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India provides \$1 billion loan to Sri Lanka to ease foreign exchange crisis



Indian and Sri Lankan Cabinet Ministers at the signing of the Loan Agreement

By Siva Sivapragasam

India has provided a US \$1 billion loan to Sri Lanka to help the island nation cope with one of the worst foreign reserves economic crises in decades, with New Delhi saying the development reflected renewed momentum in bilateral economic engagement.

The line of credit, to be used to import food, medicines, and other essential items from India, was extended at a time when President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's government is grappling with mass protests by the opposition over its handling of the economic crisis.

Visiting Sri Lankan finance minister Basil Rajapaksa, his Indian counterpart Nirmala Sitharaman and external affairs minister Subramaniam Jaishankar witnessed the signing of the agreement for the concessional loan extended by the Indian govern-

ment through the State Bank of India.

"Neighbourhood first, India stands with Sri Lanka. US\$1 billion credit line signed for supply of essential commodities. Key element of the package of support extended by India," Jaisankar tweeted.

External affairs ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi told a media briefing that India is conscious of the economic difficulties Sri Lanka is facing. "India has always stood with the people of Sri Lanka and we will continue to extend all possible support at this juncture," he said.

Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has confirmed it was considering President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's request made to discuss the economic crisis with the IMF.

"We will discuss with the authorities how best we can assist Sri Lanka going forward," IMF spokesman Gerry Rice said in a statement to the Media.

YMCA Best Performance Appreciation Awards 2022

The support for Education in Jaffna, Sri Lanka continues through YMCA under the strong commitment of the children of Late M. C. Francis of Waterloo, Ontario who established DFFS Canada



(Examination Results from 2020)

The Chief Guest was Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin B Gnanapragasam, The Bishop, Roman Catholic Diocese of Jaffna and there were many distinguished guests at the event.

The YMCA Best Performance Appreciation Awards Ceremony was conducted on Saturday 19 th February 2022 at 3:00 pm at the Jaffna YMCA. This event was sponsored by the Direct Family Financial Support (DFFS) Canada. DFFS Canada is a non-profit

organization which was established by late Mr. M.C. Francis of Waterloo, Ontario. His vision was to enhance the motivation of the students who sit for the GCE A/L in all streams. In addition to encourage abilities such as debating, bilingualism (Tamil/Sinhala) and all-round performance.

First and Second rank achievers in the field of Mathematics, Biology, Biotechnology, Science, Commerce and Arts among others were awarded.

Full details in pages 39, 40 & 41

Emergency declared in Sri Lanka

The Sri Lankan Government has imposed a state of emergency throughout the country to control protests and demonstrations in the island nation due to shortages and rise in prices of essential items.

President Gotabhaya Rajapakse using Presidential powers vested in him in the constitution declared a state of emergency throughout the Island last Friday, April 1, 2022. A curfew was

also declared over the weekend.

Shortages of cooking gas cylinders, fuel, rising prices of essential items like milk and bread along with long hours of power cuts prompted the public to stage protest marches and demonstrations in Colombo and the provinces.



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Ontario's Child Care Action Plan Puts Families First

March 28, 2022

Education

On March 28, 2022, Ontario reached a \$13.2 billion agreement with the federal government on funding for and the terms of a Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care program. The new program will lower child care costs and improve access, and quality across Ontario's child care and early years sector.

The province's made-in-Ontario action plan for meeting its commitments under the new agreement takes a phased approach and advances what is most important to families. The plan is based on five pillars: improved affordability, improved access, sustaining high-quality services, inclusion, and enhanced data and reporting.

Improved affordability

• As a first step, all Ontario families with children five years old and younger in participating licensed child care centres will see their fees reduced, up to 25 per cent, to a minimum of \$12 per day, retroactive to April 1, 2022.

• In December 2022, parents will see another reduction. In total, fees for families will be reduced, on average, by 50 per cent, relieving parents of \$1.1 billion in child care costs.

• In September 2024, families will see further fee reductions, culminating in a final reduction to an average of \$10-a-day child care by September 2025.

• To ensure a sustainable future that protects Ontario taxpayers and puts parents first, the Canada-Ontario agreement also ensures that the cost of implementing the agreement will continue to be monitored by Canada and Ontario with an automatic review in year three.

Improved access

• Ontario will address increasing demand for child care by creating 86,000 new, high quality child care spaces. This includes more than 15,000 new spaces already created since 2019.

• New licensed child care spaces will include a mix of not-for-profit and for-profit settings to provide families with choice and flexibility.



Sustaining high-quality services

• Ontario will improve compensation for all Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) working in licensed child care, including RECEs providing child care for children six to 12 years old.

• This agreement also supports the recruitment of new early childhood educators.

• Ontario will ensure a qualified workforce supply to implement the province's pedagogy for the early years to help safeguard the quality of child care programs and support system stability and sustainability.

Inclusion

• Ontario will introduce reforms that support the needs of diverse and underserved populations, including low-income, francophone, Indigenous, Black, other racialized and newcomer communities, as well as vulnerable and special needs children.

Enhanced data and reporting

• Ontario is already a leader in child care data collection and analytics. The new federal program is an opportunity to enhance sector performance by enabling Ontario to identify and evaluate the impact of these reforms on individual children and families.

• Under the federal agreement, Ontario will report regularly on its progress in meeting federal requirements with enhanced data collection and analytics capabilities.

Via news.ontario.ca

Province Breaks Ground on Ontario Line

All-new subway line will bring better, rapid transit to Toronto, create thousands of new jobs and spur economic growth

March 27, 2022

Office of the Premier

TORONTO — The province has officially broken ground on the Ontario Line Exhibition Station, marking the start of construction for the new subway line that will support the delivery of better and faster transit for the Greater Toronto Area.

“Our government has moved at unprecedented speed to start construction on the new Ontario Line subway,” said Premier Doug Ford. “This project will be a game changer for the city and region and is a key part of our plan to build the roads, bridges, highways and transit needed to move our economy forward.”

Today, the province also released the initial renderings of 14 stations along the 15.6 kilometre Ontario Line that will provide rapid transit between Exhibition/Ontario Place and the Ontario Science Centre. The initial station renderings show early planning and design concepts for the Ontario Line stations, which will connect to more than 40 other transit routes, including GO train lines, existing TTC subway and streetcar lines, and the Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit line.

“Public transit plays a pivotal role in reaching our climate goals and reducing congestion on our roads,” said the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Federal Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities. “The Ontario Line will be a major addition to existing transit options in the GTA, and will enhance commuters' ability to get to their destination on time and with ease. We are pleased to be partnering with the Government of Ontario and the City of Toronto to deliver this transformational project.”

Upgrades at Exhibition Station will allow GO customers to continue to use the station during major construction for the Ontario Line. These upgrades include opening a new station entrance and exit from Atlantic Avenue, shifting the existing GO rail track



and creating a new train platform. A temporary pedestrian bridge will also be constructed over the existing GO tracks to provide customers with additional safe access to trains between Liberty Village and Exhibition Place.

“Building public transit and critical transportation infrastructure has remained at the forefront of our government's plan to build Ontario and create a better, more successful future for the people who live here,” said Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation. “With all three levels of government at the table, we have worked at an unprecedented pace to move each of Premier Ford's four priority subway projects forward. With shovels now in the ground on three of Ontario's four priority projects, we are closer to providing better travel options, alleviating gridlock on our roads, and creating thousands of good local jobs.”

Ontario's bold transit plan for the Greater Toronto Area includes a commitment of nearly \$17 billion from the province for construction. Last May, the Government of Canada announced over \$10 billion in funding for Ontario's four priority subway projects in the Greater Toronto Area – the largest joint investment in transit in the region's history – which includes the all-new Ontario Line, the three-stop Scarborough Subway Extension, the Yonge North Subway Extension and the Eglinton Crosstown West Extension.

Via news.ontario.ca

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Happy New Year
April 1 & 2

Subhakurth Nama Samvatsara Ugadi
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Marathi New Year's Day
April 14

Happy Tamil Subakiruthu
& Sinhala New Year

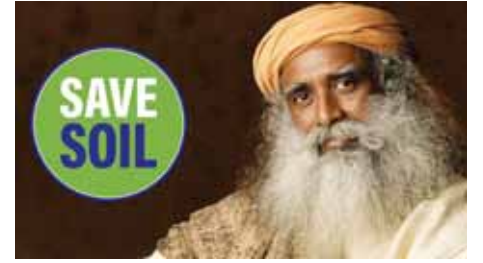
Be United with the Save Soil movement

By Harrish Thirukumar

Prior to and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, Yoga, meditation, and spirituality have become critical parts in the way I live my life, as it undoubtedly has been for many. One may even recall my writing on the topic of International Day of Yoga in this newspaper some time ago. I even related this to my own daily Yoga practice as a way I kept myself physically fit and mentally grounded to cope with the wild and turbulent times that this situation has brought on for all of us and our relationships. One thing key to Yoga and its many variations has been Pranayama or the breath technique.

Pranayama is what ushered in a global movement on another pressing concern. Sadhguru, a Yogi, Mystic, and Visionary, helped a group of people see within themselves and how they are connected with Mother Nature through the flow of their breath and that of the trees. This traces back to around the 1990s in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where they sat within the gracious shade under a tree during a sunny but hot day. This in itself signifies the impact soil has in our lives.

Soil is the foundation of almost all life on this planet. It is a complex symbiotic system of organic matter, minerals, gases, liquids and living organisms that together support life. Without organic content in the form of humus and living organisms and microbes, soil is reduced to inert sand. Or has Sadhguru puts it: "Soil is our life, our very body. And if we forsake soil, in many ways, we forsake the planet." It is for this reason that he initiated the Save Soil movement on a global scale to draw attention to the



threat of soil extinction.

It is about we as a human society striving to act more consciously with ourselves, others, and, in this case, our planet. This movement is working towards this by turning world attention to our dying soil. Next, inspiring about 3.5 billion people (60% of the world's electorate of 5.26 billion) to support policy redirections to safeguard, nurture and sustain soils. Also, it aims to drive national policy changes in 193 nations toward raising and maintaining the organic content of soils to a minimum of 3-6%. These things are crucial for our own food security needs and many other aspects of our lives. The 64 year-old guru himself is getting this message out through a 100-day, 30,000 km lone motorcycle journey to raise awareness for our world's soil crisis.

Others can similarly make their voice heard on Save Soil through social media or other means within their communities and learn more about why and how soil impacts our daily lives. Further information on this and the broader Save Soil movement can be found at <https://consciousplanet.org/>. As I have recently learned, the true purpose of Yoga is to be in union with yourself in dealing with things that can change in your own life to grow. This is something that COVID-19 has forced onto us and should also be seen with the Save Soil movement. In other words, be united with the Save Soil movement.

Canada Historic Milestones



April 1, 1999
Nunavut is established following the division of the Northwest Territories into two parts. The new territory has an area of over 2 million square kilometres and is administered mainly by Arctic Inuit.

"Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in"

- Isaac Asimov (January 2, 1920 - April 6, 1992) American writer and professor

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

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Government of Canada helps skilled newcomers access jobs in the healthcare sector



The pandemic has resulted in worker shortages across many industries, including in the health sector. However, internationally educated health professionals too often face challenges in getting their credentials recognized in Canada in order to access quality jobs in healthcare. To prioritize getting skilled newcomers into the job markets where they are needed most, the Government of Canada is investing in projects that will help them put their education and skills to work sooner.

Today, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Carla Qualtrough, announced funding for nine projects under the Foreign Credential Recognition Program. This investment will help improve foreign credential recognition and help skilled newcomers gain Canadian work experience in the health sector. Minister Qualtrough made the announcement today with Halton Multicultural Council (HMC) Connections, McGill University - School of Physical & Occupational Therapy, and the Canadian Council for Practical Nurse Regulators.

HMC Connections is receiving funding for its Career Accelerator for Foreign Trained Health Professionals in the COVID Environment project. With this investment, the Council will be able to facilitate Canadian work experience for highly skilled internationally trained healthcare professionals with a focus on establishing long-term sustainable employment in their field of study. This will assist in alleviating the current pandemic and future de-

mand on the health and social service sectors.

