajaji Meshram, and Andrew Sunil Rajkumar, a trio of health specialists, in a blog published by the World Bank.

Following technical assistance from the international financial institution in four Indian states – Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya, Uttarakhand and West Bengal – as well as with the central Government authorities, the experts set out a series of options to strengthen the country's medical oxygen policy.

always been the case, due to a lack of resources.

The same goes for all storage tanks and delivery systems, such as specialized trucks. Trained people are needed to run the plants, and India has launched an initiative to train 8,000 technicians capable of operating and maintaining them.

The experts found that, during the May 2021 crisis, the issue was not so much a shortage of medical oxygen, but rather the concentration of medical oxygen in eastern India, and the inability of the distribution network to ramp up to meet the ten-fold surge in demand.

'Buffer storage'

One solution to this issue is the creation of "buffer storage" facilities, at strategic locations, so that oxygen can be delivered far more quickly during emergencies.

Since the last wave, the Indian Government, technical partners, and private agencies have worked closely to estimate India's future demand for oxygen.

Many forecasting and modelling techniques have been used to develop a deeper understanding of production, demand and storage requirements.

Digital tracking systems have now been set up, to allow India's states to ensure the delivery of oxygen at different points along the supply chain, monitor consumption and forecast demand.

In Uttarakhand, 30,000 Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) tags have been distributed to medical oxygen suppliers and hospitals, to be affixed on oxygen cylinders. Delhi, whose hospitals were badly affected by a lack of supply during the May 2021 COVID wave, is also making use of tracking technology.

It is hoped that, by putting these measures in place, the country will be able to swiftly and effectively respond to the next health emergency, minimize deaths, and avoid a repeat of the distressing, chaotic scenes witnessed less than a year ago.

Via news.un.org



© UNICEF/Vineeta Misra

A patient who may have COVID-19 waits for medical assistance at a facility in the Goregaon area of Mumbai, India.

The World Health Organization (WHO) deployed over 2,600 public health specialists working on other diseases to tackle the epidemic in India, and around 820 staff members from the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN Development Programme (UNDP) helped the authorities to monitor over 175,000 COVID-19 centres across the country.

Maintaining a steady flow

But how should India prepare for the next oxygen emergency, given the unpredictable nature of demand for the gas, in a country where the cost of producing, storing and transporting it, is higher than the cost of the product itself?

And how can better distribution be ensured, so that oxygen is available wherever it is needed, at all times, and

Hike in production

They recommended a significant hike in the production of medical oxygen, a process that has already begun: more than a thousand new plants are being funded by the Government, producing 1,750 metric tons of oxygen every day, and more plants have been set up with regional and private sector backing.

The specialists recommend supporting hospitals that want to build their own plants, on site, which would reduce the problem of distribution. In some areas, such as Bihar state, companies are offered incentives, such as subsidized land or utilities, and low-interest finance, to set up plants.

Once they're up and running, it's important that the plants are maintained, something that has not



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With 'Love, Scarborough,' Scarborough Health Network Foundation Asks Toronto to Back Scarborough up

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) Foundation is excited to announce the launch of the Love, Scarborough marketing campaign. This campaign will directly support their \$100 million fundraising goal to help close the healthcare gap.

Scarborough is calling on the City of Toronto to back them up. Scarborough accounts for 25% of Toronto's population yet receives less than 1% of the hospital donations.

"Although Scarborough is the GTA's most economically disadvantaged community and serves a catchment area of nearly 1 million people, our hospitals have been left behind. SHN receives only a small fraction of the hospital donations to care for our diverse and growing community. We're doing incredible work with what we have, but we could be doing so much more," says Alicia Vandermeer, President and CEO of SHN Foundation.

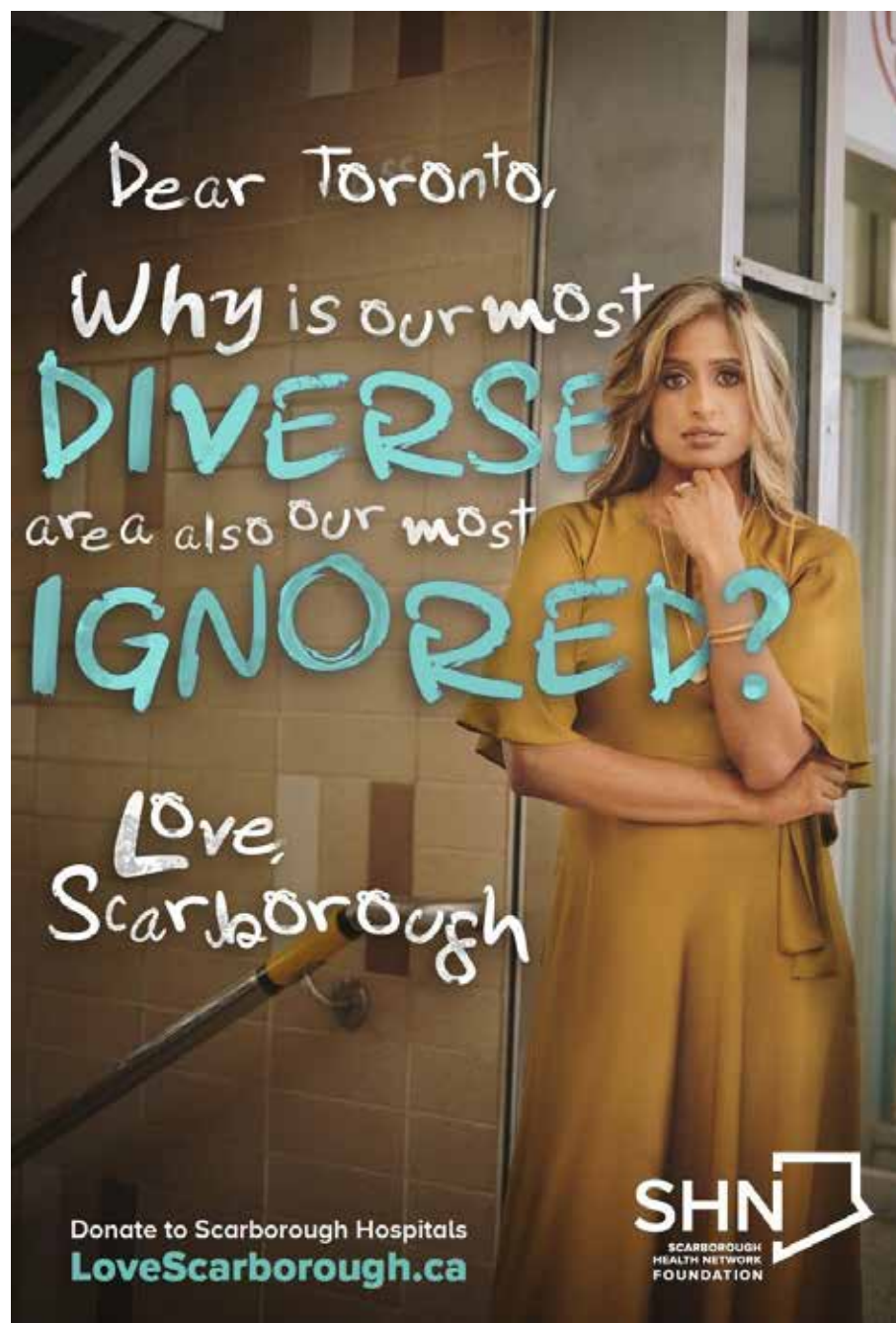
SHN is made up of three hospitals that serve one of the most diverse communities, not only in Toronto but the whole country. Scarborough is also home to a large number of new Canadians – who often speak a primary language other than English –

and SHN serves a catchment area of over 832,000 people. SHN is committed to providing world-class, inclusive care across numerous disciplines for Canada's most diverse community, but it's significantly underfunded.

Recently, SHN Foundation launched Love, Scarborough to kick off this historic donation push – the biggest in SHN's history. The mass media marketing campaign aims to raise awareness for the need to close Toronto's health care gap by driving donations not just from Scarborough, but across the GTA.

The campaign is an open letter from Scarborough to the rest of the Greater Toronto Area imploring them to help level the playing field. Throughout the campaign, the font that is featured was created from the real handwriting of 26 different individuals connected to SHN – one for each letter of the alphabet. On LoveScarborough.ca, people can learn about these people's stories and even submit their own story using the font, aptly named "Scarborough Sans".

Funds raised will support expanded emergency departments, integrated communities of care, accessible medical imaging and barrier-free mental health care.



Scarborough Vaccine Team administers 700,000 vaccines and counting

Book an appointment at one of SHN's clinics and help protect the community

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) and the Scarborough Ontario Health Team (SOHT) partners have administered more than 700,000 vaccines, including 100,000 boosters – but there's still work to be done. While many residents are booking appointments, others may remain uncertain.

For individuals with questions about the COVID-19 vaccines, SHN is encouraging Torontonians to consider SHN's free VaxFacts Clinic – a confidential, judgment-free service to make an informed decision about vaccination.

The first of its kind in Canada, the VaxFacts Clinic was created to provide a low-barrier and sensitive opportunity for those who have not gotten the vaccine, or those who are unsure about second and third doses, to have their questions answered in a way that resonates with them.

The clinic gives patients the opportunity to schedule a one-on-one phone call with

an experienced SHN doctor, ask their questions, and make an informed decision. Since its launch, patients across Canada have accessed the service with questions about medical experiences, health concerns, and vaccine importance. The VaxFacts Clinic is free to use and only takes seconds to book an appointment at shn.ca/vaxfacts.

"Nothing is more important than family and looking out for our health, particularly as we get through this fifth wave. When households and social circles come together to get vaccinated, we can help prevent serious illness, protect the community at large, and move Scarborough forward towards the common goal of getting back to normal," said Glyn Boatswain, Chief Nursing

and Allied Professional Executive, SHN.

The Scarborough Vaccine Team continues to hold community and mass vaccinations clinics apart of its ongoing strategy. The rollout has involved a nimble vaccine team, hundreds of neighbourhood pop-up clinics, and a network of community clinics and partnerships across Scarborough.

For more information, including eligibility and booking links, visit ScarbVaccine.com.

WE ARE NOW VACCINATING

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SCARBOROUGH COVID-19
VACCINE CLINIC



SHN puts the “health” into Scarborough’s mental health care

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is joining Canadians and participating in mental health conversations to fight the stigma, support world-class research, celebrate dedicated teams, and lead by example in workplace mental health.

As the globe continues its fight against COVID-19, the true necessity of mental health services is becoming more and more obvious. With the demand for mental health programs steadily increasing, and new terms like “pandemic burnout” running rampant in news and academia headlines across the globe, it is more important than ever to discuss the mental health challenges of day-to-day life.

At SHN, a group of compassionate and dedicated team members are continuing their pursuit of progress in mental health and generating positive change throughout our community.

“With compassionate and dedicated psychiatrists, nurses, and social workers serving our community, patients are continuing to receive exceptional care from SHN despite pandemic challenges,” said Sari Greenwood, Director, Mental Health and Addictions, Oncology and Palliative Care, SHN.

SHN’s Mental Health and Addictions team has worked hard to keep hospital doors open for patients, throughout the pandemic.

The Rapid Access Addition Medicine (RAAM) Clinic continues to treat patients on a walk-in basis, despite the significant increase in volumes associated with substance use disorders (upwards of over 200 per cent from 2019 to 2021). The team also opened the new RAAM Observation Clinic, which focusses on day detox from opioid and alcohol use disorders.

Day Hospital and Day Treatment programs provide support and skills development, while the First Intervention Treatment Team (FITT) is there for



young people when they need support for their first episode of psychosis.

“Despite increasing workloads and pandemic fatigue, our Mental Health and Addictions team have continued to display collaboration, resilience and dedication. Among their many achievements, the team has pivoted quickly to meet the needs and the demands of our community,” explained Greenwood.

For example, SHN’s child youth counsellors (CYC) and nurses joined the adult team to care for all mentally ill inpatients ages 18 and up; outpatient clinicians, including nurses and social workers, teamed up with inpatient teams to support patient care; and many outpatient groups went virtual, enabling programs to assign available staff to the most-needed areas.

“As the pandemic has forced many of us to rethink the way we connect, we’ve expanded virtual supports, education, and resources, enabling patients to get the care they need at home,” added Greenwood.

Online supports include the Online Psychotherapy clinic and the Mental Health App Library for those living with anxiety and depression.

Janie Leopold, who is a Patient Family Advisor at SHN and a mental health patient herself has utilized these virtual services for her own journey, and

continues to take part in conversations to improve the patient experience.

“I am grateful to provide a patient voice and perspective. Through these virtual services, you never feel alone. Though we are virtual now, we are meeting regularly to discuss and improve services for everyone, especially with the added pandemic stresses in life” she said.

Perhaps most impressive, SHN’s Mental Health programs never discontinued any essential services during the pandemic! And, while the team provides vital supports for Scarborough and beyond, they’re also supporting the needs of staff, medical staff, and volunteers at SHN daily.

SHN will continue to break the silence surrounding mental health by supporting our community and health care workers, and celebrating this team of resilient professionals, who continue to improve lives through exceptional care.

SHN Foundation recently launched the “Love, Scarborough” campaign, supporting their \$100 million fundraising goal. Monies raised will help with the creation of a new Community Mental Health Hub. This Hub will consolidate all of SHN’s outpatient adult mental health programs into one central location, and work to remove barriers surrounding mental health care. To learn more or to make a donation, please visit LoveScarborough.ca.



SPECIAL FEATURE

Serving the underprivileged in the Homeland



Boston based Subha Sundaralingam's "Now-Wow" organization provides non-profit opportunities for the wounded, widows and orphans of the war in Sri Lanka's North and East.....

In an exclusive interview with Tamil Culture's Ara Ehambaram, Boston based Subha Sundaralingam speaks about her organization "Now - Wow" and its activities, and how it is helping to provide opportunities to widows, orphans and the wounded in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka who have been affected by the thirty - year old civil war in Sri Lanka

Tell us more about "NOW-WOW" (<http://www.nowwow.org>), why you started the organization and the impact that it has had.

"When I got involved in the post-2009 Tamil Diaspora political activities, I had the opportunity to mingle with many other like - minded individuals from all over the world who were likewise committed to serve our homeland at a time when there was a lot of need. One common thread amongst the various organizations arose: "Something needed to be done here and now about our people whose family lives and livelihood has been thrown into shambles".

The case of the wounded and permanently disabled who needed medical care presented itself there in astounding numbers too. There were many who needed help with medication. Many others needed help with their prosthetics and orthotics. There were many more that would need advanced kinds of treatments. Increasing frequency of suicide reports from there underlined the fact that the number of clientele in need of psychiatric care and psychological counseling would be very daunting to handle.

On the social side, theft and robbery were slowly replacing respect for private property as the new norms of Vanni existence. Murder and violence were increasingly becoming the new mechanism for dispute settlement there. Incidences of sexual violence that was once an infrequent occurrence due to fears of harsh punishments became more prevalent. Despite foreign aid for reconstruction sent by the international community, meaningful impact on the local economy and im-

provement of these societal challenges did not change. The social fabric that held a community together was coming apart in bits and pieces.

The dire situation did make us dependent even though some of it was expected as the inevitable consequence of the brutal war. But it gave some of us food for thought also. Cluelessness would be an appropriate term here to discuss our dilemma, because most were lay people, who had neither the political experience nor a societal vision. So, when NOWWOW was formulated with enthusiasm, eagerness, and dedication – these would form the only avenue that we were prepared to bring into this new, challenging yet unfamiliar venture. We could never become an adequate substitute or something complementary to what the international organizations were already doing. Yet, we were committed to do whatever it takes to make a dent in the status quo, even if the impact was going to be a minuscule one.