McGill University - School of Physical & Occupational Therapy is receiving funding for its Serving Canadian Rehabilitation Needs: McGill Physical Therapy Bridging Program project. With this investment, McGill will be able to formalize their Physical Therapy (PT) Equivalency Training pilot program project into an official McGill University PT Bridging Program that will allow English-speaking Internationally Educated Physical Therapists (IEPTs) to receive official certification from McGill University. It will also enable IEPTs to register and obtain licensure with the Ordre Professionnel de la Physiothérapie du Québec.

Finally, the Canadian Council for Practical Nurse Regulators is receiving funding for its Language Proficiency Requirements for Safe Nursing Practice in Canada project. With this investment, the Council will review, update and validate the benchmarks for acceptable English and French language proficiency levels in the licensure and registration of International Educated Nurses in Canada.

The Foreign Credential Recognition Program funds provinces and territories, regulatory authorities and organizations to increase efficiency and timeliness of foreign credential recognition processes as well as to provide loans and employment supports (e.g., work placements, mentoring) to help skilled newcomers work in their field of expertise.

Via canada.ca

Ontario Extends Freeze on College and University Tuition

Province's action provides students and families with ongoing financial relief



March 23, 2022

Colleges and Universities

TORONTO — The Ontario government is extending the current tuition freeze for colleges and universities by an additional year, through 2022-2023, providing financial relief and predictability for students and families seeking access to affordable postsecondary education.

“Our government recognizes that students and their families make huge sacrifices to attend college and university, so our government will continue to look for ways to reduce financial barriers for learners,” said Jill Dunlop, Minister of Colleges and Universities. “By freezing tuition for another year, we are saying yes to ensuring that students have access to affordable, high-quality postsecondary education, and reducing the financial

strain on families who have already faced so many challenges throughout the pandemic.”

The one-year extended tuition freeze for Ontario residents builds on Ontario's historic 10 per cent reduction in tuition for the 2019-20 academic year, and the subsequent two-year freeze from 2020-22. These reductions represent the first of their kind in Ontario's history. The government's action to reduce and freeze tuition has provided students with tuition relief of about \$450 million annually when compared to tuition costs in 2018-19.

“Increasing the affordability of college and university is part of Ontario's plan to help people get the training they need to get good-paying jobs,” said Minister Dunlop. “By extending the tuition freeze, we will ensure that students can get the skills they need to succeed in a highly-competitive global economy.”

Via news.ontario.ca

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City of Brampton ends declared State of Emergency in response to COVID-19

Thursday, Mar 24 2022

BRAMPTON, ON (March 24, 2022) – Today, two years after declaring a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mayor Patrick Brown has terminated the City of Brampton's declared emergency on behalf of City Council and on the recommendation of the City's Emergency Management team.

The Region of Peel also terminated its declared emergency today following consultation with Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Lawrence Loh, as well as Regional Emergency Management.

The City declared an emergency on March 24, 2020, in accordance with the City's Emergency Management Plan. The declaration was a significant step to support the Province of Ontario and Region of Peel in their efforts to help contain the spread of COVID-19. The declaration of emergency was an administrative tool that allowed the City more agility in its response to the pandemic to help keep the community safe.

The City remains focused on health and safety as it continues to gradually and safely reopen, and thanks residents for doing their part throughout the pandemic by physically distancing, practising good hygiene, getting vaccinated and wearing masks to help stop the spread.

Residents should continue to put the health and safety of the community first by staying home if sick, and getting vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19. For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 vaccinations, visit the Province's vaccine portal.

Should the COVID-19 situation in Brampton change, the City will continue to work with Peel Public Health and follow all provincial and regional health and safety measures to support emergency response.

COVID-19 Support Task forces

Throughout the pandemic, the City has been dedicated to protecting the health and safety of staff and residents and supporting the local economy and disproportionately impacted communities. In March 2020, the City announced four Mayor's COVID-19 support task forces to coordinate effective responses to COVID-19: the Economic Support Task Force, Social Support Task Force, Youth Support Task Force, and Seniors Support Task Force.

The City sincerely thanks all involved with the Task Forces for supporting its COVID-19 response efforts and the Brampton Community over the past two years, including:

- **Economic Support Task Force co-leads;** Paul Vicente, Regional Councillor Wards 1 and 5 and Michael Palleschi, Regional Councillor, Wards

2 and 6

- **Social Support Task Force co-leads;** Rowena Santos, Regional Councillor, Wards 1 and 5 and Jeff Bowman, City Councillor, Wards 3 and 4

- **Youth Support Task Force co-leads;** Charmaine Williams, City Councillor, Wards 7 and 8 and Harkirat Singh, City Councillor, Wards 9 and 10

- **Seniors Support Task Force co-leads;** Pat Fortini, Regional Councillor, Wards 7 and 8 and Gurpreet Dhillon, Regional Councillor, Wards 9 and 10

- **Backyard Garden Program Chair;** Doug Whillans, City Councillor, Wards 2 and 6

- **Reopening and Recovery Working Group Lead;** Martin Meeiros, Regional Councillor, Wards 3 and 4

With the termination of the State of Emergency, the City will be transitioning the task forces and support will continue to be provided to the community through City service delivery and via community social support networks.

Ongoing COVID-19 measures

Residents are reminded that while the City has lifted its Brampton COVID-19 Mandatory Mask By-law, masks continue to be required in select settings such as public transit,



health care settings, long-term care homes and congregate care settings. Residents are asked to respect those who choose to continue to wear masks in settings where they are no longer required.

Masks will continue to be required on all Brampton Transit buses and in Brampton Transit terminals in line with the Province's regulations. Cleaning and sanitizing remains in effect, and facilities and terminals that have hard surfaces are wiped down and sanitized daily.

Visit www.bramptontransit.com or follow @bramptontransit on Twitter for service updates. Questions may be directed to Brampton Transit's Contact Centre at 905.874.2999.

Pre-screening is no longer required to enter City facilities, including Recreation facilities. Residents are encouraged to continue to stay home if they are feeling unwell.

Via brampton.ca

City secures stronger future for healthcare in Brampton through School of Medicine

Tuesday, Mar 15 2022

BRAMPTON, ON (March 15, 2022) – Today, the Government of Ontario announced that it is expanding medical school education to build a stronger, more resilient healthcare system, including adding 80 undergraduate seats and 95 postgraduate positions for the Ryerson University School of Medicine in Brampton when it opens in 2025.

The 2021 Ontario Budget announced financial support for developing a new institute of medical education in Brampton in partnership with Ryerson University.

In July 2021, Brampton City Council voted in favour of a \$1 million planning grant to help fund a future School of Medicine in the city, matching the funding invested by the Province of Ontario earlier that year. Establishing a medical school in Brampton has been a significant part of the City's ongoing advocacy work and was included in the City's 2022 Ontario Pre-Budget Submission.

The School of Medicine will make Brampton the home of a community-centric medical school focused on inclusivity, innovation and primary



care.

The School of Medicine at Ryerson University will be designed around five pillars:

- Focusing on community centric primary care and the social determinants of health
- Providing culturally respectful care to communities
- Leveraging innovation and technology in practices to improve quality of care and patient outcomes
- Providing future physicians with the skills to develop inter-professional networks of health care to achieve better outcomes for patients

- Focusing on the aging and supporting seniors as a growing portion of our society gets older

On January 22, 2020, the City of Brampton declared a healthcare emergency and launched its advocacy campaign, "Fair Deal for Brampton" – requesting additional funding from the Province to bridge Brampton's healthcare gap. This announcement and the expansion of Peel Memorial helps address the healthcare emergency in Brampton and will ensure that the next generation of healthcare practitioners can train locally in the city.

The School of Medicine will address

the current pain points in the healthcare system in Brampton and across the province, both of which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. A shared vision for a School of Medicine in Brampton builds on existing partnerships between the University and the City of Brampton, including the Cybersecure Catalyst and the Brampton Ventures Zone.

For more information about Ryerson University's School of Medicine, visit: <https://www.ryerson.ca/brampton/school-of-medicine/>

Via brampton.ca

Government of Canada will remove pre-entry test requirement for fully vaccinated travellers on April 1



March 17, 2022 | Ottawa, ON

Public Health Agency of Canada

Today, the Government of Canada announced that effective April 1, 2022 at 12:01 AM EDT, fully vaccinated travellers will no longer need to provide a pre-entry COVID-19 test result to enter Canada by air, land or water. Fully vaccinated travellers seeking to arrive in Canada before April 1, 2022, must still have a valid pre-entry test.

As a reminder, travellers arriving to Canada from any country, who qualify as fully vaccinated, may need to take a COVID-19 molecular test on arrival if selected for mandatory random testing. Travellers selected for mandatory random testing are not required to quarantine while awaiting their test result.

For partially or unvaccinated travellers who are currently allowed to travel to Canada, pre-entry testing requirements are not changing. Unless otherwise exempt, all travellers 5 years of age or older who do not qualify as fully vaccinated must continue to provide proof of an accepted type of pre-entry COVID-19 test result:

- a valid, negative antigen test,

administered or observed by an accredited lab or testing provider, taken outside of Canada no more than one day before their initially scheduled flight departure time or their arrival at the land border or marine port of entry; or

- a valid negative molecular test taken no more than 72 hours before their initially scheduled flight departure time or their arrival at the land border or marine port of entry; or
- a previous positive molecular test taken at least 10 calendar days and no more than 180 calendar days before their initially scheduled flight departure time or their arrival at the land border or marine port of entry. It is important to note that positive antigen test results will not be accepted.

All travellers continue to be required to submit their mandatory information in ArriveCAN (free mobile app or website) before their arrival in Canada. Travellers who arrive without completing their ArriveCAN submission may have to test on arrival and quarantine for 14 days, regardless of their vaccination status. Travellers taking a cruise or a plane must submit their information in ArriveCAN within 72 hours before boarding.

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

Government of Canada announces expert advisory group on online safety



OTTAWA, March 30, 2022

With Canadians spending more time on social media to connect and share information, it has become easier for us to be exposed to harmful content online. While online platforms play a central role in the lives of Canadians, bringing many benefits to society, they can also be used as tools to cause real and significant harm to individuals, communities and our country. The Government of Canada is committed to a digital society that creates safe and respectful spaces online and protects Canadians' freedom of expression.

Today, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Pablo Rodriguez, and the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, David Lametti, announced a new expert advisory group on online safety as the next step in developing legislation to address harmful online content.

The expert advisory group will be mandated to provide advice on a legislative and regulatory framework that best addresses harmful content online. The group is composed of diverse experts and specialists from across Canada who will contribute their knowledge and experience from a variety of fields:

- Amarnath Amarasingam, Assistant Professor, School of Religion, Queen's University
- Bernie Farber, Chair, Canada Anti-Hate Network
- Chanae Parsons, Community Activist and Youth Engagement Specialist
- David Morin, Full Professor, Fac-

ulty of Arts and Humanities, Université de Sherbrooke

- Emily Laidlaw, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Calgary

- Ghayda Hassan, Professor of Clinical Psychology, Université du Québec à Montréal

- Heidi Tworek, Associate Professor, School of Public Policy and Global Affairs and History, University of British Columbia

- Lianna McDonald, Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Child Protection

- Pierre Trudel, Professor, Faculty of Law, Université de Montréal

- Signa A. Daum Shanks, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa

- Taylor Owen, Beaverbrook Chair, Media, Ethics and Communications

- Vivek Krishnamurthy, Samuelson-Glushko Professor of Law, University of Ottawa

The expert advisory group will hold nine workshops to discuss various components of a legislative and regulatory framework for online safety. They will also take part in additional stakeholder engagement, including with digital platforms. The work of the expert advisory group will be open and transparent. The group's mandate, the supporting materials for each session, and non-attributed summaries of all sessions and discussions will be published. All Canadians can follow the progress of these discussions on this important issue that affects us all.

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

Ontario Invests \$19M to Help Tackle Housing Crisis

Funding for tribunals will reduce case backlogs and speed up decisions

April 1, 2022 - TORONTO – The Ontario government is investing more than \$19 million over three years to help reduce the longstanding backlogs and accelerate decisions at the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) and Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB).