NOW WOW is a 501(3) C registered organization in the United States. For a start, we worked with a targeted group of the worst affected young mothers with children. We would help them to find self-sustenance, one woman at a time. Our service, which started in small has made a difference in the lives of hundreds of people over the years. We focus on 4 elements of activities and made a difference on the war affected Tamil people in North and East of Sri Lanka.

1. Education
2. Empowerment
3. Employment
4. Emergency Relief

Tell us about what life was like for you to go from Sri Lanka and your journey here to Boston.

I was born in a village called Annaicottai, where I grew up with my brothers. My father was an accountant with a small hardware shop and my mother was a housewife. Our house had no electricity and I grew up studying in a kerosene lamp. I started my education at Annaicottai Bala Subramaniya Vidyasaalai, studied at Manipal Ladies College and completed my bachelor's degree in Chemistry at the University of Jaffna.

During my lifetime in Sri Lanka, the occupation of Sri Lankan Army and Indian Army were high. The days of hiding in our 'L' shape bunker, when the fighter jet arrives, the early morning dog-barking noises and my parents' daily struggle to save my brothers and me from the Sri Lankan armies are unforgettable. When the Indian Army arrived in Kallundai – the sound of artillery shells passing through our house, the sound of gunfire and falling the artillery shells on our house were terrifying. We were living in a makeshift refugee camp – the Muthanayanar Hindu temple for 3 months with limited meals and toilet facilities.

As soon as I completed my bachelor's degree, my parents had arranged my marriage abroad and sent me to Boston, USA. I came to Boston, leaving my entire family and the only world I knew behind in hopes of restarting a new path in my life. Even though I completed my university studies in English, I did not have practice speaking in English - a very common struggle for many of us educated in the British Commonwealth. I remember my first work interview at a department store. The manager asked me "tell me about yourself", I did not understand what he said and was not able to respond to him. The accent, culture and environments were not familiar to me. So, I just smiled, and of course did not get the job. So, to get familiar with English, I started to watch TV so that I can attend the next interview at a bank. I finally landed a clerical position for 3 months, and while working there I started looking for positions in the field of chemistry.

I started a post bachelor certificate course at Northeastern University, Boston and got a job at a teaching hospital as a Lab Assistant. I worked hard to get my license as Clinical Laboratory Scientist in chemistry and was promoted to Medical technologist, pathology team leader, and chemistry lab supervisor. At the same time my daughters were growing up and I faced many challenges in my personal life which I battled with. Now that I think back, although Tamil culture and community are great at many things - we have a long way to go in truly looking at women as equal to men and providing support mechanisms and a community to help Tamil women move passed the struggles of their personal lives. I was very fortunate to have my parents and brothers who stood by me - not every woman is that lucky.

How do you manage your time between running "NOW-WOW", being a single mother of 2 kids while having a full-time job as a Chemistry Lab supervisor at one of Boston's most prestigious hospitals?

When my daughters were younger, I worked part-time so I can focus on my family. As my children got older, I was able to return to the workforce full-time. When we founded NOW-WOW, my daughters were teenagers, so it was a different type of time management. I believe time management is important to be successful, but at the same times I had to give 100% to my daughters, my job and NOW-WOW, so I worked many long hours. In financial tough times, I remember taking really difficult 16 hour shifts then coming home and cooking food for my kids or helping with activities in the Boston Tamil community.

What's one goal that, if you were to accomplish it over the next three months, would feel like a big win for you?

The schoolgirls and young women living in rural villages can't afford to use hygienic sanitary pads. We want to distribute it to them ideally for free or at a very lower cost. For that we have put forward a few ideas to start a small factory. This small factory will also create job opportunities for many underprivileged women.

PS: Subha makes an appeal to the Tamil expatriate community all over the world for support to the "NOW-WOW" organization to make the underprivileged, widows, orphans and disabled to lead a happy life. Contact information: www.nowwow.org

(Courtesy: Tamil Culture - Edited Version)

Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall and wife of Prince Charles will be Queen Consort when Charles becomes King, says Queen Elizabeth

Queen Elizabeth II has said that the Duchess of Cornwall will be Queen when Prince Charles becomes the King.

The Queen was speaking at the 70th anniversary of the day her father, King George VI, died, and she became Queen aged 25.

The Queen cut a cake with the Jubilee emblem iced on top and received a posy of flowers at the reception in Sandringham's Ballroom, which included a band playing the song "Congratulations". She becomes the first UK monarch to reign for 70 years.

Meanwhile, Queen Elizabeth II used her Platinum Jubilee national message on February 5 to back Camilla, shaping the future of the monarchy.

The Queen expressed her "sincere wish" that Camilla will be known as

Queen Consort when Prince Charles becomes King.

As she reached her 70th year on the throne, Elizabeth II, set out her hopes for her daughter-in-law, once a royal mistress and now certain to be called Queen and crowned at Charles's side.

The Queen (95) said in the written message: "I would like to express my thanks to you all for your support. I remain eternally grateful for, and humbled by, the loyalty and affection that you continue to give me." "And when, in the fullness of time, my son Charles becomes King, I know you will give him and his wife Camilla the same support that you have given me; and it is my sincere wish that, when that time comes, Camilla will be known as Queen Consort as she continues her own loyal service," she said.



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Appreciation

SPECIAL FEATURE



Indian subcontinent lost a truly great singer: South Asian leaders on demise of 'empress of music' Lata Mangeskar

Dhaka/Islamabad/Colombo,
Feb 6 (PTI)

The Indian subcontinent has lost one of the truly great singers the world has known with the demise of Lata Mangeshkar, top leadership of South Asian countries said on Sunday as they paid their tribute to the "empress of music" who "touched billions of hearts through her golden and unparalleled voice".

Mangeshkar, whose voice stirred millions of hearts everyday and who will forever be counted as one of India's greats with an estimated 25,000 songs in an almost eight-decade career, died in Mumbai on Sunday. She was 92.

In a message of condolence, Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said Mangeshkar will remain alive forever in the hearts of the people in the region through her work.

"A great void has been created in the subcontinent's musical arena with the demise of the 'Sur Samraggi (empress of music)'," Hasina said, praying for the salvation of the departed soul and conveying her deep sympathy to the bereaved family.

In a separate message, President Abdul Hamid also expressed his profound shock and sorrow at the death of the legendary singer and expressed condolences to the bereaved family.

Taking to Twitter, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, who was on a

four-day visit to China, said, "With the death of Lata Mangeshkar the subcontinent has lost one of the truly great singers the world has known. Listening to her songs has given so much pleasure to so many people all over the world." Expressing his condolences on Mangeshkar's demise, Sri Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said India's "Queen of Music" "touched billions of hearts through her golden and unparalleled voice".

Mangeshkar is a legend whose memory will remain in our midst for centuries through her melodious voice, he tweeted, sharing a photograph of the legendary singing icon.

Mourning her demise, Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa in a tweet said, "Rest In Peace Nightingale of #India, #LataMangeshkar. Thank you for the decades of entertainment that transcended borders & gave life to the phrase 'music is a universal language'".

Expressing his deepest condolences to her family and the people of India, the prime minister, the elder brother of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, said Mangeshkar's memory will live through her music.

Lanka's main Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa also expressed his deepest condolences to Mangeshkar's family.

"Lata Mangeshkar the legend who built bridges across cultures with her



Lata Mangeshkar (born Hema Mangeshkar; 28 September 1929 – 6 February 2022)

mesmerizing voice. My deepest condolences to her family, friends and fans," he tweeted.

Nepal's President Bidya Devi Bhandari recalled the contribution of "genius" Mangeshkar to Nepali songs as she paid her tribute to the legendary Indian singing maestro.

"I am saddened by the news of the demise of famous Indian singer Lata Mangeshkar, who has also lent her melodious voice to many Nepalese songs," Bhandari tweeted in Nepali language.

"I offer my heartfelt tribute to genius Lata Mangeshkar with extraordinary talent," she added.

Dubbed as the 'Nightingale of India', Mangeshkar has lent her voice to many songs in Nepali films, including blockbuster 'Maitighar' which features yesteryear bollywood actress Mala Sinha in the lead role with Nepali actor Chidambar Prasad Lohani.

In a Facebook post, Nepali Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba said he is shocked by the news of the demise of Mangeshkar, "who has given her voice to dozens of popular Nepali songs".

"I pay heartfelt tribute on her demise and extend condolences to her family," he wrote.

PTI

The Royal College Old Boys' East Coast Foundation (RCOBECF) USA recently mourned the passing away of its oldest member – Dr. Mahendra Somasundaram in New York. Mahendra attended primary school at St. Patrick's College, Jaffna, and then secondary school at Royal College Colombo till 1949. His full education at Royal College was covered by a Governor's Scholarship. He received two double promotions at Royal and so entered the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) at the age of 17 years.

He won many awards at Medical School including the Je Boey Scholarship for best performance in the 1st MB exam and the Hazare Prize for best performance in Year 3. He was first in his class for the first four years in Medical School. He qualified in March 1955, two years younger than his classmates, graduating with First Class Honours.

Following graduation, he was a House Officer at Colombo General Hospital and then Registrar to the Professor of Medicine for nearly three years. He was then posted to Ratnapura Provincial Hospital as a Visiting Physician and left for the UK in 1962. In London he received his MRCP (Member of the Royal College of



Dr. Mahendra Somasundaram

Director of Neurology at SUNY Downstate – Kings County Hospital Centre in Brooklyn - New York.

Physicians) in 1963.

In 1965, while working

in the UK, he was recruited as Senior Lecturer in Medicine at the University of Malaya in Malaysia. He developed an interest in Neurology and was awarded a scholarship to the University of Washington, Seattle in 1967 to work with Prof. Emilio Chatrian in Neurophysiology.

He returned to the University of Malaya a year later and in 1970 went back to the US to start a Neurology Residency with two pillars in Neurology, Professor Plum and Professor Posner at New York Cornell University Hospital.

In 1974 I met Mahendra at New York Hospital while attending a neurology conference. At this time SUNY Downstate created a new Department of Neurology with Prof. Henry Schutta from UPenn as

its Chairman. The programme was enhanced by the recruitment of Prof. Roger Cracco from Jefferson to head Neurophysiology and Prof. Arthur Rose from Albert Einstein for Pediatric Neurology. Upon hearing about Mahendra, Dr. Schutta requested that I arrange a meeting with him. Mahendra was promptly hired and made the Director of Neurology at SUNY Downstate – Kings County Hospital Centre in Brooklyn NY.

Mahendra who was known as Dr. Soma by all his residents and students served as a teacher cum clinician for over 30 years. He continued to see patients and teach residents well into his eighties. Gentle, sincere and devoted to his patients, he received many accolades including the prestigious 'Distinguished Teaching Professor' at SUNY Downstate in 1994.

He was described by his residents as a very humble man, much respected and

revered by students, trainees, residents and colleagues. Some of his residents are Chairmen of Departments both in NY and NJ continuing the tradition.

On his 80th birthday Dr. Radha Giridharan, a former resident and colleague arranged a birthday party. It was a 'sold-out' event with speakers extolling his humane qualities and how he touched their lives and shaped their careers. I attended this event with two other Neurologists – Dr. Sanath Nallainathan and Dr. Miran Salgado, both Old Royalists and past-presidents of RCOBECF.

Mahendra Somasundaram M.D has left a tremendous void in the hearts of many colleagues, friends and family and the world of Neurology at large. He is predeceased by his wife Padma and leaves behind three daughters (Narmadha, Pamathi and Manjula) and two grandchildren Jothi and Vikram, the love of his life.

May he attain Moksha.

Sandran Para Waran

PS

Dr. Mahendra was the eldest son of Dr. Ramasamy Pillai Somasundaram, and his wife Maheswari Somasundaram. His brothers were Dr. Kailasan Somasundaram in Malaysia, and Dr. Kumaresan Somasundaram (deceased)



SPECIAL FEATURE

THE TAMIL NUMERALS

By: Kumar Punithavel

Recently I chanced upon reading an article in 'The Hindu', dated 29th December 2011. The title of the article was 'Ancient numbers on Ramanujan's land'. (Ref-1) It was mentioned that there isn't much written evidence of numerals in manuscripts, as palm leaf manuscripts decay with time and hardly last for more than 200 years. However, two-thousand-year-old Thirukkural, a book of ethics on as its couplet # 392 mentions.

*The twain that lore of numbers and of letters give
Are eyes, the wise declare, to all on earth that live ---392*

Meaning, numbers and letters are both the eyes of the living. Physical eyes will have no sense if one doesn't have the knowledge of numbers and letters.

Further it was mentioned in Tholkaapiyam which is older in its stanza # 655. 4 mentions about numerals. It was also pointed out in that article that the oldest stone inscription featuring a numeral is the Tamil-Brahmi cave inscription from Thondur, near Gingee, in Villipuram district, assigned to about 3rd Century C.E. Fig1.

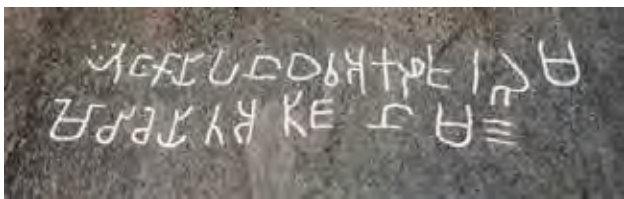


Fig1

The numeral 3 engraved at the end of a short two-line inscription in the cave is represented by three horizontal parallel lines.

As for pottery inscription A well-preserved pottery inscription from Alagankulam near Rameswaram has only the numeral incised in fairly large size (Fig.2). The inscription is dated to the 1st or 2nd Century CE.



Fig2

The figure three gives an idea of the evolution of the Tamil numerals from the Brahmi script through manuscript stage to the present print numerals. (Fig 3)

When the European nations conquered the Island of Sri Lanka, which was called Ceylon, the manuscript numerals were used. The name of the Island being Sri Elyom, became Ceylon in the foreign dialect, Sri becoming C and last letter M becoming N. Please refer to Fig 4. For numerals used by the Tamils during the time when the invaders came to the island.

0	?	?	?	0	It is claimed that the Tamil numerals evolved out of Brahmi script from the inscriptional stage to manuscript to print!
1	-	+	+	௧	
2	=	2	2	௨	
3	≡	௩	௩	௩	
4	∴	௪	௪	௪	
5	∵	௫	௫	௫	
6	∶	௬	௬	௬	
7	∷	௭	௭	௭	
8	∸	௮	௮	௮	
9	∹	௯	௯	௯	

Fig 3.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	100	1000
0	௧	௨	௩	௪	௫	௬	௭	௮	௯	௧௦	௧௦௦	௧௦௦௦
day	month	year	debit	credit	as above	rupee	numeral					
௨	௩	௪	௫	௬	௭	௮	௯	௧௦	௧௦௦	௧௦௦௦		

Fig 4.

After being ruled by Dutch and Portuguese, finally it became a colony under the British empire. During the time of Queen Victoria ¼ Cent coins were in use. Please see Fig 5.



Fig 5.

It is interesting to note that in the coin issued in the year 1890, the value of the coin in Tamil is given as 'வ சதம்', meaning ¼ cent. 'வ' in Tamil numerals means 1/4. The tradition of using Tamil numerals continues, under the reign of her successor King George the VI, the value of fifty cents is given as '௫௦ சதம்'. Here '௫' refers to five hence it is fifty cents.



Fig 6

This tradition of using Tamil numerals on coins by the British continued until Ceylon got its independence in 1948. As late as 1944 On the ten-



Fig 7

cent coin you can see the Tamil numeral '௧௦'. In this numeral, '௧' refers to 1.

Thus, '௧௦' refers to ten. In 1948 February 4th got its independence and everything changed. The Tamil numerals went out of fashion and the Roman numerals came in. To sum it all up, the year before last when I visited another island Mauritius, I found they have the Tamil numerals on their one hundred Dollar notes. Please see Figure 8.



Fig 8

On the bottom left-hand corner, the value of the note is given as '௧௦௦'. Here too ௧ refers to one meaning '௧௦௦' refers to 100. Last but not least I have given a poster on a wall for your perusal. They can understandably be proud to proclaim to the world it is 'One Island with many peoples and all are proud to be Mauritians'. Well done, Mauritius.

By: Kumar Punithavel
Canada

Ref-1 <https://www.thehindu.com/features/friday-review/history-and-culture/ancient-numbers-in-the-land-of-ramanujan/article2755518.ece>



BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

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Timeline Now

Status Photo / Video Event, Milestone + Create Page

The things I learn, teaching English

I was taught at school that yours sincerely, yours faithfully and yours truly are all valid sign-offs for formal letters.

I've just used yours sincerely all over the place since then for any formal letter writing.

Now I am learning that there is a code to all this too.

Who decides these things?

Apparently only if you know the name of the person you are writing to

and starting out as Dear Mr. X / Ms. Y - you sign off with yours sincerely.

Otherwise, if the name of the person is unknown, it's Dear Sir /Madam

and yours faithfully at the end.

Eh? Why should I be faithful to people I don't even know?

I'll stick to sincere.

Yours sincerely,

Thulasi

Going back to my traditional roots



Cooked for the first time using the bamboo puttu mould.

It supposedly releases a special taste and aroma in the puttu that can't be had in the metal moulds, as per the old timers hankering for the olden days.

Not sure I got any whiff of either taste or fragrance differently.

That coconut shell tip is pretty hard to find in the puttu too.

I shove it out the other end hot and then it takes forever to find that small brown piece in the red brown rice puttu.

Also, I made mushroom curry. And I'm a good cook even if I do say so myself.



Thulasi Muttulingam Favorites - November 20, 2021

Ooh, what are the Tamil and Sinhalese ones?

Adam Sharp @AdamCSharp

Daydreaming phrases in different languages:

5. Away with the fairies (English)
4. Thinking of blue almonds (Polish)
3. Dreaming of green horses on walls (Romanian)
2. Pondering the crab's immortality (Mexican Spanish)
1. In his head three are singing and two are dancing (Greek)

7:37 AM - 11/18/21 - TweetDeck

Tara Wine-Queen Writes November 19, 2021

Language is so fun. Away to the fairies with me now

@adamcsharp on Twitter

You and 4 others 8 Comments

Chameli Karunathilake Building dream castles - sinhalese

Mahirajah Punithavathy Mehala ஆகாயக் கோட்டை கட்டுதல்

Thulasi Muttulingam Ah thanks. Looks like it's the same in Tamil and Sinhala then. A similar expression in English too: building castles in the air.

Sumaiya Gul In Urdu it is "khyali pulao banana" which translates to "preparing imaginary pulao"

Janu Kariyawasam I think "dawal heena dakinawa" is also a common one in Sinhala.

Dharshini Vijayaruban I was thinking the same - isn't it, 'pagal kanavu kaanuthai'

Thulasi Muttulingam Yes - but that's the literal daydreaming which we have in most languages. Are there similar poetic metaphors to refer to it in our language?

Dharshini Vijayaruban Thulasi Muttulingam very weak in that subject; esp, in tamil idioms..

Azzam Ameen January 30 at 2:55 AM

20-year-old Indukadevi Ganesh from Mullaitivu wins gold in the Under 25 category 50-55kg sector girls kickboxing competition in Pakistan

0 Comments 2 Shares

Tharjini Sivalingam February 3 at 11:57 PM

It was indeed a good meet-up yesterday with Hon. Nimal Rajapaksa! Looking forward to doing my best for my nation thru sports!

#Genie #Netball #sports

6



SPECIAL FEATURE

Words of Peace

Treasures Within

We are here to try to understand something—because life is not a static thing. And what's happening in your life matters to you. And it's your life, your existence.

And of all the things that happen and will happen in your life, (all the dramas and all the traumas), there will always be one possibility that will remain—and that possibility is that you can be in peace, that you can have that joy, that you can feel this incredible gift called “life.”

Because here I am. I'm alive—and the way I explain it, that there are two walls. And there's a wall. I went through that wall—I don't know where I was, but I went through that wall—and now I am between the two walls. And between the two walls, I'm marching.

There's nothing I can do about it; there's no pause button; there is no stop button. There isn't even a rheostat that says, “Slow down.”

It's just marching at a rate—and it's marching, and it's marching, and I know where it's going. I know exactly where it's going. And it's not going left or right or up or down; it's going from wall A, (or I should call it “wall B”)—to “wall D!”

To me, it's very straightforward—there is a power that runs through this entire universe—that was there before, is, and will be. It's absolute; it permeates everything. And that power has allowed this thing called “nature,” (heard of that? It's called “nature”), to exist. And all things that we see, touch, hear, smell—feel—are compliments of nature.

So, some people call that power “God.” Some people call that power, not God. What difference does it make? What, I mean, what difference does it make?

I'm just talking about an audit of life. Since you are going from this wall to that wall—we've already established that, right? And it's afoot, right? And you're all alive, right? Wouldn't it be nice to know—and take an audit of what you've got? “Where are you at?” So What have you got?

You have your pain and you have your suffering, right? You have some bad memories too, don't you? Oh, by the way, here's another one. Sometimes it feels like you're a pressure cooker, right? (You know what a pressure cooker is, right?) “Powkhhkhhkhh...” And sometimes it feels like this pressure cooker isn't just a pressure cooker—it's going to blow. Like, “Pouchkhhkhouw!”

And you always think it's the big things in life, the big hurdles that must be really making this pressure cooker go. But it's not. It's the little things. Just pay attention to those little things. Start looking around, “So, what, what in the world are these things? What is this load that



I am carrying? What is, what is this pressure that I create for myself?”

And this is what we were talking about: the audit. So, where are you? Now, let's see what you have. You have in you an ocean of joy—immense, immense, endless, endless joy.

You have in you, endless tranquility. You have in you, endless peace. You have in you, lake after lake after lake of serenity. You have in you the most profound wisdom. Indeed, you have in you the most exquisite lit burning lamp—that holds in it the power to remove any darkness.

You have in you the might and the strength (not through your muscles, but through your wisdom) that is capable of single-handedly winning the greatest war that you will ever fight. Single-handedly, you have the capacity—this is how much strength you have—you have the capacity to win, unquestionably, win the war over ignorance.

So.... Now, we're back to audit time—I want to ask you a question. And my question to you is this: “How much of all that beautiful stuff I just talked about is reflected in your life in every single day in every single moment?” Or if somebody preemptively takes up your parking space, do you go bonkers?

A person with such a might—that holds in them the promise to be able to conquer ignorance—loses their cool because somebody stole their parking space? Because your dog ran away? Because your husband said, “I don't like you anymore?” Your wife said, “Goodbye. I found something better?”

(No, I mean, just, just, just asking.... That's the point of the audit, right? You've got to ask some questions here. Just asking.)

So, time for audit again. For the human being that has this ocean, this ocean of peace, how much of that ocean is reflected in your existence? For this human being who, in them, has these, lake after lake of serenity, how much of that serenity is actually accounted for in your life?

This strength that you have to

win the war.... Everybody, every human being on the face of this earth is born with that exceptional strength—no imagination here; just pure, simple—that special strength needed to overcome ignorance in your life, (not somebody else's life, in your life), how much of that is accounted for in your existence?

And all I'm saying is, “Can you include these things you already have?” That's all you have to do—you have to just include them in your life, every day. “Serenity? , come on over. Peace? This-a-way. Here we go! Joy? Ah, yup, come on. Let's go.” That's all. Just have to include it. Like, “Whoa.”

You know, a lot of people say—they come to an event like this, and they go, “What—you didn't give us anything.” And I want to tell you something. What I give you when you come to my event is priceless. I give you a new way of thinking—a new way of thinking that can change the rest of your life. That's what I give you.

The good news is that that power, that beauty, that joy, that peace, all of these things are the witnesses to that power being in you. And so far it is, you are between the walls.... And when you go through that wall, that won't be the case.

And so whilst you are in between these walls, you have a mission to accomplish. Each one of you on the face of this earth, you have a mission to accomplish—and the mission you need to accomplish is to flood your life with joy, is to flood your life with the peace.

It's time, isn't it?—to take that audit and say, “Well, enough is enough! Good God, it has—all this junk I've been carrying all my life, it hasn't helped me. So, now is a good time....” Because anytime is a good time, (so far you haven't hit that wall). Even if you are one-one-millionth of an inch, centimeter, millimeter away from that wall, it's still a good time; you haven't hit it.

And then, once you've hit it—I mean, but forget about this “old and young” stuff—really do; it's okay.

Your heart is timeless. Be a part of that timeless heart. That space in which there is that serenity, that space in which there is that peace, in that space where there is that joy, the boundless space that exists inside of you, that is timeless. More you use it, it will not go down.

So, take an audit—and whatever you see in your audit.... You have to perform the audit; I'm not going to make the audit; you have to make the audit of your life, and whatever you're missing, dig in and get it—before you hit that wall.

Because that's the day you will begin to live. That is the day you will actually, really begin to live. Not in this molasses, not in this goo of ideas and imagination—I mean, and don't, don't get me wrong; I'm not, I'm not saying imagination is bad. We all need imagination; that's really good!

In this life, in this existence, one, you have everything you need. Two, it's within you. Three, it's yours. Four, all you have to do—is without any fear of failure, let the river of peace run through you. That's all. That's all. Don't fight with it; let it run; be who you are—and enjoy.

In one way, we're all strangers going on this ocean, this voyage, this voyage that has something to do with time, something to do with those six elements of oxygen and carbon and nitrogen and all of that stuff. Here we are, something to do with millions of years of evolution, something to do with all of that.

But at the end of the day, here you are. And you have to look at what's possible now. Not the journey of imagination, but the journey of experience, to have made it possible to have peace in your life—the greatest achievement. The greatest, the greatest achievement a human being can achieve.

You will get the ultimate recognition for it. The award is peace. The award is joy, your joy, your peace, your life fulfilled.

PremRawat

www.premrawat.com

www.timelesstoday.com



28th Anniversary Muthuthamby Perairavar (Emeritus Principal, Manipay Hindu College)



Excerpts from his Memo Pad:

1. Manipay Hindu College was built on the Hindu Saiva vision of Thirumoolar. On the first day I joined the school, I saw in the assembly Hall, a picture of Lord Nataraja and the Saiva saints singing praises of the Dance. At that time I never knew that my first step was my last step too – that the Dance contained for me the message of my Life. Life is an opportunity for a soul to learn, grow, evolve, mature, through the learning process called Panchakrithiya to its Ultimate fulfilment and Freedom.

I learnt English and Latin in my hectic school days, instead of Tamil and Hinduism. Colonial education forced me to make this choice. If such an identity crisis could happen to me in my homeland, due to foreign rule, how much more likely and real the possibility for a Tamil child living in a foreign country. My family and my college saved me. Ultimately the inner Dance triumphed.

It is the sacred duty of all parents to pass on atleast a little of our ancient heritage to our children here and save them from a sad identity crisis and its ill effects.

Sixty years of reading English did not make me a black Englishman. I am proud to be a Tamil Hindu Marxist. (Religion for inside cleaning and Marxism for outside cleaning, I said this in 1954)

2. At the MHC, OSA.

I have come here as an Alumni. Forget that I was a principal or teacher – that is past history. Old boy is green as my heart, ever young, a child, a boy.

I appeal to that, not to the head that is bloody, diverse, and egoistic. MHC created me

If we trust each other we grow. If we distrust each other, we fight and destroy each other. We feel good because, everything you see in the other is also inside you. Be true to yourself and not to a set of rules. Else you end up an empty shell. A coat- no person in it.

We can do so many big things.

Let us be humble, sensible, and not controversial. We have strong feelings and ideologies about things. But this is about MHC

Centre of Education should be the Heart, not the Head. Heart responds to life more than the Head. Life is a flowing river, not stratified Dogma or Theory ...

3. Mind can deal only with horizontal time, love is formed in vertical time. Our minds think, not feel. A realised man lives in the present in his essence.

If you live in the head and by the head –enemies win

If you live in the head and by the heart – I win

...Guru's grace is needed. With Guru's help the heart is strengthened and head is weakened. Alone impossible.

Like me seek a Guru. Shiva becomes Guru to save us. You cannot measure Him via book knowledge- Head

Today people are religious, but

unspiritual as a lump of clay- miss the inner reality, inner magic. You can debate that question. But we need spirituality....

It is possible to become more energetic, alive, and beautiful, as we get older, if we live in the Light.

We can choose our death

4. His words on the night before, with his hand on the heart,

'I can feel the Dance of Life - it is enjoyable, it is beautiful'

You can experience the Dance of Life – it is enjoyable

His last writing on his memo pad

“... Countdown time....

My breath tells me that. It is half a breath now, very soon it will be quarter. Every breath is a vote of thanks to God.”

5. World is a stage, you are the witness to the evolution of your soul-graduation ceremony into immortality – the last day of your journey.

- Jan 20th 1994 Friday 4.00 a.m.



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SPECIAL FEATURE

Air Disasters

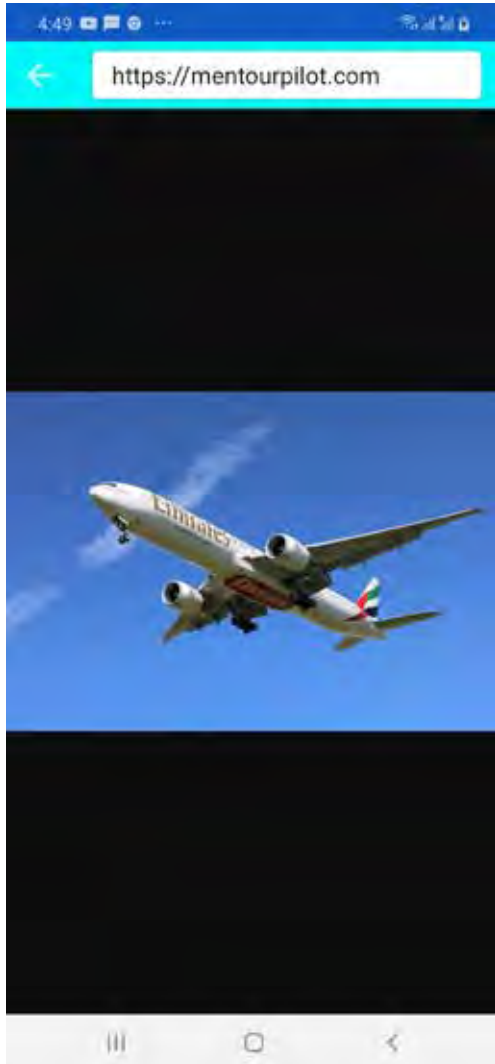
What happened to Airlines Emirates flight EK231 20th of December 2021??