Funding will help appoint more impartial adjudicators at the OLT and LTB and support additional technology at the land tribunal to resolve cases faster.

"Ontarians deserve the opportunity to find the right home for them, and government bureaucracy should never stand in the way," says Attorney General Doug Downey. "We are making even more investments in the Ontario Land Tribunal and the Landlord and

Tenant Board to help clear longstanding backlogs and drive faster decisions so we can get more shovels in the ground."

This investment addresses a key recommendation in the Report of the Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force to increase resources at the Ontario Land Tribunal so homes can be built faster.

"We recognize the important role the Ontario Land Tribunal plays in the province's housing supply, and we remain committed to the principled and timely resolutions of the matters before us," says Greg Bishop, Alternate Chair for the Ontario Land Tribunal. "This investment will allow the Tribunal to schedule hearing events



and issue decisions quicker and more efficiently than before, and we appreciate the support of the Ontario government to allow us to provide an even higher quality of service to Ontarians."

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- [ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca)



WORLD NEWS

India asks Sri Lanka to 'exercise caution' while handling fishing boats

27 March, 2022 12:45 pm IST

Colombo, Mar 27 (PTI) India has asked Sri Lanka to "exercise caution" so as to prevent any casualties in the course of crackdowns on Indian fishing boats and requested the island nation to tackle the fisheries issue based on a humanitarian approach.

During a virtual meeting of the Joint Working Group on Fisheries on Friday, both countries agreed that the use of force could not be justified under any circumstances, and reiterated the importance of extending humane treatment to all fishermen, the Indian High Commission here said in a statement.

"The Indian side asked the relevant Sri Lankan authorities to exercise caution so as to prevent any casualties in the course of crackdowns on fishing boats, and suggested using paramilitary to apprehend civilian fishermen," the statement said.

"Suggesting that relevant UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) clauses are fishermen friendly in spirit and letter, the Indian government requested Sri Lankan authorities to tackle the fisheries issue based on humanitarian approach," it said.

The Sri Lankan side raised its concerns on the methods used by fishing vessels and stressed that it is imperative for the two countries to work

together in drawing up effective measures to mitigate the loss of livelihood. The Indian side took a constructive approach in its response and assured its assistance.

The Indian side also elaborated on the steps undertaken by the Government to safeguard the marine environment and explained government measures to improve the fisheries order, including stationing coast guard vessels at key sea routes requested by the Sri Lankan side, creating awareness on environmentally damaging fishing operations, and providing education, financial support and guidance to Indian fishermen to migrate to longliners fishing.

The Indian side had earlier dispensed dry rations to Sri Lankan fisher families, reflecting continuing interest in the well-being of the fishermen.

In recent weeks, Sri Lanka fisher organisations had stepped up pressure on the government to take steps to stop the Indian fishermen from entering Sri Lankan waters.

The Sri Lankan delegation at the meeting was led by R.M.I. Rathnayake, Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries of Sri Lanka, and the Indian delegation was led by Jatindra Nath Swain, Secretary (Fisheries).

Both sides reviewed the developments since the last meeting of the



Joint Working Group held in December 2020.

The fishermen issue is a contentious one in ties between the two countries.

In February, the issue of fishermen also figured in the talks between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Sri Lankan counterpart G L Peiris in New Delhi. Jaishankar will visit Sri Lanka from March 28 to March 30 for bilateral talks and BIMSTEC engagements.

There have been periodic instances of Indian fishermen being apprehended by Sri Lankan authorities for allegedly crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and fishing in Sri Lankan waters.

There have been several incidents of Sri Lankan Navy personnel even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait

and seizing their boats.

The Palk Strait, which is a narrow strip of water separating Tamil Nadu from Sri Lanka, is a rich fishing ground for fishermen from both countries.

According to available information, in the last three years, a total of 329 Indian fishermen were arrested by Sri Lankan authorities, of whom 305 were from Tamil Nadu. A total of 88 Indian fishing boats are in Sri Lankan custody.

India has been taking up the issue of the detained fishermen at the highest level (in Sri Lanka), including a "2+2" meeting between the foreign ministers and the fisheries ministers of the two countries.

Via PTI

Sikh Heritage Month: Statement by Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion



OTTAWA, April 1, 2022 - Today, Canadians across the country mark the beginning of Sikh Heritage Month. This is a great time for us to recognize the many past and current contributions of the Sikh community in making Canada the country that it is today.

Since the arrival of the first Sikh immigrants in the late 19th century, the Sikh community has helped make Canada a stronger country through its accomplishments in many different parts of our society.

Whether it's politics, sciences, arts, business, or sports, the Sikh community has helped shape Canada's cultural fabric. Our country is the proud home

of more than 500,000 members of the Sikh community, making Canada home of one of the largest Sikh diasporas in the world.

The values of equality, selflessness, openness and compassion are the core principles of Sikhism, and these values will be highlighted during Vaisakhi later this month.

As Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, I invite people across the country to celebrate the accomplishments of our fellow Sikh citizens both in April and throughout the year.

Have a great Sikh Heritage Month!
- via canada.ca

Ramadan Mubarak!

Statement by Minister Ahmed Hussen on Ramadan



OTTAWA, April 1, 2022: At sunset tonight, Muslims in Canada and around the world will mark the start of the holy month of Ramadan.

Ramadan is a time for reflection. Over the coming month, Muslims will fast from sunrise to sunset, breaking their fast with dates and a shared meal, iftar. This month is also a time for the community to come together spiritually by taking part in nightly prayers. Many members of the Muslim community will renew their commitments to better themselves and the world around them through acts of charity, continued empathy and generosity to those who need it most.

Ramadan is also an opportunity to celebrate and recognize the incredible contributions of Muslim Canadians to our country. Muslim Canadians are a

part of what makes Canada what it is today. However, they continue to be targeted by unacceptable hate crimes and discrimination.

Our government is taking action to tackle hate and discrimination by renewing the federal Anti-Racism Strategy, working on the creation of a new National Action Plan on Combatting Hate, and appointing a Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia. These are important steps. We will continue to work with affected communities and individuals in our shared fight against the forces that seek to divide us.

As Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, I extend my best wishes to everyone observing this sacred month. Ramadan Mubarak!
- via canada.ca



UN chief condemns attacks on civilian facilities in Saudi Arabia and Yemen



27 March 2022

Peace and Security

"The Secretary-General is deeply concerned about reports of ongoing airstrikes in Hudaydah city and the targeting of Hudaydah's ports, which provide a critical humanitarian lifeline for the Yemeni population," the UN chief's spokesperson, Stéphane Dujaric, said in a statement.

Over 23 million Yemenis face hunger, disease, and other life-threatening risks as the country's basic services and economy are collapsing, the UN Office for Humanitarian Coordination (OCHA) had said.

Deadly airstrikes

On Friday, Yemen's Houthi forces, also known as Ansar Allah, launched aerial attacks on civilian and energy facilities in Saudi Arabia, including on an oil facility in Jeddah that triggered a huge fire, which sent up a column of black smoke.

Subsequently, on Saturday, the Saudi-backed coalition retaliated with airstrikes on the Houthi-controlled seaports of Hudaydah and Salif as well as Yemen's capital, Sana'a, which reportedly killed eight civilians, including five children and two women.

"These airstrikes also resulted in

damage to the UN staff residential compound in Sana'a,"

Stop the hostilities

The UN chief is calling for "a swift and transparent investigation into these incidents to ensure accountability," the statement continued.

As the conflict enters its eighth year, the UN chief reiterated his calls upon all parties to "exercise maximum restraint, immediately deescalate, cease hostilities and abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution."

He also urged the parties to "engage constructively, and without preconditions, with his Special Envoy to reduce violence and urgently reach a negotiated settlement to end the conflict in Yemen."

Meanwhile, news media reported that Yemen's Houthi Ansar Allah said it would suspend for three days, missile and drone strikes on Saudi Arabia. The group upheld that the unilateral peace initiative could be a lasting commitment if the Saudi-led coalition stopped airstrikes and lifted port restrictions.

Via news.un.org

Today's wanting of Sri Lanka doing well

By K. Thirukumaran

As the Sinhala people all along have come to being that Sri Lanka is theirs, that seem to be they talking and taking matters in their own hands and at a level not seen before regarding the current situation.

For the vast majority of us Tamils though it has always been a case of delegating our civic woes and aspirations to others such as a political party or group on the socio-political front.

Several things can go into this as reason but we chose a certain narrative in the island's political spectrum. What resulted, is what it is!

Yet overall the Tamil people, especially the Northern, more specifically people from Jaffna peninsula, a good number of them are a far better off lot today in various ways if we are to look back.

Some of us including me never lived this three decades of the catastrophic war in Sri Lanka, but may have paid



a price for displacement from traditional homeland be it North or just in "Dehiwela".

The thing is compare this to rest of South Asia, even the world, we are in superior safe zones due to our diasporic being happened at a different time. It was a not a strategy, it so happened. So many calamities since then happened around the globe.

I'd say this only as a member of this non-monolithic diaspora; belonging to those within it getting that relatively easier exodus and mass migration. This was aided in large by a cold War ending naive world with globalization

Jaishankar meets top Tamil leaders in Sri Lanka; discusses their quest for equality, justice, peace & dignity



28 March, 2022 09:00 pm IST

Colombo, Mar 28 (PTI) External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday met Sri Lanka's top Tamil leaders and discussed realisation of the aspirations of the minority community for equality, justice, peace and dignity.

Jaishankar, who arrived here on Sunday night to hold bilateral talks with Sri Lanka's top leadership and attend the seven-nation BIMSTEC summit, met the main Tamil party – the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) – delegation led by R Sampanthan.

"Met the TNA delegation led by Shri R Sampanthan. Discussed realisation of the aspirations of the Tamils of Sri Lanka for equality, justice, peace and dignity," Jaishankar tweeted in both English and Tamil languages.

The minister also met Tamil Progressive Alliance (TPA) leaders and discussed the socio-economic issues of the Indian origin Tamil (IOT) community in Sri Lanka.

"Interacted with TPA delegation of Mano Ganeshan, Thigambaram, V Radhakrishnan, Uday Kumar. Discussed the socio-economic issues of the Indian origin Tamil community. India stands committed to its development partnership with IOTs," he said in another tweet.

His meetings with the Tamil leaders came days after Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa sought cooperation from the minority community leaders to "rebuild the country" in his first interaction with them since assuming office over two years ago.

"Let's work together to rebuild the country," President Rajapaksa told the leaders of the TNA who called on him at the Presidential Secretariat here on Friday.

During more than two-hour long talks, the President had pointed out that attention was paid on further steps to be taken with regard to those

who are held in long-term detention, release of lands that have been previously used for cultivation, investigation of missing persons, discussion of amendments to the new Constitution after translating into Tamil and Sinhala, and the establishment of a North-East Development Fund.

The TNA wants full devolution under the 13th Amendment as the central governments have over the years shown reluctance to meet the demand for police and land powers to the provinces.

The 13th Amendment provides for devolution of power to the Tamil community. India has been pressing Sri Lanka to implement the 13th Amendment which was brought in after the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement of 1987.

The Sinhala majority hardliners of the ruling Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) have been advocating a total abolition of the island's provincial council system established in 1987.

On Monday, Jaishankar also met State Minister Jeevan Thondaman and Senthil Thondaman and reviewed India's development engagement in Upcountry.

"Exchanged views on expanding our cooperation," he tweeted.

He also met Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Don Pramudwina of Thailand on the margins of the BIMSTEC Ministerial here.

"Discussed global and regional issues as well as taking BIMSTEC forward," he said.

Besides India and Sri Lanka, the BIMSTEC comprises Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Nepal and Bhutan.

The summit is being hosted by Sri Lanka in its capacity as the chair of the grouping BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation).

Via PTI

at its cusp and to a significant part by some good functioning institutionalized processes in Sri Lanka, those residuals of leftover parliamentary traditions, aplenty now too. So thanks

to all that; even gratitude felt today, for that in wanting Sri Lanka doing well amidst normalcy for all its people living their hopes and working towards realizing their aspirations!