Has Emirates Airlines Eclipsed by its money and lost its value in managing the first and the foremost airline of the modern Dubai? Proclaimed as one of the best in the Mideast, I remember in 1985 this airline fledged its wings and have seen it from walking, running and to blossom in to a promising airline with Maurice Flannagen and later with Tim Clark at the helm. Has it lost its guard down? I know the H.E. Sheikh Rashid is very much involved in this. Whatever it is, things had happened and have been happening with Emirates. This particular aircraft had come from

Zurich about two days back and was resting and was readied for flight EK 231 Dubai - Washington D. C. The Aircraft was cleared by ATC for takeoff from Runway 30R and was on the roll at 2.30 am, the speed V1 has been reached, the aircraft was on its V2 (Speed for pull up or Rotation of the aircraft) and was still rolling on the runway at almost 265knots, almost at the end of the long runway of 13000 feet, realizing this one of the pilots (as if God told him" pulled the stick up") and the flight got airborne barely missing all the high rise buildings in Deira, Dubai by less than 200 feet according to initial reports. Being an active aviation enthusiast and worked in this field for almost 50 years I would categorize this a miracle in aviation history. On the same breadth it would have been the worst aviation accident in its history by the sheer negligence, a "Story Book" of human error in aviation log books.

Boeing 777 made its maiden flight in 1994, United airlines took its first delivery. I would say a state of the art aircraft and the "fly by wire" technology, called Triple 777 and about 785 of them are still flying all over the world powered by Pratt &Whitney engines. It is the first to be designed entirely by computer "fly by wire" aircraft. This means that the controls surfaces on the wings and tail are operated by electric signals "by wire" from the controls in the flight deck .. 70 different airlines operate 777, one of the most beautiful of the Boeing family. According to pilots it's a great plane sophisticated, very capable, nice to handle, and one of the safest aircraft in the skies. It's a fully automated aircraft that has many features to help the pilots to fly this beauty.

Flight EK231 Dubai (DXB) to Washington Dulles (IAD) with a scheduled departure at 02.25 am, 777-300 ER, was cleared for takeoff



by ATC Dubai and was on the takeoff run on runway 030R attained its initial speed (V1) of 160 knots and reached its rotating speed of 190 knots and reached almost 260 knots but still the aircraft was on the runway, not airborne, just before it ran through the end of the runway and crashed into the houses and the high rise buildings near the airport, one of pilots pulled the aircraft's nose up and was airborne at almost 175 feet over Diera City Centre. Since this was a 14 ½ hour flight to Dulles, there were 4 pilots on board, after 7 hours the other 2 set of pilots will take the Controls because of flight time limitations. There were almost 300 passengers with the crew. Somehow the pilots realized their mistake and corrected in the nick of time avoiding a major disaster in aviation history on ground. Within two days of this incident "Dot Aviation" reported this. From the NOTAM that was issued days after this we can conclude, it was a simple pilot error at the best in the cockpit in modern aviation while being on ground. Preliminary reports indicated that all the 4 pilots were sacked which was denied later. This is what would have had happened. The pilots before takeoff forget to set the Autopilot to an initial climb height of 4000 feet and it was on zero and the flight director was showing the nose of the aircraft in the ground and they were blindly following the flight management control system. This particular aircraft arrived from Zurich (ZRH) two days before and the crew set the altitude to zero after landing. This was not noticed by the crew for the Washington flight. The pilots do a checklist in the cockpit before each and every flight for landing and takeoff. In the good old days it's done manually. Especially in 777, it is built in the system and the pilots use a cursor like a laptop Track pad to click through the check lists. This ensures nothing is missed and

alerts if an incorrect switch or lever selection has been made by pilots. It will be still a mystery how both the pilots had missed this auto pilot setting. According to a friend of mine an experienced pilot of 45 years, lives in Adelaide said that a female pilot was in command at the time of takeoff. I understand that the airline naturally wants the citizens of Dubai at the controls or being checked out as captains or co- pilots but they should not rush into this scenario in a hurry unless they are fully trained and certified and also must have at least minimum 5 years of flying in the right hand side, This is my assumption, maybe I am wrong. Also I learnt after this incident that at Emirates the flight training insist on pilots to rely mostly on automation systems of the plane rather than on their manual skills. I know well pilots do the takeoff and landing manually. Once they attained the cruise altitude or height, they engage the auto pilot for the long sector flights which reduces the work load for pilots. The pilots normally disengage auto pilot when they are almost on final approach and do the landing manually. I am not surprised to see this kind of procedures are still used by pilots in USA and other countries. But some airlines in that part of the world rely on this automation reasons best known to them. I heard there are couple of other incidents after this with Emirates which could have endangered, "the sky of aviation". One flight took off without ATC clearance, another almost near collision of two aircrafts on ground recently.

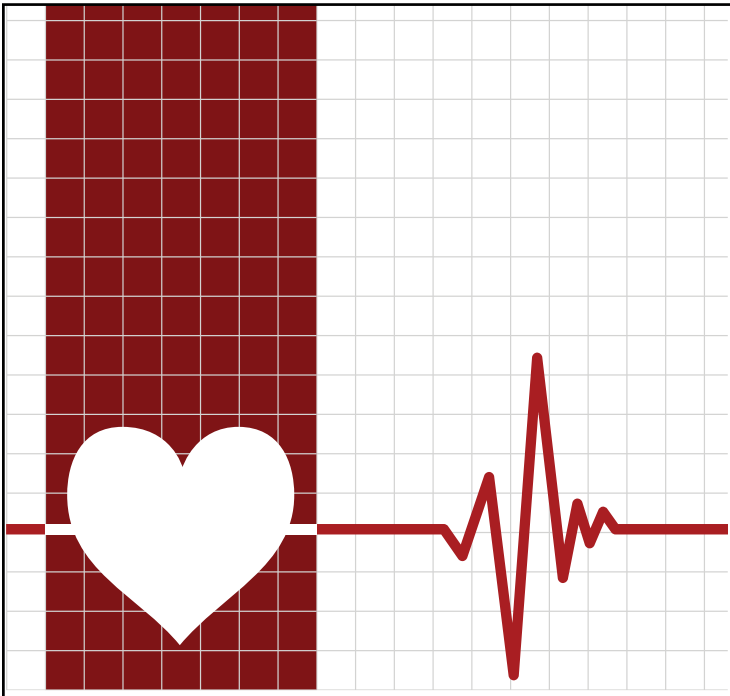
Personally don't want to see another calamity in aviation.



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(Pictures seen here are taken at an Eekai event)



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SPECIAL FEATURE



THE MARUTHANAMADAM VEGETABLE MARKET

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C. Kamalaharan



Market

On our return from Malaysia in 1949 my father bought a piece of land along the Jaffna – K.K.S road at Inuvil mainly to settle us away from the densely populated ancestral home and built a house a stone's throw distance away from the Maruthanamadam junction. Those days there were only three houses between Maruthanamadam junction and the Inuvil MacLeod hospital. Inuvil is a red soiled fertile land in which vegetable crops richly thrive spreading over a far stretched lush green landscape.

I remember as a young boy the vegetable market those days functioning in a small plot of land between the gas filling station and the K.K.S road. Hardly any possibility of widening the market area to accommodate more farmers and the continuous inflow of reaped farm products the market was later shifted inside the Uduvil village council area where there was an elongated thatched roof building. In the building was the library where news papers both in English and Tamil were kept on the tables. There was also a table tennis table provided with net rackets and ping pong balls. In the evenings film music was relayed through speak-

ers. It was during our time Radio Ceylon commenced the commercial service presenting continuous film music. Daily in the evenings people arrived there to read news papers and listen to music both being the only entertainments then.

The arrival of farmers with farm produce from other areas and the influx of consumers from neighbouring villages prompted the expansion of the marketing area. As a result the village council office had to be shifted to the Pradesh Sabha in Chunnakam. With the widening of the area the market became popular with abundance of fresh vegetables and fruits.

The active farmers arrive early in the morning with their farm produce and the market becomes a hive of activity. The pealing of the Vairava temple bell early in the morning serves as the time piece for office workers school children and others engaged in various trades to prepare themselves for duty.

The Maruthanamadam junction now is congested with the setting up of new buildings and the plying of vehicles in all directions. The Jaffna - K.K.S road and the Kaithady - Manipay road crossing at the Maruthanamadam junction

causes heavy traffic jam. Furthermore the K.K.S road is the busiest road in Jaffna as most business establishments factories offices and schools are functioning along this road. Furthermore school children especially girls cycling along this road is a common sight. Vegetable vendors with heavy load on their bicycle carriers tractors land masters and even bullock drawn carts are familiar sights along the road.

There are many attractions all along the road. The newly constructed 72 feet majestic statue of Lord Anjaneya in front of the Lord's temple along the K.K.S road at Maruthanamadam can be seen from far off places. Normal poojas for Lord Anjaneya

are performed daily in the morning noon and evening. Also special poojas are held on Tuesdays and Saturdays as these are days considered special for Lord Hanuman.

The Pallappa Vairavar temple close to the junction is revered by everyone.

People leaving Jaffna during their outward journey pay obeisance at the temple for a safe journey. The Thurai tea boutique Thevi vilas and other business establishments set up much earlier in the junction are always busy with brisk business. With the setting up of many other business establishments the Maruthanamadam junction has become a very busy town.



Anjaneyar Kovil



SPECIAL FEATURE

Speaking to suit the Audience



By: J.A. Rajah

Men of eloquent speech and precision in words will choose their words and style on an assessment of the audience and its disposition. Every good speaker assesses the calibre and requirements of his audience and proceeds to speak in a manner that appeals and easily understood by them. Competent and successful speakers will suit their content and words of presentation to the appreciation and receptive mood of the audience. Winston Churchill, war-time prime minister of England was a master of the art of choosing the right word, and in the right context, for which he practiced and prepared a lot.

*“Avaiyariyar sollal methkolpavar sollin,
Vahai ariyar vallkathoom ill”*

“அவையறியார் சொல்லல்மேற் கொள்பவர் சொல்லின்
வகையறியார் வல்லதூஉம் இல்”

Persons who venture to speak without assessing its nature and mood, do not know the art of speech, nor will they ever be good at anything else. It is proper to be radiant before the brilliant, but before simple ‘white’ folk, one will do well to assume colour of slaked lime. In an assembly of one’s betters, in age and accomplishments it would be an outstanding virtue, to be modest and exercise restraint, not seeking to precede in speech. Being guilty of slipping from the right path, in front of an assembly is like losing one’s foothold in a rushing river.

*“Kattarinthar kalvi vilangum kasadarach,
Sol therital vallar ahathu”*

“கற்றறிந்தார் கல்வி விளங்கும் கசடறச்
சொற்றெரிதல் முன்னர் இழுக்கு”

The knowledge and expertise of brilliant men will shine only in the midst of accomplished men of learning and critical judgement. When wise men, with understanding of men and matters, speak to an assembly of the learned men, it is like channeling water to flourishing plants.

Wise men capable of good and convincing speech before a gathering of learned men, will not fritter away their talent speaking to an assembly of fools, even by mistake.

*“Pullavaiyul poccharnthum soolartha nal avayul,
Nanku sella solluvar”.*

“புல்லவையுள் பொச்சாந்தும் சொல்லற்க நல்லவையுள்
நன்கு செலச்சொல்லு வார்”

Indulging in learned discourses before a gathering who are not your intellectual peers, is like pouring water into the gutters. The idea is similar the Biblical statement in St. Matthew Chapter 7 verse 6 which instructs: ‘Neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet’.

(Kural: 711-720)



Valluvar's Views



THE RISE OF WOMEN IN THE MODERN WORLD

By: J A Rajah

A. The Push Towards Equality of The Sexes:

The status of women is gradually increasing especially in the developed countries. However, there were reports to the effect that boys were favoured in the classroom while girls were discounted and ignored even in countries like the US and Canada. Later the report was found to be incorrect. The US Congress passed the 'Gender Equity Act', which allocated millions of dollars per year to programs designed to redress the so-called bias against girls. Money was included in the act to reprogram teachers who were 'unconsciously sexist.' In September 2021, the picture dramatically changed. Roughly, 60% of college admissions are women, and the schools of higher learning struggle to keep male population at 40% level. Even in eastern countries like India and Sri Lanka, the number of women seeking higher education has increased. Equal opportunities are given to both sexes. However, people argue that men still earn money and hold power positions in the world. However in recent decades, women have sought to invade practically every area that was once reserved for men.

B. Women gaining grounds:-

It is found to be good to give equal opportunities for both boys and girls in order for the welfare of the society at large. However, the statistics in the US point towards a trend that shows female dominance. 59.5% of college enrollment were women in 2021.



Enrollment for Bachelor's degrees is 57.4% in 2020, Master's degrees is 60.1% and Doctorates is 53.1% for women. What we see is a world trained upside down. Instead of men becoming leaders, we see many floating aimlessly as more and more leadership positions go to women. That is the pattern in other countries too. Srimavo Bandaranaike as Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Srimathi



Vijayalakshmi Pandit as President of India, Indra Gandhi as Prime Minister of India, Margaret Thatcher as Prime-Minister of U.K, Chandrika Cumaranathunga as President of Sri Lanka had already demonstrated to the world that women can wield political power and administrative leadership. In Germany and Australia, women recently became prime ministers. Even in Bangladesh, the President is a woman. A song by Bob Weir (1981) has the line, 'women of the day are smarter than the men in every way'. This has become a reality today. In India the constitution guarantees to all women equality with no discrimination. 39% of women aged 25 received secondary education, there are 14.5% of women in parliament and 27.2% in the labour force. In Africa the rights of women have gradually improved. Women still face various issues related to gender inequality such as disproportionate levels of poverty and education, poor health and nutrition, lack of political power, limited work-force participation, gender-based violence and child marriages. Latin America is witnessing a rise in the state of women with women over 25 receiving secondary education (50%), women in labour force-59.6%, and women in parliament: 9.6%.

C. The Balance in Male-Female Relationship:

Male and female relations have never been in perfect balance. Even today, women are horribly abused in some countries around the world. In some cultures, girls are not allowed to go to school and wives may be beaten crudely without any consequences dealt to their husbands. Yet in the Western world, a different extreme has been promoted and embraced, in which men are treated as bumbling fools incapable of fulfilling their original leadership role. Radical feminists have scorned the idea of male superiority and

out to prove that they can do anything and everything that men can do. They have scaled mountains, piloted planes, ventured to get to the moon and fathomed the deepest oceans.

D. Essentials of a Well-ordered Society:

The equality of men and women is essential to a well-ordered society. Intelligence and ability are common to men and women. The society should be able to get the best talents for the greater good of the people at large. Marriage between one biological male and one biological female can bring children into a balanced, nurturing and loving environment where both male and female contribute unique qualities. Family is a perfect training ground for learning good manners, care for others, self-discipline and self-sacrifice. Men and women are to build each other up, not tear each other down. When boys are left without proper guidance and direction, too many become confused about their expected role in life.-the role of a loving leader. This does not only hurt men; it also hurts women. In fact it hurts the whole society. Therefore, educational planners should take care and try to maintain the balance between the sexes and never give way to the idea that one is superior to the other.

"Paddangal arlvathum, saddangal cheyvathum paarinil pengal naddatha vanthom, eddum arivinil anukku inge penn illaipillai kaan enru kummiyadi"
- Subramaniya Bharathi.

"பட்டங்கள் ஆள்வதும் சட்டங்கள் செய்வதும் பாரினில் பெண்கள் நடத்தவந்தோம் எட்டு மறிவினில் ஆணைக் கிங்கேபெண் இளைப்பில்லை காணென்று கும்மியடி!"

'We women have come to hold degrees and enact laws; we are in no way inferior to men in acquiring attainable knowledge.' (Translation).



Why Can't You Work From Anywhere if You Work From Home?

By: Alia Hoyt

Sep 20, 2021

Bret Bonnet, co-founder of the Illinois-based company Quality Logo Products, Inc. was none too pleased when he found out that one of his employees had moved to another state to work remotely without informing the firm.

"The state he moved to came after us for a week's worth of state income tax that we failed to pay as a result," Bonnet recalls by email, noting that while the amount only totaled \$87, with late fees, fines and penalties, the final sum was \$1,700. "After more than 40 hours and countless phone calls/emails, we eventually got this cleared up, but it just goes to show what a headache out-of-state employees can be unless you're a major national corporation."