WORLD NEWS

Sri Lankan police fire tear gas and water cannons to quell protests in front of PM Mahinda Rajapaksa's home

4 April, 2022

Colombo, Apr 4 (PTI) Sri Lankan police fired tear gas and water cannons at some 2,000 irate protesters who defied curfew orders and tried to storm Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa's residence in Tangalle on Monday, demanding his resignation amid the worst economic crisis in the country. Around 2,000 people descended near the Prime Minister's residence known as Carlton House in Tangalle, situated 200 km south of Colombo, and pulled down barricades chanting anti-Rajapaksa slogans.

Interestingly, Tangalle, which has a Sinhalese-majority population, is considered to be the bastion of the powerful Rajapaksa clan.

According to eyewitness accounts, angry protesters managed to dodge the police and were seen running towards Rajapaksa's gates clamouring for his resignation.

The government's poor handling of the economic crisis where citizens currently endure long hours of power outages and scarcity of essentials has angered the public that has resulted in planned and sustained country-wide protests since Sunday.

These protests have prompted the government to declare an emergency and impose a 36-hour curfew and a

social media ban.

On Sunday anti-government protests were staged here in Independence Square, protesting President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's move to impose a state of emergency and a raft of other restrictions here in Independence Square. Protests staged by university students also erupted in the country's Central Province on Sunday evening.

Consequently, the current economic turmoil and unrest in the island nation has precipitated a political flux with all 26 Cabinet Ministers submitting their resignation.

On Monday, Sri Lankan President fired his brother and Finance Minister Basil and invited the Opposition parties to join a unity Cabinet to tackle the raging public anger against the hardships caused due to the country's worst economic crisis.

Incidentally, Basil had negotiated the Indian economic relief package to help Sri Lanka tackle the current foreign exchange crisis.

He has been replaced by Ali Sabry, who was until Sunday night the Minister of Justice.

Basil was scheduled to leave for the US to meet with the International Monetary Fund for a possible bailout package to get over the unprecedented economic crisis.



He was at the centre of anger within the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna coalition.

Last month, at least two ministers were sacked from the Cabinet as they publicly criticised Basil.

After the resignation of the Cabinet Ministers, at least three other new ministers were sworn in.

G L Peiris has been sworn in as the Foreign Minister, while Dinesh Gunawardena is the new Education Minister.

Johnston Fernando was appointed the new Minister of Highways.

Meanwhile, Governor of the Central Bank Ajith Nivard Cabraal also an-

nounced his resignation on Monday.

"In the context of all Cabinet ministers resigning, I have today submitted my resignation as Governor," he said in a tweet.

Cabraal, 67, was blamed for his rigid stance on Sri Lanka seeking an economic bailout through an IMF structural adjustment facility.

Samagi Jana Balavegaya, the principal opposition party on Monday termed this spate of resignations a "sham" and declined an invitation from the President to form an interim government.

Via PTI

Sri Lanka Central Bank Governor quits amid mounting economic woes

April 04, 2022

Colombo, Apr 4 (PTI) Sri Lanka's Central Bank Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal, who had resisted calls for an IMF bailout, resigned on Monday amid escalating protests in the island nation over the mounting economic woes.

Cabraal, 67, announced his resignation in a Twitter post, after being elevated to this position less than seven months ago.

He stepped down after all members of Sri Lanka's cabinet, apart from President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his brother, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, quit on late on Sunday.

"In the context of all Cabinet Ministers resigning, I have today submitted my resignation as Governor @CBSL to the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa @GotabayaR #SriLanka #GoSL"

In September 2021, he replaced WD Lakshman to take over for his second term as Central Bank governor.

A former state minister of finance and a Member of Parliament since August 2020, Cabraal had earlier served as the Governor of the Central Bank of



Sri Lanka between 2006 to 2015.

In his second stint, the veteran policy-maker displayed his proclivity on reducing reliance on foreign debts and was reluctant to take loans from the International Monetary Fund despite the Sri Lankan economy going into a tailspin.

Cabraal leaves office at a time when inflation in Sri Lanka is at an all-time high.

His resignation came hours after Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapak-

sa on Monday removed his brother and Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa from his post.

According to the Central Bank estimates, inflation and prices of essentials have surged to 17.5 per cent in February this year, and are expected to rise in the coming months due to the devaluation of the Sri Lankan currency.

On Sunday, the entire cabinet apart from President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his brother Mahinda, the Prime

Minister, resigned against the mounting economic crisis and the social media ban that failed to quell anti-government protests.

The island nation has seen widespread public anger against the government for its mishandling of the worst economic crisis.

The country is grappling with what is said to be its worst economic crisis since independence from the UK in 1948.

It is caused in part by a lack of foreign currency, which is used to pay for fuel imports.

People are languishing in long queues for fuel, cooking gas and endure power cuts lasting multiple hours.

The public came out onto the streets independently of political parties. The mass agitation prompted the government to impose a state of emergency which gives security forces sweeping powers to arrest people.

Later, a curfew was imposed to curb public protests which the public defied.

Via PTI



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Mayor Patrick Brown enters contest to become leader of the Federal Conservatives

Mayor Patrick Brown officially kicked off the run to become the next leader of the federal Conservatives at an event in Brampton in the morning of March 13.

Mayor Brown said he was in the best position to oust the Liberals in the next federal election and become the 24th Prime Minister of Canada.

Statement in his official campaign portal -
<https://fighterleaderwinner.ca/>

Mayor Brown is a proven fighter for Canadians.

He has led the fight against the discriminatory Bill 21 that bans religious symbols.

When a serial pedophile moved into his GTA city, Mayor Brown led the charge that resulted in police putting the perpetrator back behind bars.

And when the liberal media tried to make him Cancel Culture's latest victim by smearing him with false allegations, he fought back to clear his name – and won.

Today, Mayor Brown is leading the Conservative counter-strike against Cancel Culture.

He lifted his GTA city's ban on Christmas. And, when a GTA transit driver was banned from displaying "Merry Christmas" or other religious phrases on his bus, Mayor Brown intervened.

Now, every bus in his city says "Merry Christmas" during the holidays while also celebrating other faiths year round.

Now he's fighting to build a stronger Conservative Party – one that's rooted in our values and principles, and can win.

Mayor Brown is a strong fiscal Conservative who knows how to deliver.

He's the only big-city mayor in Canada to freeze taxes every year he's been in office while delivering four consecutive balanced budgets.

And when COVID-lockdowns threatened the freedom of GTA families and businesses – and the mental health of Canadians – Mayor Brown became one of the only big city Mayors to speak out and demand an end to restrictions.

Not only did he speak out, he also matched his words with action.

It was Mayor Brown who ensured families could build skating rinks on their private property, something still banned by most "government knows best" municipal administrations.

Mayor Brown is also a successful businessman, who started and operated his own law firm, where he fought for the little guy.

Mayor Brown isn't one of those Conservatives who talks a big game about knowing how to break through in the seat-rich GTA. He's already done it.

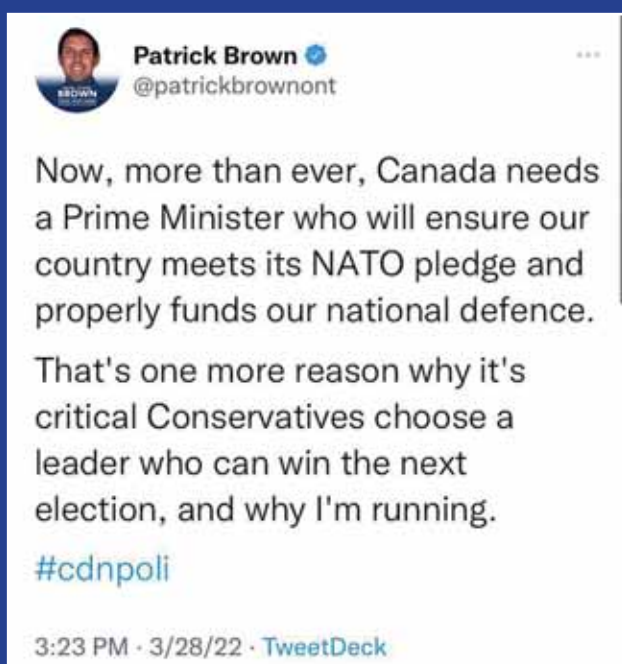
As provincial party leader, he won a number of hard-fought by-elections in what were considered safe Liberal seats.

He has record-level approval ratings as a popular mayor in the GTA – where Conservatives need to breakthrough in order to win a government.

Mayor Brown is also a former Conservative Member of Parliament, elected three times under the leadership of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, where he served as GTA Caucus Chair.

But what really makes Mayor Brown a winner is his amazing wife Genevieve and his two young kids, Theo and Savannah. Their love and support motivate him to fight for Canadian families every day.

A trove of tweets from Mayor Patrick Brown's Twitter handle, <https://twitter.com/patrickbrownont> is also displayed here.





Looking inside your heart now in HD!

SHN first hospital in Canada to trial HDi ultrasound device for viewing coronary arteries

At the heart of Scarborough Health Network's (SHN) regional cardiac centre, an expert team of cardiologists and nurses are performing life-changing procedures and using ground-breaking, leading technologies to diagnose and treat heart conditions and diseases.

Most recently, Dr. Ram Vijayaraghavan trialed an intravascular ultrasound (IVUS) device called HDi from ACIST and BRACCO Imaging. With this high-definition diagnostic imaging device, doctors are able to see sharper, clearer pictures of a patient's blood vessels feeding the heart, allowing for improved cardiac procedures. Ultimately, HDi helps the care team to best visualize any coronary complications that can lead to major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE).

Approved for use by Health Canada in 2020, this was the first time a Canadian hospital has trialed this particular intravascular ultrasound technology, and it was demonstrated and used successfully in one of SHN's three catheterization labs at its regional cardiac centre.

"IVUS is available widely, but this particular HDi device has an easy-to-use interface with very, very high-quality images, and is the first to enable what we call High Definition (HD) IVUS," said Dr. Vijayaraghavan.

IVUS is used in many complex scenarios, helping doctors like Dr. Vijayaraghavan treat patients. When used as part of a successful percutaneous coronary intervention (a procedure used to open clogged heart arteries), IVUS can be life-extending and life-changing with less heart attacks and less symptoms long-term. Patients travel to SHN from across the province, and some from across the country, to receive



these types of diagnostics and treatments.

In cases where stents (tiny tubes that are implanted to open up narrowed arteries) are needed, the HDi device truly shines. "It can tell you exactly what size and length of stent the artery needs, and how best to prepare the artery for the stent," says Dr. Vijayaraghavan. He noted that the size of the stent is critical. If it's too big it can be dangerous, and if it's too small it can fail over the long-term.

In addition, IVUS can be used to help doctors see entire artery walls and provide more information about plaque buildup. "Intravascular ultrasound is something used in about 10 to 20 per cent of cases to improve stents, and to get a really great result and to understand what is really going on in the artery better than in a regular angiography (another kind of heart imaging procedure)," explained Dr.

Vijayaraghavan. "And the HDi device is particularly excellent for complex cases that require additional imaging information."

"There are aspects of imaging with the HDi device that are really unique and special. It allows for the procedures to be done with very high accuracy and ability to interpret. Far more efficient than other forms of IVUS that are available right now," he said.

The images feature better contrast for border detection and the device improves the balance of high-resolution images, giving doctors a deeper, more detailed look at their patient's needs.

"The purpose of using the ultrasound, in this case, was to measure the artery so we could get the right size stent for the patient, and to understand the nature of the disease—whether it's very calcified or not," he said.

If the plaque is heavily

calcified, a doctor may need to consider additional tools before opening the artery and implanting the stent.

As home to the designated cardiac centre for Scarborough, Durham and other areas across the Central East region of Ontario, SHN already offers the most comprehensive range of cardiac services to local and surrounding communities. This kind of state-of-the-art technology means SHN continues to lead in cardiac care, including in intracoronary imaging, across the province.

"Although, this device, has previously been available in the United States and Europe—it's the first time it has come to Canada and I'm confident others will be interested in it," Dr. Vijayaraghavan explained.

"We are committed to using different types of technologies and intravascular imaging; it speaks to our level of expertise and the desire for even better results for our patients."



How the pandemic affected kidney disease patients, staff, and doctors

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is revealing the impact of COVID-19 on chronic kidney disease (CKD) patients.

As SHN began to navigate the pandemic, it quickly became clear that those with kidney disease were particularly vulnerable to the disease. Our kidneys are responsible for removing waste and excess fluid from our bodies. Patients on dialysis treatment – which is a medical intervention to remove this waste and excess fluid – have less than 15 per cent kidney function.

It was critical for SHN's life-saving dialysis programs to remain open for in-person appointments, when other outpatient clinics were able to pivot to online delivery models.

Tell me about your story – how did you end up at SHN?

I've had a chronic kidney problem for as long as I can remember. For at least 10 to 15 years, my kidneys have not been removing the waste and excess fluid from my body properly.

Every three months, I needed to see the nephrologist. By October 2019, it was getting worse and I wasn't feeling so hot. The doctors suggested that I begin dialysis treatment, which usually happens once you lose about 85 to 90 per cent of regular kidney function. I was a little terrified because, number one: I didn't know what dialysis was, and number two: I was just scared.

By January, I saw the nephrologist again and she said it was time to start dialysis. At this time, I was getting winded just walking upstairs; I could barely walk. My legs were at least twice the thickness past my knees because of the water I was retaining.

In early February, the dialysis clinic called and let me know we'd be starting dialysis on a Tuesday. I was feeling so bad, that I just said, "Okay, sure. See you Tuesday morning."

For those who don't know, dialysis treatments replace the work of your own kidneys using a special filter

called a dialyzer. Your blood travels through plastic tubing to the dialyzer, where it is cleaned and then returned to you.

You usually have a choice between going to the hospital to be hooked up to the dialysis machine for four hours, a few days a week, and home dialysis. Which did you choose and what was it like?

I picked home hemodialysis. So, I went to the hospital and they trained me to do it on my own, right from day one.

You also need someone to help you for home dialysis, so my wife came in periodically to be trained.

After my first treatment, I started doing dialysis every other day, and about a week or week and half later, I was thinking that if I knew I'd be feeling this much better, I would have started back in October, if not earlier. It was a world of a difference.

In June, I finally started doing my treatment at home. Things have worked out great.

Why was it important to you to be on home dialysis?

Being on home dialysis is empowering; I have more independence and flexibility. From April



Outpatient Nephrology Interview with George Aprile, home dialysis patient

After years of suffering from chronic kidney disease, 61-year-old George Aprile started dialysis treatment at Scarborough Health Network in 2019. Since then, he's learned how to perform treatments at home with the help of his wife, and like many others, unexpectedly learned how to navigate care with his nephrology team through a global pandemic.

Mr. Aprile shares his personal story of resilience, celebrates his care team, and shares his advice for other patients living with kidney disease.

Editor's Note: This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

to June, I was finally doing everything myself: setting up the machine, putting the needles in my arms – the whole nine yards.

From a pandemic perspective, being on home dialysis was beneficial. Knowing kidney patients are at a higher risk for developing serious illness if they contract COVID-19, really made me appreciate the fact that I could be treating myself from home. It wasn't something I really planned; it just happened that way.

What was it like training for home dialysis during the pandemic, and did you notice any changes along the way?

I was actually in the hospital during the beginning of the pandemic, from February to June. During that time, I noticed small changes in what we were required to wear, like masks. When we had clinics, the doctor would come and see me while I was on the dialysis unit.

But it was in June, when I came home, that I noticed more change; whenever we'd have clinics, it was always over the phone.

Virtual care was a bit challenging because we never did a face-to-face clinic with the doctor. Every three months, I would get a nurse assigned to me and we'd go through some questions. They would talk to the doctor and let me know about any changes to treatment. If I needed any extra supplies, I would

come to the hospital and my nurse would hand it to me through the window of my car.

What is the most important quality of care for you as a patient?

In my opinion, you really have to be able to trust what the care team is saying and doing. As well, care and empathy, especially at the beginning. I was terrified and didn't know what it was.

But this whole process, including my pandemic concerns, were made easier through my care team at SHN.

Heading into my first treatment, I was nervous. But everyone in the nephrology department was accommodating. I didn't know a lot about dialysis at the time, and I had a lot of questions. But you could ask anyone anything, and if they didn't have the answer, they would go find it for you.

Everyone went out of their way to help me. For instance, at one point I had a bad gout attack in my leg and could barely walk. I used to get a wheelchair and they'd bring me up. The receptionist herself would even wheel me down to my car – which was amazing. They all, as a team, were just fantastic! You could ask anyone anything, and if they didn't have the answer, they would go find it for you.

It was all top-notch care. The whole team – they are a team – and that is the great thing about it. You're never in contact with just one person. You get to know all of them.

How the pandemic affected kidney disease patients, staff, and doctors

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is revealing the impact of COVID-19 on chronic kidney disease (CKD) patients.

As SHN began to navigate the pandemic, it quickly became clear that those with kidney disease were particularly vulnerable to the disease. Our kidneys are responsible for removing waste and excess fluid from our bodies. Patients on dialysis treatment – which is a medical intervention to remove this waste and excess fluid – have less than 15 per cent kidney function.

It was critical for SHN's life-saving dialysis programs to remain open for in-person appointments, when other outpatient clinics were able to pivot to online delivery models.



Inpatient Nephrology Interview with Dr. Tabo Sikaneta, Nephrologist

Described by his patients as "approachable, kind, and knowledgeable," Dr. Tabo Sikaneta is well-loved throughout the community. As a nephrologist, Dr. Sikaneta works in the kidney unit at Scarborough Health Network (SHN), dealing primarily with dialysis and in patient kidney care.

Dr. Sikaneta explains the importance of the life-sustaining nephrology program even during a pandemic, along with a personal reflection on his journey working in kidney care for 19 years.

How did COVID-19 impact the nephrology program?

At SHN, it was important that nephrology services, particularly when it came to the provision of hemodialysis, be maintained throughout the pandemic. When kidneys fail completely, a person is dependent on a kidney transplant or dialysis treatments to stay alive. Patients on hemodialysis need their treatment two or usually three days a week to keep going.

So the nephrology program wasn't as affected as other areas within the hospital. Pandemic or no pandemic, our patients had to continue coming to hospital for their lifesaving treatments. Also, when complications arose that needed to be addressed in hospital, like infections or heart disease, our patients were still admitted.

What did change, of course, was that we had to care for kidney patients with COVID-19. Dialysis patients are more susceptible to getting very sick from COVID-19, and some other patients – who had no previous kidney problems – developed kidney failure because of COVID-19. So, in the intensive care unit (ICU) especially, we saw more new cases of kidney failure.

What is it like wearing Personal Protective Gear, such N95s, gowns, and face shields, all-day long?

It was quite trying. It was challenging to interact with other staff and patients because of all of the layers of protective gear and the need to ensure physical distancing. Due to the sheer volumes of our patients, there was a lot of donning and discarding of protective gear, and then there was always the concern that despite this we were still at risk of exposure when working with confirmed cases of COVID-19.

It was very uncertain for a lot of people when the pandemic first started. How did you and your team support each other during those challenging times?

It was a scary time. There was a lot of fear as no one really knew what was going to happen or how much worse things were going to get. When the first few patients came down with COVID, we didn't know what was going to happen to them, how

(See Page 17)



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It was critical for SHN's life-saving dialysis programs to remain open for in-person appointments, when other outpatient clinics were able to pivot to online delivery models.

What was it like working in the in-centre hemodialysis unit when the pandemic first started?

It felt chaotic. We were all scared of the unknown. I was scared, my patients were scared, and it was very tiring by the end of a shift because we were learning about this new disease, how to stop it from spreading and how to protect patients.

At the beginning, I think a lot of my patients were angry and frightened. They had a lot of questions about COVID, what screening measures were in place to keep them safe, and what it meant for their health and for their families.

I think there was a lot of fear at the beginning of the first year, when everything started. No one really understood what was going on. We were doing a lot to support our patients and each other through talking, understanding, and by just being there for each other. It was – and is – a big challenge.

Through it all though, we were committed to maintaining services in our nephrology program because patients on dialysis are at a higher risk for contracting the disease, and many of them have varying degrees of immune suppression – which also means, they could develop more complications.

We were able to offer CKD patients and their loved ones early access to vaccinations, in an effort to maintain the safest environment for them.

Recently, it's gotten better, and we have a good understanding of what we're doing and dealing with. At least everybody can see the light at the end of the tunnel now.

What is the typical experience for

a patient coming in for dialysis, and how has it changed during the pandemic?

We have over 60 patients every shift: morning, noon and evening. We are a big community and it's incredible how we can handle so many patients.

Patients usually come in three to four times per week. We only have a handful of patients who come twice a week. Each session lasts about four hours.

Most of our patients take Wheel-Trans to the hospital. Once they arrive, they come into their station and get weighed before the treatment.

We connect them to a machine, which removes the blood through a needle in the arm and filters it through a dialyzer. We do this because the kidneys don't filter blood the way they should, and it is important to remove waste and other toxins in the blood stream.

We try to ease our patients' nerves by having a conversation with them. We like to get them talking about themselves, but it's usually a little bit of information at a time until they are comfortable with us. Once they see our face and begin to recognize us, it's nice.

Through the pandemic we had to make some changes. Not only are we masking, but we're equipped with facial shields and other personal protective equipment (PPE). The extra PPE can be very warm and uncomfortable, especially by the end of a full shift.

It is important to monitor staff and patients, and support isolation, as well. If an individual on the unit was exposed to COVID-19, we all needed



Hemodialysis Interview with Irina Segura, Registered Practical Nurse

Meet Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) Irina Segura. Irina has spent 10 of her 12 years at SHN supporting dialysis patients, currently working on the hemodialysis unit at SHN's General Hospital. This unit is one of four clinics serving Scarborough and beyond, including a hemodialysis unit at Centenary Hospital and three at satellite locations in community settings.

Here, Irina recalls her experiences offering support, education, and treatment, as well as how the pandemic affected the unit's staff, patients, and families.

to be tested to ensure the safety of everyone on the unit, including patients, staff and loved ones.

It's been a complete change.

What is the most important quality of the care experience for kidney patients?

It's about making our patients feel comfortable and that takes patience and time. There's a lot of factors to consider. Each patient has a different story, perhaps speaks a different language, and circumstances vary about why and how they arrived at SHN.

It's also about being there to resolve any doubts. Our patients are just like us; they have their good days and they have their bad days. You have to be able to help them and be compassionate in those kinds of situations.

During the pandemic, we continue to support the health needs of patients, and we ensure we're available to answer any additional questions or concerns.

In general, over time, we find most of the patients do open up to us. As RPNs, we communicate with each other and the physicians about the patient; for example, their demeanour or preferences, to ensure they feel safe and comfortable in their experience.

What would you say to a patient to alleviate their nerves and to reassure them exceptional care is being provided, even considering a global pandemic?

relationships with your patients. You have a lot of patient contact. They get to know you and trust you, and vice versa. Similarly, I enjoy working with and developing long-term relationships with my colleagues and other kidney health care professionals. In many ways we are like a family.

I love the fact that it's challenging, cerebrally. It requires you to have one foot in general internal medicine and another foot in the speciality aspects of it, like dialysis.

I love the opportunity to make a meaningful impact in those patients who have reversible or treatable kidney disease. When that happens nephrology can be very rewarding.

I also love the breadth of practice. We care for inpatients in all departments throughout the hospital, and see outpatients in a variety of clinics. There's also a strong bend to primary care prevention, for example by preventing or treating diabetes or high blood pressure – the main causes of kidney disease.

Anything else you would like to add?

Scarborough is a fantastic place to work as a nephrologist! Pulling together to get the job done during a global pandemic demonstrated how strong is the teamwork ethic of SHN's regional kidney program. The sheer volume and pace of growth of kidney disease, also means that working in Scarborough offers many other opportunities to make a difference, not just for patients here and now, but for patients elsewhere and in the future. I believe there are secrets and lessons of nephrology right here in Scarborough to seek and broadcast beyond its borders!