Working from home used to be a rare occurrence for most people, but the COVID-19 pandemic has seen many companies really ramp up the remote option to keep things running during unprecedented times. Indeed, it has been largely a success, with employers enjoying increased productivity and happier employees who don't have to commute as much. Major companies like Twitter, Amazon, Zillow and Spotify have announced varying levels of work from home expectations, ranging from occasional office face-time to none at all.

Some states (and even some foreign countries) are enticing remote workers to try them out with all kinds of incentives. Other workers might just want to move someplace more inviting for "work from home." After all, working near the beach or from a mountain cabin sounds better than in a tiny city apartment or a cookie-cutter suburb.

But before you make a move, know this: Just because a job can be done remotely 100 percent of the time doesn't mean you can do it from anyplace you want. So why not?

The Tax Issue

"Each state's income and withholding tax requirements differ for individuals out-of-state, as do the laws on business registration, which depend on several factors, including the nature of the business," emails attorney David Aylor, who is based in Charleston, South Carolina. "States have different thresholds for when employees working remotely triggers tax changes, so each individual situation needs to be assessed by looking at federal, state, and local laws in both a potential remote employee's and the business's location."

It's not just taxes. Employers may also be liable for workers' compensation insurance and unemployment insurance in the state that the employee is working. So, if it's just one person in the company working from that state, it's probably not worth it to take care of all the legal and accounting implications.

"To allow administration to be completed correctly means that the HR and payroll departments would need knowledge of all the different rules in the areas in which employees

resided," emails James Crawford, co-founder, CEO and hiring manager of e-commerce platform DealDrop. "The expense and time spent in applying all these differing rules can prove to be too complicated to allow the employer to permit working in different regions."

Time Zones and Meetings

Even if you work for a large company with locations in all 50 states and several foreign countries, an employer may still not grant your request to work remotely from another state from which you were hired originally. While many employers are cool with not laying eyes on employees every single day, they may still want to have regular in-person meetings. If your office is in Georgia, but you decide to move to California or Canada, that could be a problem.

"Although meetings can be done via web conference, some employers still expect staff to, at least occasionally, call into the office for face-to-face meetings or team building events," says Crawford. "If the team is spread over different states, or even different countries, this can be highly problematic."

Most companies have set "core hours" during which they expect employees to be active. This gets tricky if too many time zones are crossed. "For example, it might be difficult for remote workers in Los Angeles to work for a company in New York because of the three-hour time difference," says Bowen Khong, founder and head of research at ForexToStocks, an online brokerage review firm, who employs many remote workers for his business. "Clocking in at 5 a.m. PST for an 8 a.m. EST shift isn't desirable and makes the workers less productive."

What Happens if You Relocate Under the Radar?

You might be tempted to make the move even if your company forbids it. After all, how would they know that you left town? You'd be surprised.

"Employers find out this sort of thing via social media, where people forget that their colleagues and employers often have access to their posts. If that employee tries to file their taxes in their current state, the employer may find out about the move via a tax agent when the filing flags their alert system," says attorney Aylor, noting that this deception could be grounds for termination.

"Lying about your location could



little girl with dad working from home. - Getty Images

- howstuffworks.com

also cause the business to improperly file their taxes, in which case they may be liable for tax fraud, a very serious legal dilemma that can bankrupt a business quickly," he adds. "Generally, tax agents won't pursue legal action if steps are taken to right the wrong after they discover it. When it comes to legal matters, you do not want to lie and hope you get away with it — be honest and up-front with your employer."

To avoid such mishaps, employers need to clearly communicate the ground rules when offering a remote position and employees need to ask how "remote" they can be if they're thinking of moving location.

"Before you decide to relocate because you work remotely, be sure that the terms of your employment allow you to do so, and if not, stay put or find a new job," says Khong.



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High Cost, High Risk, High Hopes James Webb Space Telescope Successfully Launched

By OUE Research Institute

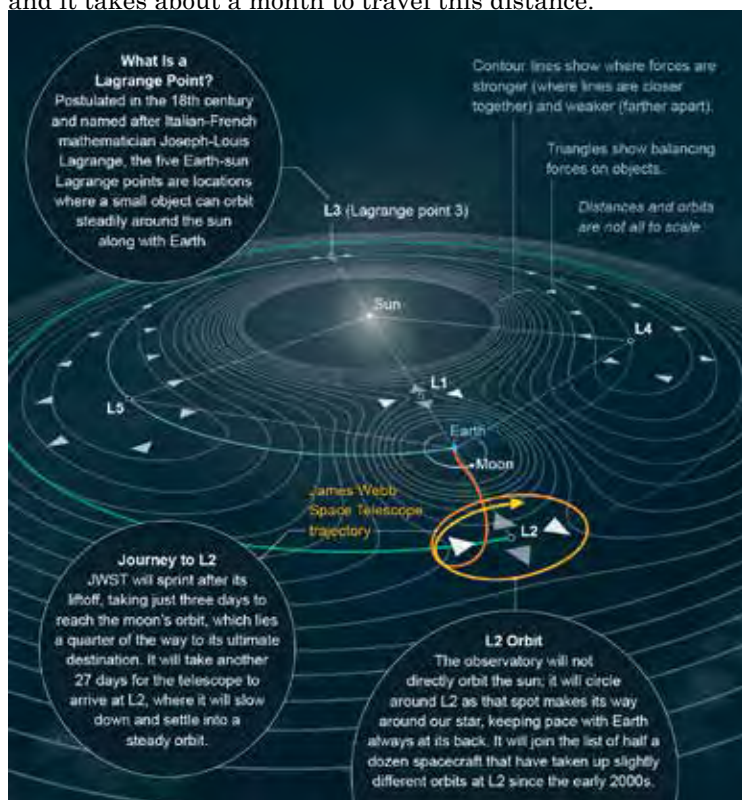
The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is an international collaboration among NASA, the European Space Agency, and the Canadian Space Agency. It cost over 10 billion USD (2016), and the size is approximately over 20m x 14m was launched on December 25, 2021. JWST is a large, space-based observatory optimized for infrared wavelengths, which will complement and extend the discoveries of the Hubble Space Telescope. It will have more extended wavelength coverage and greatly improved sensitivity. The longer wavelengths enable Webb to look further back to find the first galaxies that formed in the early Universe and peer inside dust clouds where stars and planetary systems are forming today. This space-based observatory is named after James E. Webb (1906- 1992), NASA's second administrator. Webb is best known for leading Apollo, a series of lunar exploration programs that landed the first humans on the Moon. However, he also initiated a vigorous space science program responsible for more than 75 launches during his tenure, including America's first interplanetary explorers.

Webb and Hubble

Webb is designed to look deeper into space to see the earliest stars and galaxies that formed in the



Universe and to look deep into nearby dust clouds to study the formation of stars and planets. To do this, Webb will have a much larger primary mirror than Hubble (2.7 times larger in diameter, or about six times larger in area), giving it more light-gathering power. It also will have infrared instruments with more extended wavelength coverage and greatly improved sensitivity than Hubble. Finally, Webb will orbit around the second Lagrange (L2) point, which is about 1.5 million km away from Earth, and it takes about a month to travel this distance.



Webb will maintain its freezing operating temperature, stable pointing, and higher observing efficiency than Earth-orbiting Hubble.

The most important size of a telescope is the diameter of the primary mirror, which is approximately 6.5m for Webb. It is about 2.75 times larger in diameter than Hubble, or about six times larger in area. The Webb has a mass of approximately 6,500 kg on Earth (in orbit, everything is weightless), a little more than half the mass of Hubble. The largest structure of Webb will be its sunshade, which must shield the deployed primary mirror and the tower that holds the secondary mirror. The sunshade is approximately the size of a tennis court.

JWST Communication

The JWST will send science and engineering data to Earth using a high-frequency radio transmitter. Large radio antennas segment of the NASA Deep Space Network will acquire the signals and forward them to the Webb Science and Operation Center at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, Maryland, USA.

The primary Goals

JWST has four primary mission goals:

- Search for the first luminous objects or galaxies formed after the Big Bang.
- Determine how galaxies developed from their appearance until the present.
- Watch the appearance of stars from the first stages to the formation of planetary systems.
- Measure the material and chemical effects of planetary systems and investigate the possibility for life in those systems, including aliens.

Detection Distance

One of the main objectives of JWST is to detect some of the very first-star formations in the Universe. It is assumed to occur somewhere between redshift 15 and 30. At those redshifts, the Universe was only one or two percent of its current age. The Universe is now 13.8 billion years old, and these redshifts correspond to 100 to 250 million years after the Big Bang. The light from the first galaxies has traveled for about 13.6 billion years, over a distance of 13.6 billion light-years.

First galaxies after Big Bang

Current hypotheses of galaxy formation suggest that the birth process for these vast systems of stars may be very violent events and will be billions of times brighter than our Sun. Such events may remain visible at highly redshifted wavelengths. Although much of the energy produced is emitted in the ultraviolet, it will be redshifted into the infrared by the time it gets to us because of the extreme distance (in space and time).

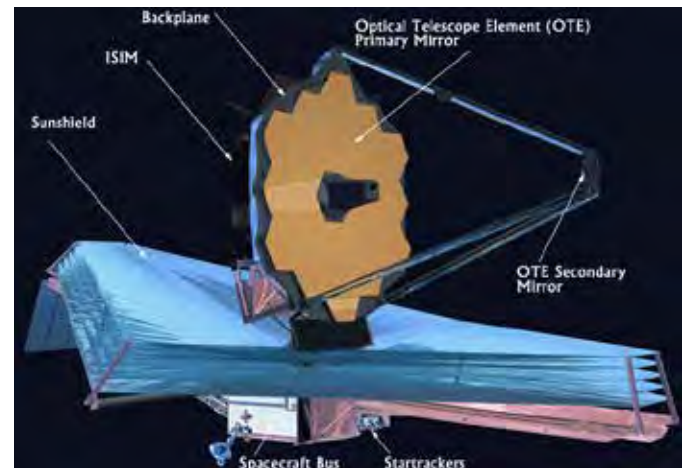
Redshift Measurement

Redshift is a unique astronomical case of a physical phenomenon called the Doppler effect (after Christian Doppler [1803-1853]). The Doppler effect occurs when a source sending out waves (either sound or light) moves to an observer. When the



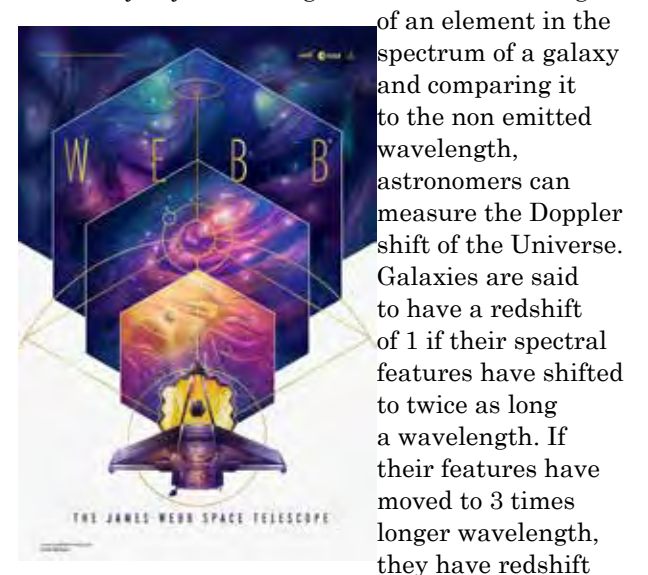
source moves toward the observer, waves arrive earlier than they would in the stationary case, and the wave peaks come closer together (the sound is the higher pitch or the light is bluer). If the source moves away from the observer, the waves get more stretched out (the sound is the lower pitch or the light is redder). The Doppler effect on sound can be heard when a siren or fast train passes.

Most galaxies are moving away from us because the Universe is expanding, so the light from the galaxies is redshifted. The faster it moves away from us, the larger the redshift. How redshift is connected to the distance of an object depends on the expansion rate of the Universe, the geometry of the Universe, and the energy content of the



Universe. Determining these values is an essential subject of investigation of current-day astronomy. Redshifts are measured by taking spectra of the electromagnetic radiation (X-rays, ultra-violet, visible and infrared light, microwaves, radio waves, etc.) of astronomical objects.

Physical processes within the atoms and molecules that make up stars and galaxies cause the spectra to have recognizable features at specific wavelengths. The wavelengths of these atomic and molecular absorptions or emission lines can be measured very accurately. By measuring the observed wavelength



of an element in the spectrum of a galaxy and comparing it to the non emitted wavelength, astronomers can measure the Doppler shift of the Universe. Galaxies are said to have a redshift of 1 if their spectral features have shifted to twice as long a wavelength. If their features have moved to 3 times longer wavelength, they have redshift

2, and so on. Webb is designed to see galaxies at redshifts of 15 or more, where the ultraviolet light is redshifted into the infrared. In the upcoming article, the author will update the status of JWST



SPECIAL FEATURE

MAHAKAVI BHARATI'S WISDOM CONTINUES TO GUIDE HUMANITY

By **Danesh Thirukumaran**
Dayton, New Jersey, USA

Growing up in the United States, I had little exposure to the history and ideals of citizens in the Indian subcontinent. The education system, alongside western culture, did not greatly emphasize the triumphs of states and individuals within the subcontinent. I was inclined to believe the method of life and ideals of those originally residing in the subcontinent were below those of the west due to my minimal exposure to the history of the Indian subcontinent, alongside the inherent superiority complex promoted within western education and culture. This point of view changed as I began to fully understand the influence collective morals, values, and principles have in dictating the progress of a nation and its people.



C. Subramania Bharati

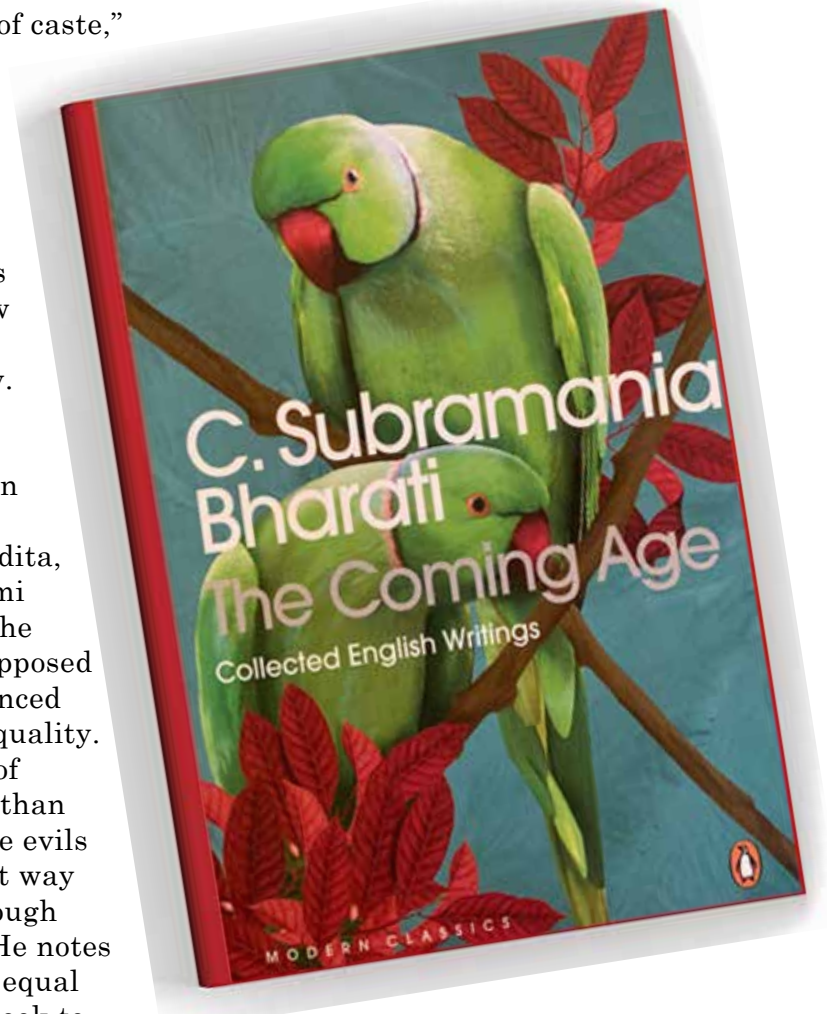
(December 11, 1882 – September 11, 1921)

Recently, I read *The Coming Age*, a collection of Mahakavi Subramania Bharati's English writings put together by Mira T. Sundara Rajan, Bharati's great-granddaughter. Bharati was given the title, Mahakavi, meaning supreme poet, on account of his exemplary literary capabilities extending beyond Tamil, as he was also fluent in languages such as English, French, and Sanskrit. "Bharati was a nationalist who fought against British rule in India and a social reformer who advocated passionately for women's

equality and the eradication of caste," Rajan noted. Although the English writings published in this book have been available for many decades now, this compilation allows a global audience to fully engage in Bharati's teachings and ideology, recognizing how they may continue to guide humanity's progression today.

Bharati's criticism of the way men treated women in society displayed his evolution as a human being. Through interactions with Sister Nivedita, a disciple of the famous Swami Vivekananda, he unlearned the social norms dictating the supposed "place of women." This influenced his advocacy for women's equality. Bharati believed women are of greater spiritual evolution than men. Women acknowledge the evils associated with men's current way of civilizing one another, through violence and imprisonment. He notes that men are afraid to afford equal opportunities to women and look to control their sexuality. Men over time have looked to develop hierarchical relationships in not only their personal life, but also on a societal basis. Exerting power and control to enslave others has been a desire throughout human history. This is seen through the mischaracterization of caste as theorized in the sacred Hindu scripture, the Bhagavad Gita. Political figures within India have attempted to cite that their use of caste is God-given. However, Bharati comments that this theory presented within the Gita has yet to be put into action, as the competitive nature humans have cultivated in part hinders this.

As we continue to progress within the modern age of technological advancement, the competition for material desires and goods continues to spiral out of control. Losing our sense of self, while continuing to mistreat our planet will inhibit our upward evolution as a society, Bharati noted in 1915. Society today faces a seemingly insurmountable task in slowing climate change, induced in large part by the excessive competition us humans have played into. If we truly are higher beings compared to animals, then through the Will within ourselves we must strive to learn to live in harmony with the planet and the greater universe. To learn why we are inclined to promote competition amongst one



another, we must unlearn our unrelenting desire for power.

In his 1915 essay, 'The Siddha and the Superman', Bharati compared German philosopher Nietzsche's *Übermensch* (Superman) and Hinduism's *Siddha* (Perfected Man) to reveal the importance the two terms have in revealing "... the modes of thought, ... the historical reminiscences and spiritual aspirations" of different communities of people. Striving to become Siddha is to understand that we should not desire the will to power but desire the Will itself in its entirety. The Will itself holistically encompasses the will to love, the will to be, and the Will of the universe, to live harmoniously amongst one another. Power is present in society as well as our individual relationships. Its inherence within our lives' points to Bharati's insight that we must desire the Will within ourselves holistically, lessening the importance we collectively have placed on power.

Bharati's vision for change has given us a way to reflect on how far we have come, and how far we still must go. Humanity's upward evolution depends upon our ability to live in harmony with the universe. The version of society in which we can all live peacefully depends upon each of us reevaluating our own individual morals, as well as the morals of the society governing us.

BOOK REVIEW

SPECIAL FEATURE



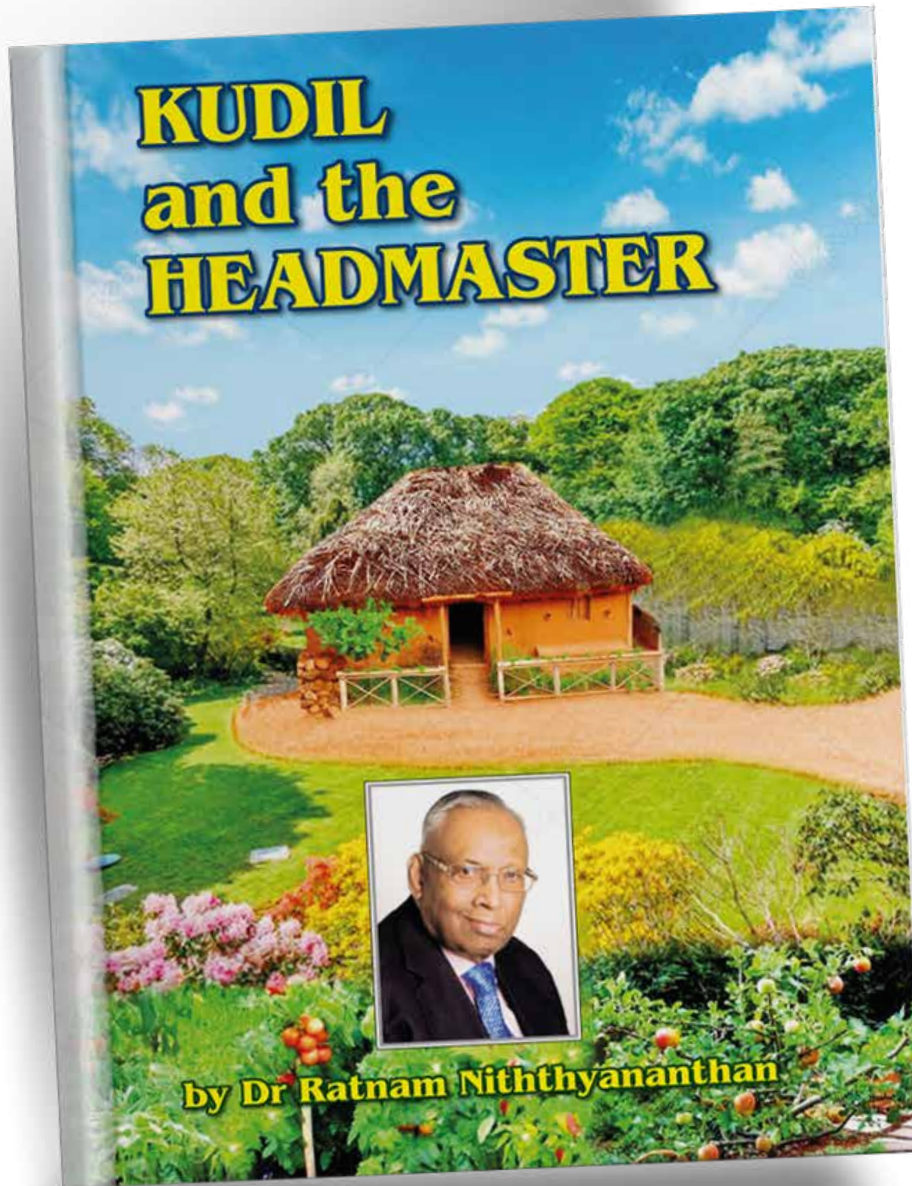
KUDIL AND THE HEADMASTER

● Author: **Dr. Ratnam Niththyananthan**

It is indeed my pride and privilege to review Kudil and the Headmaster, an autobiographic exposition of the life and times of my friend and colleague Dr Ratnam Niththyananthan whom I will also be fondly referring to as Nithy hereafter.

The author sounds quite sceptical about his command of English and expresses regret for not devoting much attention to learning it as desired by his father, nonetheless, reading through his work makes you feel that he had gained adequate command of the language despite the initial setbacks during schooling for, whilst going through his later chapters in his career building process it is indeed commendable the manner in which he has tidied over any inadequacies in English. Obtaining an Honours degree in Chemistry at the University of Colombo, proceeding to UK as a commonwealth scholar, and obtaining a Doctoral degree all bears testimony to it and cites a good example of optimism and perseverance for others in the same situation to follow.

Reading through his work and whilst observing the major benchmarks in his life span what strikes one uppermost is the fact



and adventurous. He outlines the many and varied stages in the process of conquering her and later the happy life together confronting all the stress and tribulations they had to face together due to several morbid situations in the family when his wife firmly stood by him like the “boy who stood on the burning deck.” All in all, his work spells out the tenets of building up a well - knit happy family life, a dictum worthy of propagation when families tend to have fragmented thoughts and divisive outlook in life.

Nithy has used his early retirement from employment to serve the Tamil Community in London by playing the cardinal role by serving as the Head of the London Tamil Centre for well over two decades in an honorary capacity. This is indeed a very remarkable contribution he has made especially after the civil unrest in Sri Lanka which made several families ending up in UK as refugees. In this regard, side by side his significant contribution to teaching Tamil in London his domain of service spread far and wide into the Fine Arts. This contribution in an English environment did proudly unravel the richness of our culture to a wider world.

Alongside his involvement in a wide array of noble deeds, he did not ignore his service to the elderly, the stage to which we are all destined to reach. The patronage he extended towards the welfare of the London Tamil Elders Centre is indeed praiseworthy. Moreover, he stayed alert to changing emergency situations. His prompt magnanimous action by visiting those in Mullaitivu affected by the Tsunami of December 2004 is worthy of mention.

Crowning his philanthropic journey is the establishment of the Ratnam Foundation named after his father, offers a wide range of multi - pronged service. Its charitable activities are so very elaborate and covers education, health, and housing programmes in Sri Lanka.

In attempting to conclude, I would regard it as appropriate to refer to the scope and content of the conclusion wherein it outlines healthy expectations and code of conduct in life padded with appropriate citing of the kural enshrined. Moreover, I would state that we could derive healthy morals in the work that we could all follow. Finally, it's certainly not flattery but we need more and more Niththyananthans in society to uplift society and bring upward societal mobility to enable the present and the future generations to flourish.

The author can be contacted at:

00447956541844,

nsaro@hotmail.com

that the writer is a philanthropist better said in Tamil (a thondan). Above all, when society is going through hardships and constraints due to ethnic strife affecting education and the other vital aspects in life, Kudil and the Headmaster spells out adequate guidance and approach to appropriately remedy and provide the strategies to uplift the societal needs and bring sunshine to the affected communities.

Whilst introducing his father who was a teacher, he brings to light to the reader the pivotal role education plays to mankind, a matter that had gained such prominence in both his life and in his personal service to society. It preaches to the up – and - coming generation that as you grow up despite with meagre means, education would enable your aspirations to reach heights enabling you to end up on a very high pedestal as the author. To quote it's value to readers he indicates that “education is the greatest gift we can pass on to others because the rewards are so great”, a tenet he well and truly implemented very effectively both at the micro level within the family by striving hard to educate his son at Eton an investment which provided immense satisfaction and rewards to his family and at the macro level to the community at large.

In this regard, his hunt for his beloved wife is indeed sounds so very interesting

An exposition
of a commendable
life and times



Reviewed By:

Professor (Dr) P. Puvanarajan

Appointments & Achievements

Business Leader Ajit Gunawardene appointed Chairman of Teejay Lanka PLC

Teejay Lanka PLC, Sri Lanka's largest textile manufacturer, has announced that distinguished business leader Ajit Gunewardene is to be appointed Chairman with effect from 17 February.

Ajit was a former Deputy Chairman of John Keells Holdings (JKH) and a former Chairman of Nations Trust Bank (NTB) and Union Assurance. He will succeed Bill Lam, who resigns on 17 February, ending a 13-year stint at the helm of the company.

Announcing the succession, Teejay Lanka said Gunewardene's appointment is expected to be pivotal to the growth journey of the company, which has already announced targets of becoming a \$300 million enterprise by 2023 and a \$500 million business in the longer term.



Google Innovator Academy's certified coaching award to teacher Premalatha Selvaraj

A teacher in a rural primary school of 250 pupils in Malaysia has done the country proud by being the sole Malaysian winner of this year's Google Innovator Academy's certified coaching award.

Premalatha Selvaraj, 37, teaches mathematics and information and communications technology (ICT) at SJK(T) Ladang Krian but her passion for teaching and learning does not end there. She conducts workshops for learners from all over the country on the use of Google's education tools. On top of being the only Malaysian winner, she was one of the 11 in the Asia-Pacific region.



Vallipuram Kanagasingham appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Batticaloa University

Vallipuram Kanagasingham has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Batticaloa University.

He was previously the Principal of the Trincomalee Campus of the Eastern University and Dean, Faculty of Commerce and Management.

He was also the Coordinator, External Degree Programmes.

He also served as the resource Person for the Curriculum Revision (2013), Faculty of Management Studies, University of Jaffna.



Quotable Quotes - 2022

By: Siva Sivapragasam

“They said it”



“Canadians know where I stand. This is a moment for responsible leaders to think carefully about where they stand and with whom they stand”

– Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau about Leadership



“I expect many businesses will be throwing in the towel... because there is nothing left”

– Dan Kelly, CEO Canadian Federation of Independent Business



“I don't see any scenario I would support a Doug Ford Government. I just don't have a lot of respect for what he has done in Ontario.”

– NDP Leader Andrea Horwath



“The icing on the cake was in Oxford but the cake was baked at home”

– Lakshman Kadirgamar, Former Sri Lankan Foreign Minister on studying at Oxford University



“I pledge my support and unwavering loyalty to our next leader, and I urge everyone in our party to come together and do the same”

– Erin O' Toole, former PC Leader



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MONSOON KITCHEN

GENIE SISTERS SAMAYAL SANTHAI



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

Sisters Niranjini 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.

★ Adjaruli Khachapuri ★

This month, we are featuring a recipe from Georgia, a country close to Syria, which has a rich food history. This dish is quintessentially the most popular dish from the Adjara region of the country; a dish that is fun to make if you are looking to make something for Valentine's Day together with your significant other.

Method:

In a small bowl, combine warm water and dry active yeast together with a pinch of sugar and stir. Let it sit for 7 minutes until the yeast activates and is foaming.

In a large bowl, mix together flour, salt and sugar. Pour warm milk, activated yeast and olive oil over the flour mix and knead these ingredients together for 5 minutes. Cover the dough with a clean kitchen towel and let it rest for 20 minutes. After it has rested, knead again for a further 5 minutes. Divide the dough into 4 equal parts and roll each part into a ball. Cover the dough balls again with your clean kitchen towel and let it rest again at room temperature for 35-40 minutes.

Preheat your oven to 200°C/400°F, and whilst you are waiting, combine all the cheeses into a bowl and mix together until all integrated.

Post-rest, roll each dough ball out into circles, on greaseproof paper, with an approximate diameter of 9 inches. Arrange some of the cheese mixture of either side of the circle, a few centimetres from the edge, in rows. Roll the sides up so the cheese is encased along the edge, then gently pinch and twist the top and bottom parts of the dough to form the shape of a boat. Place a generous amount of the cheese mixture in the centre of the khachapuri. Brush the edges with an egg wash and, if using, sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Place in the oven for 15 minutes, remove, make a well in the centre of the khachapuri and gently crack an egg into the well. If using, sprinkle oregano, baharat, black pepper and pul biber on top at this stage. Return to the oven and bake for another 7 minutes, or until the egg is cooked on top. Once removed from the oven, place a knob of butter on top the khachapuri and butter the crust. It is now ready to eat!

Traditional khachapuris have a runny yolk, it is the best part of the eating process! Usually, the crust is ripped and used as a tool to mix the egg and cheese together. Best eaten with hands!