It's okay to feel whatever you feel. A lot of new CKD patients feel frustrated and angry. For them, they feel like they're saying goodbye to the life they knew. After the treatment, they will also feel very drained and tired.

It's important to know our SHN team is here for you. We are a very close team, and will support you every step of the way.

The advice I always tell my patients, don't worry – let's take it one treatment at a time. Focus on today and don't worry about tomorrow.

Anything additional you would like to add?

Over the past 10 years I've seen a lot of changes, including increases in capacity and new technology and equipment. As the program has grown, I've grown with it, and that's a good thing.

Most of our patients come from the Greater Toronto Area. However, we have patients that want to be in our care who come from as far as Barrie. We are catering to a big community and we will never deny anyone of care.

Since I've started, we have noticed trends in patient health. The difference today is that many of our patients are more chronically sick. They are older and less responsive to treatment compared to 10 years ago. We've added new machines and more spaces, including accessible satellite sites to meet treatment demands. We are the largest regional program in the province.

Over the last decade, I've not only become a better nurse, but a better person. I would say my patients have impacted my life greatly. They've seen me pregnant, they've seen my kids grow. They have really become my second family.

(Continued from page 16)

much this was going to spread within the dialysis population, or to us as the dialysis care providers and therefore to our families at home.

We made some changes to our hospital schedules so that we could have clear 'on' and 'off' times when it came to our provision of care to inpatients. During the 'on' times when we were in the trenches so to speak, some of the staff members would take up separate residences, or separate themselves from other family members within their homes.

How was the nephrology program handling COVID-19 vaccine in patients?

We believed early on that vaccination would be a powerful way to protect our patients, and we were one of the most proactive units – not just within the hospital but among dialysis units around the province – in getting our patients vaccinated. We were able to get our patients prioritized for the vaccines, and marshalled the resources – including the staff that worked tirelessly around the clock – to get them vaccinated. It was quite an undertaking, and this credit is due to Dr. Paul Tam the Program Director, and the team of nurse managers and nurses, as well as our Senior Leadership Team who all helped to make this happen.

What is the most important quality of the care experience for kidney patients?

Trust. They must trust their doctors and health care team because they are very vulnerable patients

who put themselves in very compromised positions week in and week out. At each treatment our hemodialysis patients are connected to machines that pull out all their blood to clean it, and are at risk for all manner of problems – including blood pressure changes, vomiting, cramps, adverse reactions, infections, heart problems just to name a few. Kidney patients therefore have to be able to trust their lives with us.

Another important quality is that they feel their wishes are respected. Kidney failure and dependence on dialysis already represents the loss of so much control over one's health, and it is critical to remember and respect the dignity and wishes of patients.

Have you noticed any changes or trends in what types of patients are coming into the hospital?

I've worked at the hospital since 2003, and the relentless growth of the program has been quite striking. At 7 per cent, the annual rate of growth is double the provincial average. I have also been struck by the disparities apparent in people who get kidney failure, especially among subgroups of people who were not born in Canada and people of non-White ethnicities. Given that Scarborough is already so diverse and growing so rapidly, it is perhaps no wonder that the program is growing so fast. What is a wonder is the opportunity presented to better understand who gets kidney disease and why here in Scarborough, and the challenge to buck this trend.

What do you enjoy about your job?

I love nephrology because you develop long-term



SPECIAL FEATURE

Tamil Identity Between the Real and the Unreal

**Dr. A.J.V. Chandrakanth reviews
Devakanthan's 'His Sacred Army' &
'A Time of Questions' translated
by Nedra Rodrigo**



Devakanthan

In the literary world of Tamil readers in Canada and abroad, Devakanthan is a highly renowned writer and an eminent literary critic from among the Tamil community in Toronto. In 2014, Mr. Devakanthan was the recipient of the Award for Best Fiction from the Tamil Literary Garden (an organization founded in Canada in 2001 to promote Tamil literary works), and Kanavuchirai or Prison of Dreams was cited for this award. Later the State Government of Tamil Nadu honoured this same novel by presenting him with a Special Award. Mawenzi House deserves our appreciation for bringing out the English translation of the first two books of Devakanthan's quintet. I wish to comment briefly about three distinct features that undergird this novel which make these volumes a highly commendable literary innovation in creative writing. In my view, the author is charting new contours for future writers.

Historical Context

An engaged and critical reading of a classical novel at this first quarter of the 21st century, particularly a novel that is situated within the South Asian region, cannot be undertaken with total dissociation and detachment from contemporary permutations of the historical reality and the radical social transformations in vogue within and around us.

History attests that South Asian literature, and particularly Tamil literature, reached towering heights more than twenty centuries ago. For various reasons those soaring heights remained unnoticed by the world of Oriental scholars within the Indian subcontinent and outside for many centuries. Today Tamil literature captivates the attention of scholars in a variety of arenas. Not least among these are: linguistics, semiotics, epigraphy, history, religion, social anthropology, and classical literature; largely because of the wealth of sociological, geographical, literary, linguistic, cultural and historical treasures enshrined in them. As a classical language, Tamil is slowly but steadily climbing the stairs of some of the leading temples of learning in the world.

Literature is as much a product of human endeavor as it is a product of the endless fluctuations of history that in turn brings about calamitous and catastrophic changes in society. What prompts a writer to produce a work of this magnitude cannot be wrongly reduced to the power of socio-political imagination, nor can it be reduced to emotional bosh that seeks an outlet in literary creativity.

Often it is the lived experience and, to some extent, an inevitable internalization of the pain and pathos of the human predicament that propels a writer to compose a work of this rigor, while standing in the very abyss of the turbulent social arena as a helpless witness to history. Here the desire to write emerges from the determination to draw insights from all layers of the social palimpsest

and to show that there is always a horizon of hope beyond the ever-expanding avenues of despair.

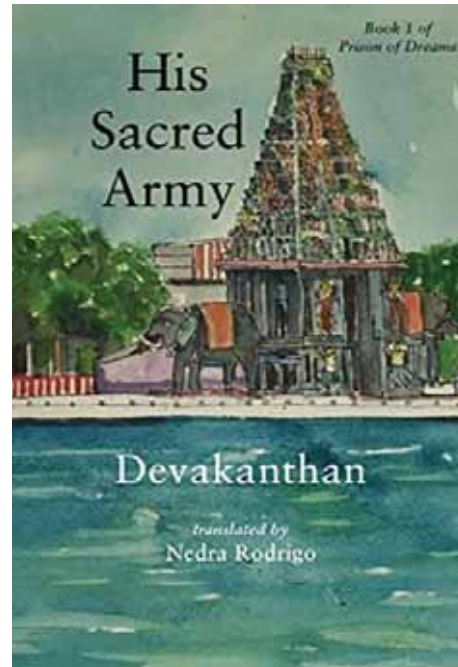
Personal Experience

Secondly, unlike other literary creations, an socio-political novel by its very essence is a portrayal of reality with all its comforts, calamities, catastrophes, cruelties, disasters, conflicts, and challenges. Such a novel consciously endeavors to portray reality as perceived, internalized and experienced by the writer. Knowledge can be shared and to some extent can also be objectified; but not experience. Experience cannot be adequately expressed, explicated, or even shared. It is this inescapable struggle to translate experience into words that makes a novel throb with the vigor of life. A novel that encompasses many geographical locales within a particular historical period must deal invariably with many characters with varying values, visions, and beliefs. The molding and sculpting of the many characters in a novel become the most daunting challenge to the author. To an author, a novel is an inescapable product of social change of which she or he is an inseparable part. Thus, it becomes a personal struggle to either resist or to let one be drawn by the uncontrollable undercurrents of this change.

In responding to this labyrinth of social change, the writer decisively enters each character, or each character delves into the writer; into the writer's mental discourses where all the conversations and of the novel are originally spoken, deciphered or enacted. The fact is that in a socio-political novel like Prison of Dreams, the terrain and the geographical horizon extends in many directions from Nainativu to Jaffna, Colombo, Trichy, Madras, Bombay, Paris, Zurich and to many a strassenbahn in Germany, thereby drawing in multiple characters with manifold motifs into the story.

In my view, herein lies the most formidable challenge of all. With over 47 principal characters and around six auxiliary characters, this novel moves forward easily and smoothly while keeping an entrancing grip on the reader. This is the most commendable achievement of Devakanthan. Not a single character is interpolated without necessity, nor a single character left unchosen while furthering the progress of the story.

Here I must commend Nedra Rodrigo for the excellent flow of the translation. The story truly flows so effortlessly, like a clear stream of water moved by a gentle breeze. The reader is so swiftly drawn into the story that she or he will find it very hard to come out of it and put down the novel. The exigencies triggered by the next move and the question of what will happen to the poor widow Maheswari or her daughter Raji, or to others like Thyagu, Thiravi or Suthan, will keep the reader bound inside the novel not merely as a reader but as an involved. Many a Tamil reader will enter one or more characters and is bound to



feel 'this is about me, or my sister, my mother, my cousin, my aunt, my home, my village, my town'...., one can go expanding this list with all the emotion, pain and tears it may entail. This is where history becomes not merely a text or a document but a recognizable personal encounter transcending time and space.

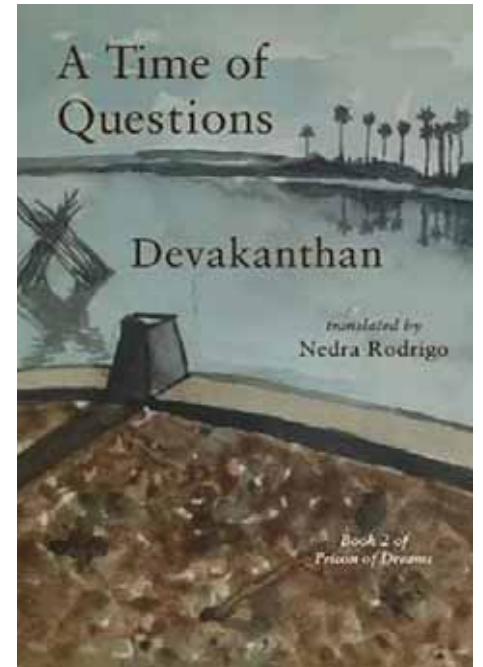
Communal Relations

My third remark is that a novel itself is a hermeneutical entry into the literature of life with all its ramifications. A realist novel in that respect becomes an inescapable product of social discourse at all and every level that includes political, religious, and other forms of communal or national interactions.

An involved entry into a reading of Devakanthan's novel cannot be done if one turns a blind eye to contemporary linguistic trends and the dynamic phenomenology of discourse in action. We hear often "words do matter," and we all know it to be true. Today, this cry is more frequently heard in political platforms than in social discourses. You can communicate without words, but you cannot have a language without words. It is hard to imagine a human language devoid of words and saturated with wordlessness.

The location of this novel is the ancient port hamlet of Nainativu. The novel rightly refers to this little islet as the sacred Manipallavam once visited by the Tamil Buddhist nun Manimekalai as mentioned in the fifth century Tamil classic Manimekalai. This holy land is a quiet village with two sacred temples: one dedicated to Lord Buddha and the other to the Saiva-Hindu goddess Nagapushani Amman. Many generations of people living in this isle were used to observing or even participating in the rites and rituals in both temples, undergirded by a common bond of piety and religiosity. This seems to have continued for centuries despite anti-Tamil pogroms that happened in the 1950s, 60s and even 70s in other parts of Sri Lanka.

But the horror inflicted by the blood-spilling daylight murder in the mid-seas a few meters away from these two temples inaugurated a slow and certain rupture in relationships tearing off the seamless mantle of inter-religious cordiality and communion. Nainativu was not the same anymore. "When the form changed, that was bearable; but when the soul changed –well, with that life never returned to normal." These



words of Raji, one of the principal characters in the novel are pregnant with meaning portending a paradigmatic change for many of her generation.

Rajalakshmi's gradual realization that there are ideals that transcend personal choices and ambitions or even commonly held conventions and social customs laid down by moribund traditions lead her toward a radical personal transformation in many of her decisions with a vigorous determination. In charting new contours of life, she becomes a symbol of hope and resilience for those 90,000 Tamil war widows in the North and East.