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



Ingredients:

- ✓ 240ml warm milk
- ✓ 118ml warm water
- ✓ 1 tbsp dry active yeast
- ✓ 3 tbsp olive oil
- ✓ 540g plain flour
- ✓ 1 tbsp granulated white sugar
- ✓ 1 tsp salt
- ✓ 1 cup grated mozzarella cheese (low-moisture)
- ✓ 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- ✓ ½ cup grated parmesan
- ✓ 1 egg per khachapuri
- ✓ 1 knob of butter per khachapuri

Optional:

- ✓ Sesame seeds
- ✓ Pul biber
- ✓ Baharat
- ✓ Pul biber
- ✓ Ground black pepper

At the Monsoon Kitchen,
Samayal Santhai

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*Prior experience **not required**, the Samayal
Santhai team will mentor and guide you.
**This is not a paid position.



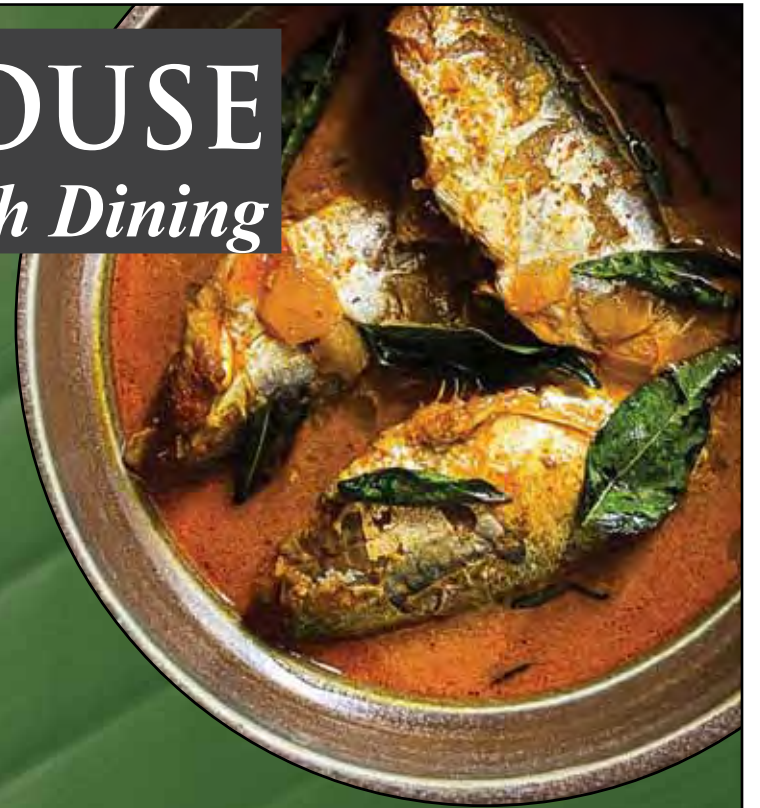
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“தாயகத்தின் இதயத் துடிப்பு”

VIRAKESARI
வீரகேசரி

தமிழால் இணைவோம்

செய்தி வரலாற்றில் 9 தசாப்தங்களுக்கும் மேலாக வீரகேசரி செய்தித்தாளை வெளியிடும் எக்ஸ்பிரஸ் நியூஸ்பேப்பர்ஸ் நிறுவனத்தின் சகல பதிப்புக்களையும் மின்னிதழ்களாய் ஒரே தளத்தில் படித்தீடுங்கள்.

சமீபத்திய செய்திகளை தெரிந்துகொள்ள தினந்தோறும் ஒளிபரப்பாகும் வீரகேசரி செய்திகளை எமது YouTube / Facebook பக்கத்தில் காணத்தவறாதீர்கள்.

(கனடா டொரென்டோ நேரம் காலை 9.30, இலங்கை நேரம் இரவு 8.00 மணி)

நீங்கள் உலகின் எப்பாகத்திலிருந்தாலும் தாயகத்திலும் உலகெங்கிலும் நடந்தேறும் முக்கிய நிகழ்வுகளையும் அவற்றின் உள்ளூன்றிய ஆய்வுகளையும் தாய்மொழியில் அறிந்தீடுங்கள்.



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Sri Lanka's International Newspaper



City of Brampton recognized by Forbes as one of Canada's Best Employers in 2022

Wednesday, Jan 26 2022

BRAMPTON, ON (January 26, 2022) – The City of Brampton has been recognized by Forbes as one of Canada's Best Employers 2022.

This year, the City ranked 98th out of 300, and this is the fourth year in a row the City has ranked on the list.

Forbes partnered with market research company Statista to compile the annual list, surveying more than 10,000 Canadians working for companies with more than 500 employees. Participants rated their organizations based on their willingness to recommend them to friends and family. They were also asked to nominate organizations other than their own.

City of Brampton Highlights

• In January 2022, the City of Brampton launched a Flexible Work Program supporting flexibility in where and when employees work; including options for remote work, flex-time, job sharing and compressed work weeks. This program is part of the Workplace Modernization initiative, which also includes space planning to accommodate flexible work options and support collaboration.

• In 2020, the City established its Economic Empowerment and Anti-Black Racism Unit to take meaningful action against anti-Black racism in the community. In 2021, the Unit held in-depth community consultations, conferences and events to support the development of a five-year action plan. The City also developed an internal Black Employee Engagement Network, and launched the Black and Indigenous Youth Internship and Co-op Program in the performing arts, the first of its kind in Canada.

• In December 2020, the City announced the new Equity Office to serve its employees and citizens. The Equity Office focuses on identifying and removing barriers in the workplace and community regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, disability, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, same sex partnership, age, marital status, family status, immigrant status, receipt of public assistance, political affiliation, religious affiliation, level of literacy, language and/or socio-economic status.

Via brampton.ca

City of Brampton celebrates Black History Month

Friday, Jan 28 2022

BRAMPTON, ON (January 28, 2022) – During the month of February, the City of Brampton celebrates Black History Month and honours the many contributions and achievements of the Black community in Brampton who, throughout history, have done so much to make Brampton the livable, compassionate and prosperous city it is today. The month of February will be filled with both in-person and online events.

Black History Month

Flag Raising

Ken Whillans Square

February 1, 12 pm

The Pan-African Flag will be raised to signify the start of the month and remain for the entire month of February.

Black Business Artisan Market – Reveiller Afriq

Bramalea City Centre

February 8 & 9, 10 am – 8 pm

Support local Black-owned businesses, makers and artisans at this two-day in-person market experience, in partnership with Bramalea City Centre. Find the pop-up on the second floor by the Best Buy entrance.

Weekly Performance Series

Tuesday nights, 8 – 10 pm

rosetheatre.ca

Enjoy an entertaining online performance series to celebrate Black History every Tuesday night all month long. Performances will be livestreamed

from the Rose Theatre stage.

• February 1: DJ Versus Battle featuring DJ Allan and DJWHATSNEXT

• February 8: Live performance curated by Off the Record with Shade Waheed

• February 15: A performance with Des McKenzie in partnership with ACCIDA

• February 22: A performance with Travis Knights in partnership with ACCIDA

Weekly Lunch'n'Learns

Every Wednesday, 12 – 1 pm

Join MOYO Health & Community Services for a weekly educational session. Topics include:

• February 2: Introduction to ABR, Intersectionality, Power & Privilege,

• February 9: Supporting Black Women

• February 16: Supporting Black 2SLGBTQ+ Individuals

• February 23: Celebrating Black Excellence

Black History Month Experience Box

Returning this year is the popular Experience Box. These limited edition, curated gift boxes feature products and services from local Black-owned businesses. All boxes will include:

• *AuxGod Music Battle Card Game*

• *Lavendula and Tea Tree Oil Body Scrub by Sugar Plum Scrubs*

• *Disorientation by Arts Walk of Fame Inductee, Ian Williams*

• *And more!*



City of Brampton supports Rogers proposed \$100M investment in and relocation to downtown

Thursday, Jan 27 2022

BRAMPTON, ON (January 27, 2022) – At its meeting yesterday, Brampton City Council approved a recommendation to support Rogers Communications' relocation to Downtown Brampton.

Through the proposed new development, 3,000 employees would relocate to a 200,000 square foot space in the downtown. The new campus would consist of mixed office and retail space, with room for additional offices to be added in phases.

This strategic new location and investment will help spur a vibrant transit-oriented community and situate the new Rogers Brampton office at the centre of Canada's Innovation Corridor, broadening both Rogers and Brampton's access to talent. Additionally, the relocation of the Cybersecurity unit from the Rogers Brampton Campus to the Innovation District will bolster and strengthen the city's position as a national leader in Cybersecurity.

"I am absolutely thrilled to welcome



this proposed relocation of Rogers to downtown Brampton, which builds on the exciting transformation underway and recent investments the City has made. We are committed to ensuring Brampton remains a welcoming home to our businesses, and our Council and staff are working closely with all of our partners to support this new development. A new Rogers site in the city's core will further strengthen our position on Canada's Innovation Corridor and as a national leader in Cybersecurity, and I look forward to the exciting next steps!"

- Patrick Brown, Mayor, City of Brampton

Via brampton.ca



Boxes will be delivered to the first 50 people who make a charitable donation of at least \$20 to Restoration and Empowerment for Social Transition or (R.E.S.T.), a Black-empowering organization.

Wellness Moments

Join Brampton native and acclaimed yoga instructor Matthew Bonas for weekly wellness moments including couples fitness and yoga. New class available each week.

Black Artists Live Here Digital Exhibition

Garden Square

Presented by ACCIDA

The Arts, Culture and Creative Industry Development Agency (ACCIDA) presents Black Artists Live Here, a PIXEL Digital Screen Exhibition on the 24' LED screen in Garden Square featuring the work of eight local

artists, creatives and collectives from February until May 2022.

Thank you to the event sponsors Algoma University, Brampton Real Estate Board and Sun Life for their generous support.

For more information on the Black History Month events, brampton.ca/bhm2022

"Join us in celebrating Black History Month to recognize and honour the important work, talent and contributions of Members of the Black community in Brampton. Brampton's cultural diversity is what makes this city so special, and it's important that we acknowledge our history and community so we can continue to grow and flourish as a city."

- Patrick Brown, Mayor, City of Brampton

Via <https://www.brampton.ca/>


COMMUNITY WATCH


Royal College OBA transforms hope to under privileged families in Sri Lanka

Toronto, Canada: The theme of helping underprivileged families in Sri Lanka was the project, global members of Royal College Class of 1980 (Tamil Medium) vision, as part of giving back to the country of origin. The project was to build a few houses for underprivileged families and give hope.

This is the first major project initiated by RCOBA 1980 Tamil medium and wanted to give back to the community as part of social responsibility. A small group of volunteers planned and raised funds. Overseas volunteers knew it's going to be a challenging task to be part of ground reality of Sri Lanka i.e construction, labor, material cost etc. The volunteers tapped into the government of Sri Lanka N-E province poverty and shelter program. The government was willing to assist with the provision of voluntary manpower and procurement of material through the Sri Lanka Army troops deployed in Jaffna.

A selection process vetted and a family from Alvai, Pointpedro in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka was selected for the first house. The family consists

of father, mother along with two daughters and son (Age 10, 06 and 07), living below poverty line. The lady was a former member of LTTE rebel movement during the ethnic conflict. She served in the year 2007-2009. She was badly injured during that time and was living in a tin shed house without clean running water, electricity or sanitation. The family has been living for the past 10 years under this unfortunate circumstance. The lady, having undergone rehabilitation by the government, has been living with her family on a single income in Alvai, Vadamaarachi, Northern Province of Sri Lanka.

Newly built house consists of two bedrooms, a large veranda, kitchen and bathroom. In addition, a water tank above the roof, fan and furniture were provided. The construction was completed within 8 weeks due to around the clock manpower provided by the army. The ceremonial handing over of the house took place on Wednesday, January 26th 2022 in the presence of Maj. General Sujeewa Senarath Yapa, the Security Forces Commander - Jaffna

and Mr. Rajendra Theagarajah, a fellow Royalist (Class of '72) and Past resident of Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, along with other government representatives. During the ceremony, dry ration packs, educational materials for children and essential household items for the house were donated by the Commander of the security forces of Jaffna.

Volunteer committee leader, Retired Major General Ravi Ratnasingham said "It was hope for the family of five living in poor conditions, to a spacious brick home. A lifestyle they wouldn't have even dreamt. It was made possible by RCOBA 1980 Tamil medium and Sri Lanka Army".

The second home will be handed over to a family in Point Pedro in February 2022. Construction of the third home has been initiated in the Eastern Province.

Royal College Class of 1980 (Tamil Medium) members live in Canada, USA, UK, Australia and Sri Lanka. Royal College Colombo is a leading educational institution in Sri Lanka.



COMMUNITY WATCH





SPECIAL FEATURE

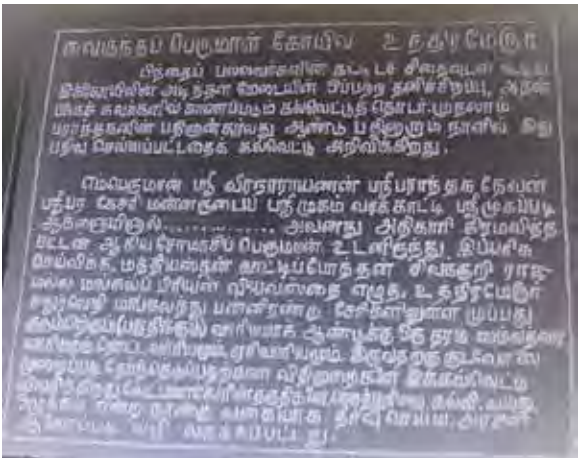
CRADLE OF DEMOCRACY ESTABLISHED IN ANCIENT INDIA AS EARLY AS 920 AD

Compiled by : KIDAMBI RAJ

INTRODUCTION

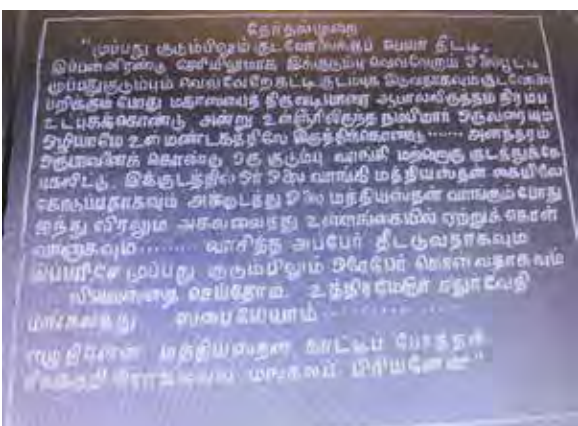
In his speech at the Bhumi Pooja celebration for the New Parliament Building, in December 2020, India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, proud of his identity as of Hindu heritage, commented on the inscriptions on the walls of a temple in Uttaramerur near Kancheepuram in Tamil Nadu. These inscriptions that he commented on are on the northern walls of Sri Vaikuntavasava Perumal temple in Uttaramerur, a small village in Kancheepuram district about 90 km from Chennai. These ancient and classic inscriptions from the times of **Parantaka Chola** (920 AD). They describe in specific detail of the village administration was honed into a perfect system.

THE GREAT SIGNIFICANCE OF THOSE INSCRIPTIONS

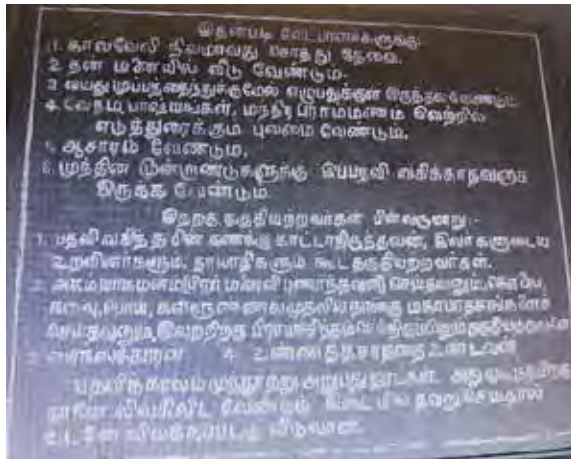


Magna Carta, "The Charter of Freedom" granted in 1215 by the then King John of England is regarded world over as publicized by the westerners as the oldest and greatest constitutional document of all times, perhaps due to ignorance, deliberate or real. But a better treatise or formulation of freedom of individual or self- government was in effect in ancient India a good 450 odd years before the advent of Magna Carta and nearly 1000 years before the Constitution of the United States of America came into being in 1788. Yet the western world is preaching us that America is the mother of democracy in the world! So, let us here, just see the detailed description of the elaborate democracy that thrived in ancient India at a small village, Uttaramerur in Tamil Nadu.

THE INSCRIPTIONS AND WHAT THEY SAY:



What the **Sutra** and **Smriti** literature prescribed were strictly followed and practiced. Prof. R. Nagaswamy, a renowned archaeologist, epigraphist and art expert of South India, has demonstrated the coherence between the



injunctions of **Dharmasastras** and ground realities in ancient India, and in Tamil Nadu in particular. He has used two inscriptions: the **manur** inscription **Pandya Varaguna** and the **Uttaramerur** inscription of **Parantaka Chola** to illustrate the same.

Uttaramerur, which has a 1,250-year history, is situated in the district of Kancheepuram. It was established by the **Pallava King Nandivarman II** in approx. 750 AD. Subsequently, it was ruled by the Pallavas, the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Sambuvarayars, the Vijayanagara Rayas and the Nayaks. It has three important temples, the **Sundara Varadaraja Perumal (Vaikuntanatha Perumal)** temple, the **Subramanya** temple and the **Kailasanatha** temple and all of these possess a great number of inscriptions, particularly dating to the reign of **Raja Chola** (985-1014 AD), his son **Rajendra Chola** and the **Vijayanagar emperor, Krishnadeva Raya**.

The entire village is constructed according to the canons of the **agama texts**, and accordingly, it has a village-assembly **mandapa** at its centre. The three temples of the village are oriented towards the **mandapa**. There are two 10th C.E. inscriptions in the Perumal temple which throw clear light on the system of village administration in ancient India.

The inscriptions dated around 920 AD, in the reign of **Parantaka Chola** (907-955 AD) is an outstanding document in the history of India. It is a veritable constitution of the village assembly that functioned over 1,000 years ago. The inscriptions give astonishing details about the constitution of wards, the qualification of candidates standing for election, the constitution committees with elected members, the functions of those committees, the power to remove the wrongdoer, etc. But it is on the walls of the village assembly (mandapa) itself that we have the earliest inscriptions with complete information about how the elected village assembly functioned.

The primary assembly of **Uttaramerur** was known as a **Sabha** in the case of **Agraharas** and **Ur** (voor) in the case of ordinary villages. It consisted of all the residents of that particular village. Its meeting was usually summoned by the beating of the drum and when the drum was beat, the entire village, including infants

had to be present at the **mandapa**; only the sick and those who were away on pilgrimage were exempt. The most important aim of the assembly was to elect the executive committee. Accordingly, there were **six** important executive committees:



Vaikuntanatha Perumal

1. Annual Committee (Samvatsara vaariyam): It was the most important and influential of all the committees. It had 12 members, and the election of this committee preceded that of all the committees. And only those who had (previously) been on the **Garden committee** and on the **Tank committee**, could be chosen for the **Annual committee**.

2. Garden Committee: It had 12 members.

3. Tank Committee: It had six members. Their duty included the maintenance of tanks, irrigation, levying of tank taxes and utilizing the funds so collected for the same purpose. The committee also had to de-silt the village tanks once in three months and strengthen the tank bunds by widening and raising its height. The sluices and the overflow channels were to be maintained properly.

4. Gold Committee (Pon Vaariyam): Its primary work was to test gold by rubbing it against a touchstone. Usage of rough stones were strictly prohibited because that would lead to greater loss of gold by rubbing. The committee members were expected to recover the gold dust from the touchstone at the end of each day and deposit it with the village assembly. Once in three months, they were obliged to go before the village assembly and swear that they had not committed any fraud in the testing. It was well known that people were so proud of their oaths and sworn statements that they would sacrifice their life rather than break their own sworn statements.

5. Pancha-vaara Committee: It had six members, and it supervised the five committees (Pancha-vaara) of the village.

6. Committee for Supervision of Justice: It was formed to supervise the justice or fairness of the annual elections of the various committees. Thus, this committee convened the annual meeting of the assembly and conducted the elections of the various committees whenever they were necessitated.

According to Prof. R. Nagaswamy, the most astonishing details that the Uttaramerur inscriptions furnish is the process of Secret-ballot election (**Kuda Olai**) of the said committee members:

The village assembly of Uttaramerur drafted the constitution for the elections. The salient features were as follows:

The village was divided into 30 wards, one representative elected for each. Specific qualifications were prescribed for those who wanted to contest. The essential criteria were age limit, possession of immovable property and minimum educational qualification. Those who wanted to be elected should be above 35 years of age and below 70. Only those who owned land that attracted tax could contest elections. Another stipulation was that such owners should possess a house built on a legally

SPECIAL FEATURE



owned land (not on public *poromboke*). A person serving in any of the committees could not contest again for the next three terms, each term lasting a year. Elected members who accepted bribes, misappropriated other's property, committed incest, or acted against the public interest suffered disqualification.



Accordingly, Uttaramerur, a village of 12 streets, was divided into 30 wards/electoral units for the purpose of elections. A meeting-point was designated in each ward where the residents were to assemble when the drum called for elections. When thus assembled, each resident was to write down on a ticket the name of the person he wished to vote for. When this was done, all the tickets of a ward were filled into a packet. Thus, there would be 30 packets one for each of the 30 wards. Each packet bore the name of its ward on its *covering ticket*. All the 30 packets were then put into a pot (*kodam*) and placed before the *mahajana/sabha* i.e., the village assembly in the mandapa. One of the young boys (who did not know what was

Vaikunta Perumal Temple, Uttaramerur



inside the packet) was then called to pick out one of the packets. The tickets in this packet were then transferred to another (empty) pot and shaken, i.e., shuffled thoroughly. The boy then drew one ticket out of the pot and made it over to the arbitrator (*madhyastha*). While taking charge of the ticket thus given to him, the arbitrator received it on the palm of his hand with the five fingers open. He then read out the name on the ticket received. The ticket thus read by him was also read out by all the *purohitas* present in the inner hall. The name read out was then put down (and accepted). 30 names were thus chosen, one representing each of the 30 wards. Such a method gave no scope for canvassing and other electioneering methods of doubtful utility and ethical values. The conditions of eligibility were a sufficient safeguard against the election of an undesirable person, and the necessary elimination they involved would leave no chance of producing any undesirable result.

The following qualifications were to be possessed by a member to be eligible for nomination by his ward and they are:



Vaikunta Perumal Temple

1. He must own more than a quarter of tax-paying land (*Kaani nilam*);
 2. He must live in a house built on his own site;
 3. His age must be below 70 and above 35;
 4. He must know the *mantra-brahmana*, i.e., he must know (the *Veda*) by teaching;
 5. If he owns one eighth of land, he must be proficient in *one Veda* and *one of the four Bhaashyaas* by explaining to others;
 6. He must be conversant with business;
 7. He must be virtuous and his earnings must be honest and
 8. He must not have been on any of the committees for three previous years.
- The following were the factors that would affect an immediate disqualification of the candidate:

1. (a) Defaulting persons (those who have not submitted financial accounts) and their relatives, however remote, who are thus specified, namely, the sons of the younger and elder sisters of his mother; (b) the sons of his paternal aunt and maternal uncle; (c) the step brother of his mother; (c) the step brother of his father; (e) his step brother; (f) his father-in-law; (g) the step brother of his wife; (h) the husband of his step sister; (i) the sons of his step sister; (j) the son-in-law who has married his daughter; (k) his father and (l) his son.



2. Incurable sinners and their relatives however remote for killing a brahmin; drinking intoxicating liquor; theft; adultery with the wife of one's spiritual teacher and associating with anyone guilty of these crimes.

3. Outcasts until they perform the necessary expiatory ceremonies.

4. Those who are mentally or morally disqualified.

5. Those who have (i) taken forbidden dishes of any kind which is equivalent to drinking intoxicating liquor; (ii) become village priest; (iii) Committed incest; (iv) rode on an ass (which was a punishment for some offence and hence implied a conviction disqualifying the candidate); and (v) committed forgery.

The above, were inscribed on the 16th day of the fourteenth year of King Parantaka Chola.

Special qualifications were prescribed for the Judges and this is most evident in the Manur inscription: Judge to be elected should have at heart the village's welfare; he should be proficient in Dharmasastra; he should not have served in any village administrative committee five years before their election and once his tenure of five years is completed, he cannot be a judge for another five years. Furthermore, they were to pass an examination in legal texts to qualify as judges; they must be of sterling character and must have studied at least one Veda. The judge should give accounts of the fines collected when he demits office. Judges were fined heavily (in gold) to be paid to the village assembly if they gave wrong rulings.

Another significant point to be noted is the power of the village assemblies to amend the constitution. The village assembly had first met in the 12th year of King Parantaka Chola (918 A.D.) and drafted a constitution and it was brief and vague in certain areas. So, two years later, a more refined constitution was drafted. It can clearly be seen that this later constitution is

detailed, clear and shows certain amendments to the first one. Therefore, there was freedom to frame constitutions for elections to village assemblies, and such constitutions were written documents, drafted clause by clause with meticulous care and when necessity arose, they could be amended to give fuller participation to all members and express themselves in the affairs of the administration.

Prof. R. Nagaswamy remarks that in its entirety, the Uttaramerur inscription show how in every aspect of life the highest standard of democracy was enforced in the village, in complete correspondence to the Dharmasastras. It shows how the Chola ideal of democratic participation extended to a larger section of society, exerting at the same time constant vigil and scrupulous enforcement of the law, without favours or prejudices. He calls it the *grass root democracy*. It is thus a perfect example of how the theory and practice of Dharmasastras are not divorced from one another.

He also says that he first came to know about these neither from not from the then history books nor from his teachers in school and college, but from a book of *Paramacharya of Kancheepuram* that contains his teachings. In fact, Late *Sri T.N. Seshan*, when he was appointed as the Election Commissioner in 1990, was a bit dejected when he was appointed as Chief Election Commissioner and went and met Paramacharya who was 97 at that time. A visibly disappointed Seshan came to meet Paramacharya who 97. Paramacharya immediately sensed the cause of Seshan's disappointment and counselled him to treat the transfer as an opportunity granted by God to serve the Indian public. He had suggested Seshan visit the Uttaramerur temple and read through the details of electoral regulations prevalent in India about well over 1,000 year ago, including qualifications of candidates that can contest elections.

In the words of Sri Seshan, "The credit for Electoral reforms must go to *Kanchi Mahaswami*, but for whom this would not have been possible. At 97, He had such clarity and described minute details of the electoral rules embossed on the northern walls of the Uttaramerur temple and mentioned to me that even implementing a tenth of those reforms, would be a great service to India". The rest is history.

In the words of columnist, TJS George, "Seshan showed what one man could do to ensure that democracy did not become a hydra-headed monster. In time, Seshan retired in 1996 and the monster was set free".

In conclusion, it was wonderful that India's Prime Minister had shared on national stage, about the inscriptions on the walls of the temple in Uttaramerur temple so that everyone across the country could get the opportunity to know the richness of India's culture. The Vishnu



temple in Uttaramerur is very unique since the same was built by *Viswakarma* and it is the *first Ashtanga vimanam* to be constructed. The Vimana in the *Ashtalakshmi temple in Besantnagar*, Chennai was designed and built copying this vimanam only.

Uttaramerur is certainly a place to visit to know and understand the richness of India!!!



COMMUNITY WATCH

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. We are continuing to provide free virtual activities almost every day for kids to seniors. 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.

skills /

Sharing information / Sharing success stories

Please email info@durhamtamils or Call 905-428-7007

To know more about DTA and what we do, please visit our website - durham-tamils.org

DTA's Drop-in Peer Support group



Durham Tamil Association is pleased to announce the Durham Tamil Community Drop-in Peer Support group for 18+ for overall wellness.

- Having positive role models involved in a non-judgmental environment and an opportunity to informally connect with others through safe and supportive discussions.

- Building a strong Tamil community building and support system within our Tamil community to provide a safe space to reach out to others in times of need.

- Drop-in Peer Support Objectives:

- To provide expertise or experiences a Peer Supporter can provide
- Mentorship support/Decision Making / Goal Setting / Guide to new



Tamil Heritage Month & Pongal Vizha 2021

We had an amazing DTA's Tamil Heritage Month 2022 celebration on January 17th.

Thank you to all the parents of the performers for their cooperation and continued support.

Thank you to the volunteer choreographers for their passion and for arranging the dances as always.

Special thanks to all the Dance teachers for providing the programs and supporting DTA's Tamil Heritage Month.

As always, thank you Mano Pancharatnam and Sveta Manorathan for your excellent work with the digital support.

Special thanks to Rega video for their support and cooperation. They have always been huge supporters of DTA programs.

A huge thanks to DTA's signature hosts Mano Pancharatnam and Hanthan Manikavagar for making the event entertaining.

Special thanks to Subramaniam Rajaratnam (Tamil Master) for giving us the space for recording our programs.

Please visit the DTA News YouTube channel to view all the programs. Feel free to share the videos of the programs.

DTA's Unlock the Rubik Cube

Durham Tamil is presenting a free Unlock the Rubik's Cube program. It will teach everyone how to solve a Rubik's Cube.

Ages: 10-14

Time: Mondays 6:00-7:00pm

Class Requirement: 3x3 Rubik's Cube

Register online: durhamtamils.org

Instructor: Kevin Jacob

About Kevin Jacob:

Kevin is a proficient Speedcuber versatile in 3x3, 4x4 and 5x5 Rubik's cubes with a personal best solving time of 29 secs for 3x3 in the World Cubing Association competition held at University of Toronto in August 2019. He has recorded his personal best single solving time as 9 secs and the best average of 5 solves as 12 secs. Kevin is preparing for his upcoming WCA competitions in 2022.

What the Program offers:

The training offers a step-by-step breakdown of how to solve 3x3 Rubik's Cube for ages 10-14. You will learn cube notations, how to achieve different stages in solving a cube and several tips to minimize your solving duration. If you have passion for Speedcubing, this is the ultimate program for you.

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

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, 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

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 HOW TO SOLVE RUBIK'S CUBE

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 MEMBERS ONLY

MONDAYS
 6:00-7:00PM

AGES: 10-14
FREE!

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(South Asian Community Monthly English Newspaper)

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Neilson & Finch:	Erra Supermarket		
Middlefield & Finch:	New Embassy's Grocery		
	Samosa King		
	GTA Mall		



MONSOON JOURNAL
16TH YEAR
IN CIRCULATION

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The Monsoon Journal is currently seeking a Content Writer to conduct interviews and write business or career profiles on individuals within the Monsoon Journal readership community.

This position is on a part-time basis for 3 months.

This is a paid position and aimed towards candidates currently pursuing post-secondary education.

Please submit your resumes in consideration for this role by March 15th 2022.

Email: editor4mj@gmail.com



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