Until this mid-sea murder many men and women young and old who left Nainativu temporarily for a few hours or days to sail up to the mainland returned eagerly to their home and habitats and to their beloved sacred isle, as did the birds, the goats, the cows, and their calves. But not after the blood-spilling mid-sea massacre of a boat full of Tamil children, men, and women by the Sinhala navy. These helpless people were moving from the island to the mainland.

After this atrocity everything changed. People left their sacred isle never to return. Even the Buddhist monks who preached the Buddhadamma left for good. Young men left, leaving behind their elderly parents; someone never saw them again. Husbands left, never to see their wives and children for many decades. This reality, so stark, cruel, and calamitous, is now a permanent mark of Tamil lives, Tamil families, Tamil homes, Tamilland, and Tamil soil. Today the land and the birds, the trees and plants are different these cannot be seen, befriended, or named.

The reality of that little isle has become a prison of dreams. Are not dreams neither real nor unreal? Dreams are not something, but they are not nothing either. Dreams are in between. Dreams are the elusive connection between reality and unreality, and this where Tamil identity is standing today: between the real and unreal. This novel unravels the dilemma of Tamil identity between the real that is lost, and the unreal that is being forged.

'His Sacred Army' & 'A Time of Questions';

**By: Devakanthan,
Trans. By: Nedra Rodrigo,
Mawenzi House**

Price: \$22.95

<https://www.mawenzihouse.com/product/his-sacred-army/>



THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF MALAYSIAN AIRLINES FLIGHT MH 370

It had been almost 8 years since this flight disappeared in the blue skies over the Indian Ocean without a trace of it except for few of the debris found in the islands near Madagascar. The world of aviation enthusiasts, crash investigators and the beloved relatives of this “ghost” flight, are looking for answers as to what happened to this flight? On a warm moonless ominous night with cloudy skies, 8th of March 2014, departed on a regular flight to Beijing, with 227 passengers plus 12 crew members on board but never to be returned. Most of the passengers were Chinese who were going home to be with their loved ones but was never to be. Americans, British, Australians were also there. It is inexplicable in mere words, the cries of the loved ones who want to find answers.

The Captain of this flight was Zacharie Ahmad Shah, 53 years old, 33 years with MAS, had almost 18000 hours of flying, short of 1000 hours of Capt “Sully” Hudson River Famous Chesley Sullenberger when he gently landed in his US airways B737 MAX,. Zacharie was not only a captain but also a father figure for most of his young co-pilots who had a built-in aircraft simulator at his home to practice in his spare time and used to post videos to educate the young pilots. Co pilot Fariq Abdul Hamad with MAS for 4 years, 2 of which was on B 737. A young pilot with lots bright of future ahead, engaged to his friend Nadira Ramli, were to be married soon.

When the flight took off at 12.41 a.m. local time had fuel for of 7.5 hours, the radio calls were made by Fariq indicates Zacharie was in control of the flight. When the flight reached cruising altitude Fariq called the controllers and confirmed flight reached 35,000 feet altitude as per ATC plan. When they were leaving the Malaysian air space, were asked to report to HO Chi Minh, Vietnam tower on 120.9 frequency. The last words spoken from 370 was “Good night Malaysian” Capt. Zachraie said and with that they were gone forever. AS soon as the flight disappeared from the Radar, lots of theories mushroomed and have been reading a lot of it but still no aircraft was found. Since it was a Muslim country, most popular version was “Terrorism” by some Jihadists who could have entered the aircraft through the under carriage into the cockpit and was on a suicidal mission. Also, they further said that the co pilot was on a suicidal mission and crashed the flight in the Indian Ocean. Another interesting one from Fox News Mc Inerney, was that the aircraft got hijacked and is in one of the “-..... STANS” countries hidden from the public eyes for ransom money.

I wonder how many of these folks will remember this incident happened in 1938 with PANAM and is still a mystery without



any trace of it for almost 85 years and counting.. PANAM Clipper disappeared on July 29, 1938, with Capt. Terletsky, plus 5 other cockpit crew members and 11 passengers, Martin 130, named “Hawaiian Clipper”, approached Philippine Archipelago, disappeared over the island Panay, so far no piece of the plane, human remains, luggage or cargo, no oil spill from the aircraft was ever found. It is still one of the mysteries in aviation as I am penning this. The other is Amelia Earhart’s flight on the 1st of June 1937 was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean wanted to accomplish one more feat, when she flew from Miami to circle the globe at the equator and never to be heard again and still none has any answer for these two incidents.

I recently read an interesting narration about MH 370 flight from former CNN aviation correspondent Christine Negroni who was in Malaysia to investigate this incident. She writes, Quote “soon after the flight attained cruising altitude Zacharie who had been in the cockpit that night from 11 p.m. supervising the readiness for the flight would have left the cockpit for a snack in the cabin, keeping the cockpit door locked as per FAA regulations. During this

time by some reasons, a depressurization of the aircraft caused by some electrical malfunction which would have been very severe and sudden for the co pilot don his oxygen mask immediately and could have been completely incapacitated by lack of oxygen which deprived his brain of any cogent thinking. Same thing could have happened in the cabin also where Capt. was enjoying a coffee. It looks like a sudden event which none could have anticipated at all. It is called hypoxia or altitude sickness. The fact that the aircraft was continuing its flight for 17 hours till it burned out all its fuel and then could have crashed in the sea without any power. This disproves the theory by some of the skeptics that the copilot was on a suicidal mission and dived into the sea after 30 or 45 minutes. Many investigators believe very strongly Capt. Zcharie purposefully staged the crash after analyzing the treasure of evidence submitted from investigators mainly from the radio signal sent out by the aircraft to its manufacturers located in different parts of the world and also the signals WSPR and from Ham radio operators around the globe. None of the investigators can’t understand why it circled over Penang after leaving the KUL air space, 370 was on a holding pattern for 20 minutes at the end Malaysian air space and then flew towards the Indian Ocean with the Transponder being switched off to prevent the radar controllers to know where they were flying. Also, ample evidence is there that flight plan was specially filed to avoid Military Radar. It clearly signals there was an active pilot operating with sinister motives, suicidal purpose.

I conclude with great sadness the mysterious disappearance of MH370 as there are no answers, after a joint effort by multinational countries to find the wreckage costing more than 100 million US dollars. But the latest from retired Aerospace engineer Richard Godfrey, based on his research it is somewhere in the Australian waters, Perth. We can hope and pray for this recovery which would definitely shed enough light on its disappearance and bring a closure for the families and for crash investigators as to the actual cause. This will help everyone with the “Million Dollars Question”.

As in the words of late secretary Donald Rumsfeld “There are known knowns, there are known unknowns and There are unknowns unknowns” which seems to set a chord with this flight MH370.

K.N. Sivagnanasunderam (Blue)
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SPECIAL FEATURE

Words of Peace

Choose Right

“There may be a lot that is wrong, but should that define you?” - Prem Rawat



You are pure. But your purity is contaminated by the noise that you allowed to echo between your ears. You memorize that which causes you pain and suffering. You ignore that that can bring you comfort. Comfort. In your hard times, there is something so precious in you that wants to comfort you: “It’s okay! You are alive.” And so far you are alive, believe you me, everything is okay.

Your life, my friends, cannot possibly be, nor is it about what is wrong—but your existence is because of what is right. Do you accept that? (Not everybody.) I’m not saying there aren’t things that are not right! There may be a lot

Discover what’s right in your life on any given day.

that is wrong! But should that define you? Or what is right define you?

And if this breath comes into you, this is right. It’s not wrong; this is right. If you feel the peace in your life, this is right. If you thirst for joy, this is right! This is right. If you want to feel good, (now we can talk about, “Should that be called ‘happiness’ or this or that,” whatever). But if you want to feel good, that’s right. That’s right.

What are you looking for? What do you want? However old you are, whatever you’ve

been through. I’m sure things have happened to you that you want revenge for. Fine. You won’t hear that. You would hear, like, “Oh, oh, you shouldn’t have those feelings.” I’m like, “Yeah. Sure.”

Because what is wrong is wrong, is wrong! And you cannot just simply wish it away! But you can focus—and choose to be with what is right! Because when you choose the wrong, that doesn’t make the right go away!

Choose the right, what is right. This will have an impact on your life. This will

empower you to live your life consciously, to stay away from the noise and accept the truth of your existence. This will give you the context you need to value each breath that comes into you. This will give you the context to have gratitude for every single day that you are alive.

And that gratitude has a way of putting a smile on your face like nothing else can make you smile. Because that gratitude is the final result of everything being right. Not about wrong. Everything being right.

Prem Rawat.
www.timelesstoday.com
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BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

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Fazmina Imamudeen
13h · 🌐

Rekha, my friend is an inspiration. I saw her at my Masters orientation programme for the first time and my first impression was - why would she come so late? Very irresponsible. But everyone has a story that we do not know about. That is why we say, be kind to others, you don't know their stories. Rekha's story is that of grit. She came that day, after her first chemotherapy. She came late, but didn't miss the orientation. That is motivation, that is perseverance. I don't know how we became such close friends, but we did. And we have helped each other immensely in our MA studies. She is my oldest bestie. And I am quite proud to have such a driven woman in my life. Age is just a barrier we create to stop ourselves from achieving the most. Rekha is young and beautiful. While reading for her MA and battling cancer, she was also reading for her Bachelor of Education. What's beautiful about her is that she would never complain. She never missed an assignment and did so well in all the assignments and final evaluation assessments that were assigned in our MA programme. And today, when these pics of her in the black cloak appeared, I couldn't be but proud for my dear friend. Amazing and inspiring. Past 50 years old, diagnosed with cancer, anyone else would have retreated. But not my friend Rekha. This is what hope looks like. These are women no one knows about, and whose stories need to be heard.



Historic Photographs
Yesterday at 4:11 PM · 🌐

In 1973, Marlon Brando rejected his Oscar for The Godfather to allow Sacheen Littlefeather to protest Hollywood's portrayal of Native Americans.

Thulasi Muttulingam
★ Favorites · 13h · 🌐

Nostalgia amid the mayhem.
My grandmother used kerosene lamps like these. This though is a Chinese knockoff that runs on battery. For old times sake, I actually wanted the locally produced kerosene lamps - but those were Rs 2,500 - at the time I went looking 3 months ago. This was Rs 600. Decided to be prudent. Just as well. Kerosene which wasn't in shortage at the time I bought this, now requires long queues. There was something comforting about woodfire smoke and my grandmother with her lamp. Can't say I'm all that comforted now.



👍👍👍 36 6 Comments 1 Share

Thulasi Muttulingam
★ Favorites · 19h · 🌐


Me and you and many other Sri Lankans 😞

Sara Inshira Nazoor
21h · 🌐

I am tired of fixing things when the majority would go back and vote in people who have no clue what they are doing.
I am tired of fixing issues so that one family can loot us all and pretend they are doing us a favor.
I am tired of taking small steps.
I am tired of choosing between bad and worse.
I am tired of hoping for a better tomorrow.
I am tired of having to cram in one day of work within a few hours.
I am tired of holding in my anger and hurt.
I am tired of sweating all my energy off
I am tired of telling my daughter how long till the fan can be switched on again.
I am tired of shadow puppets, how many can I make anyways.
I am tired of charging all the re chargeable appliances.
I am tired of having to solve problems and then getting back to square one.
I am tired of the majority and minority
I am tired of having to listen to people cry because they are so helpless.
I am tired of people forgetting
I am tired of political propaganda
I am tired of having to think hundred times before I step out of the house because is it really worth it.
I am tired of staying silent thinking if I work hard enough the system would change.
I am tired of wars that we fight for the gain of few.
I am tired of dreaming because aren't we too poor to dream anyways.

👍 1

Thulasi Muttulingam
★ Favorites · Yesterday at 4:54 PM · 🌐



The British Empire in 1921.

History for Fun
March 26 at 10:54 AM · 🌐

The British Empire at its territorial peak in 1921.

Thulasi Muttulingam
★ Favorites · March 29 at 5:23 PM · 🌐

Mahendran Thiruvarangan
March 28 at 9:10 PM · 🌐

Where Arts Faculties should be headed – a rejoinder - by Farzana Haniffa

"It is not the Harvards of this world that we should emulate, but contexts that have enabled the emergence of labour struggles and cultural critique informed by class analysis. It is also here that our decolonial critique needs to be located. Our task should be to enable our students to better understand and critique the structural conditions behind their circumstances and equip them to change these conditions for their communities. It is to this end that we should gear our educational goals and not merely to equip individual students to escape class through "entrepreneurship." Having students aspire to become CEOs of exploitative enterprises that trap future generations in poverty is the neoliberal project that we should resist."

<https://island.lk/where-arts-faculties-should-be-headed.../>

Thulasi Muttulingam
★ Favorites · March 6 at 6:37 PM · 🌐



Sri Lankan Pictures Without Context
March 6 at 12:26 AM · 🌐



SPECIAL FEATURE

Memory lingers on (Kurunthokai 61)

By: Kumar Punithavel

Kurunthokai an anthology of short poems by many poets, during Tamil Sangam era which was compiled more than two thousand years ago. It is believed the original composition had 400 poems, though today, 402 are attributed to this anthology. The collection belongs to the akam (love) category sonnets and each consists of 4 to 8 lines (except poem #307 and 391 which has 9 lines). I was glancing through the book and came across the poem #61 that had a situation very much like the couplet 1281 of Thirukkural.

The particular sonnet of six lines was composed by a bard named ThumbiserKeerananar (தும்பிசேர்கீரனார்). There are many songs that are attributed to more than one poet named Keerananar.

Of them, this poet is credited with composing seven of them. Thumbi (தும்பி) is the Tamil name for the dragonfly which is a very common one in Tamil land. In Kurunthokai anthology #392 which too was composed by him. In it the poet mentions a situation where the dragonfly speaks. In another sonnet Natrinai #277, it is mentioned that the heroine admonishes a dragon fly for not conveying her message to the lover. As there were many poets with the same name Keeran, to differentiate him from the rest, the compilers of the anthology must have given the title Thumbi to his name and refer to him as ThumbiserKeerananar.

The great St. Thiruvalluvar in his book compares Love with toddy and says in his couplet # 1281 that love gives happiness in thought and sight, but not toddy. The couplet 1281 goes as follows;

Gladness at the thought, rejoicing at the sight, Not toddy, but love, yields such delight. -1281

உள்ளக்களித்தலும் காணமகிழ்தலும்
கள்ளக்கில்காமத்திற்குண்டு. 1281

Yes, as mentioned in the couplet there are times when the recollection of the lover and the intimate time spent together brings feelings of happiness. Likewise, a situation happened thousands of years ago during the Sangam era in the Tamilian world. The hero in this poem had probably gone to a distant town on a trade mission, and could not keep the promised date of return. To pacify his lover, he asked his friend to go ahead and try to calm her down and explain



his situation, before his return. The hero had also probably sent a beautiful pair of bangles as a gift, through his friend to his lover.

At the door of the heroine's house, her friend stops the messenger-friend of the hero, and asks who he is and what he wants. Being the envoy for his friend, he goes on to explain who he is and asks permission to meet the heroine, and pass on the bangles to her and also convey the message from her lover.

The friend of the heroine who was already annoyed because of the delay in the arrival of the hero replies to him in the form of a sonnet of six lines saying, "Kids playing with carpenter made toy horse wagons cannot derive joy from riding it, for it is only a toy. Yet, they do certainly derive pleasure dragging it around likewise.

Like happy kids who pull with their hands tiny horse wagon made by carpenters, without getting any joy of riding on them,

தச்சன் செய்த சிறுமாவையம்
ஊர்ந்து இன்புறா அர் ஆயினும் கையின்
ஈர்த்து இன்புறா உம் இளையோர் போல,

The heroine's friend continues further on, mentioning about the bangles the hero had sent to cover up his delay was a bit annoying. She was determined to point out if her friend's lover could stand the separation, her friend too could stand up to the separation. She continues saying, though they could not intermingle with one another when he was riding in a fine chariot in the far-off township with ponds, and in his absence, she cannot have

any intimacy with him, she still derives pleasure by recollecting the memory of intimacy she had shared with him, like the kids playing with the small wooden toy made by the carpenter. Very much like said in couplet #1281 in Thirukkural where memory of the intimacy gave pleasure.

The friend established by being happy in recollection of memory of intimacy, she really did not miss him very much. This being so, her arms haven't thinned down to need smaller sized bangles sent by the lover that can fit tight in her hands without slipping away from her waned away arm. Thinning of the arm is a common motif in Sangam literature.

In a subtle way the friend of our heroine had told the hero's friend, like the hero she too could

manage the separation well and get on with her life.

*She's happy even without intimacy
By her bond to him in fine chariot in town
with ponds. Her bangles have stayed tight
on her hands.*

உற்று இன்புறேளம் ஆயினும், நற்றேர்ப்
பொய்கை ஊரன்கேண்மை
செய்து இன்புறறனெம், செறிந்தனவளையே.

Now let us see the whole poem as composed by the poet ThumbiserKeerananar in both English translation and Tamil original in poem # 61 of Kurunthokai.

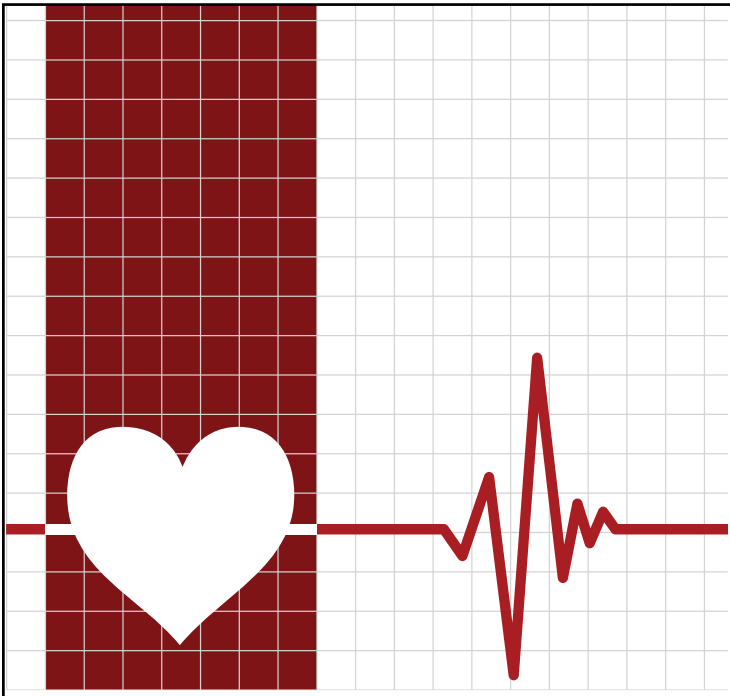
*"Like happy kids who pull with their hands tiny horse wagons made by carpenters,
without getting any joy riding on them,
She's happy even without intimacy
By her bond to him in fine chariot in town
with ponds. Her bangles have stayed tight
on her hands".*

“தச்சன் செய்த சிறுமாவையம்
ஊர்ந்து இன்புறா அர் ஆயினும் கையின்
ஈர்த்து இன்புறா உம் இளையோர் போல,
உற்று இன்புறேளம் ஆயினும், நற்றேர்ப்
பொய்கை ஊரன்கேண்மை
செய்து இன்புறறனெம், செறிந்தனவளையே”.

It is also worth to note two thousand years ago young Tamil youths traveled to far-off land to earn wealth. Horse chariots were in trend among Tamils. In the two thousand years old poem of six lines the poet has brought the whole incident to light clearly. Hope you too would have enjoyed the same.

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COMMUNITY WATCH

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The Rise was founded by Rev. Fr. Jegath Gaspar Raj, operating now in more than 20 countries. While offering itself as an effective platform for business networking, The Rise also

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SPECIAL FEATURE

THE PLIGHT OF THE COMMON MAN

C. Kamalaharan



Life for everyone seems miserable
For the common man it's terrible
For him the cost of living is awful
Purchasing essential items impossible
His meagre income is unaffordable
So the situation remains deplorable.
For the affluent whose unshakable
Determination is always impeccable
Breaking the impasse for them possible
As they lead a life happy and respectful
A good lesson for others to be inimitable.
So plight of the common man is pitiable
His future sadly remains unpredictable.



SPECIAL FEATURE

Not Causing Injury/hurting other's feelings



By: J.A. Rajah

Men of virtue will not surely not do harm for others- even if it is productive of wealth and attendant fame. Cardinal Newman defines a gentleman as one who does not inflict pain on others. Even to a man who maliciously did him harm, the righteous man's ideal is not to return evil. Jesus becomes an outstanding example of this virtue when he pleaded for his persecutors, while hanging on the cross - 'Father forgives them, they know not what they do'. A vengeful harm done even on an unprovoked wrong, will bring endless evil in its trail.

"Inna ceytharai oruthal avarnana nal nayam ceythu vidal".

The best punishment for those who do evil to you, is to shame them by doing good for evil. In a similar vein Jesus says, "Whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn him to the other also." Valluvar's advice in this Kural is complete, consummate and practical. You should treat other's grief as yours; otherwise there is no use of wisdom.

Kalithogai of the Sangam period re-iterates this view by asserting that, "Pirar noiyum than noi p-ot pottanarithal, sanravarrkellam kadan".

What has realized as causing pain to himself, should not be inflicted on the neighbor. Valluvar through these ideas goes to the fundamentals of enlightened human conduct. Jesus explains the idea in the Parable of the Good Samaritan in an explicit manner. If no wrong is ever done to anyone even in thought, that itself is a cardinal virtue. Why should a man who has experienced, the pain of injury cause harm to

done to other human beings.? If a man harms his neighbour in the forenoon, surely the harm will come to him in the afternoon. Jesus explained the same idea when he said, "And with what measures ye mete, it shall be measured unto you". The norms of the Tamilian society of those days thus become evident in the thoughts of Valluvar. All pains in the world rebounds on the man who caused it; one who seeks freedom from it, should not give pain. The Holy Koran says: 'Wrong not and ye shall not be wronged.'

*"Inna ceytharai oruthal avar nana,
Nannayam ceythu vidal"*

“இன்னாசெய் தாரை ஒறுத்தல் அவர்நாண
நன்னயஞ் செய்து விடல்”

(Kural: 311-320)



Valluvar's Views

SPECIAL FEATURE

RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM AND ITS THREAT FOR WORLD ORDER

By: J A Rajah

A. The Unlawful Aggression:

Imperialism is a new form of colonialism unparalleled in history for its complete suppression of individual freedom. The President of Russia, Vladimir Putin has the ambition of restoring the Soviet Union and started the attacks on Ukraine on the 24th of February and has now gone on for 10 days putting the country into innumerable problems including loss of lives and property. It is going on from bad to worse. The population of Ukraine is 44 million. A good number of refugees estimated to be more than 1.7 million have fled to Poland, Romania, Moldavia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Refugees fleeing into Poland and Moldavia are being supplied with food and other amenities by US and other western countries. 80,000 foreign students from India, Morocco, Ghana and Nigeria have also been forced to leave. Now Russia had captured two of its nuclear plants at Zepozhazha and Khmeinitzky NPP. The Russians are also shelling major cities of Ukraine like Kyiv, Odessa, Kherson, Leviv, Mariupol and Kharkiv. The River Dnieper flows from north to south of Ukraine dividing the country into two halves. The East of the River is more prone to attacks from Russia invading it from northeast and south. The major exports of Ukraine are Seed Oil and Wheat. Ukraine has a population of 44 million and it is the second biggest country in Europe next to Russia. Volodymyr Zelensky, President of Ukraine has stated that the NATO allies have not taken any effort to help them like insisting on imposing the No-fly zone over Ukraine. He also asked for fighter jets to combat Russian attacks on key population centers of Ukraine. The US president Joe Biden has repeatedly said that they would not join in an armed conflict with Russia which may bring about a major world catastrophe- in other word-a nuclear war. Even the humanitarian corridor to evacuate refugee children has not been properly installed. Shelling attack on an apartment building at Chernihiv killed 32 people and injured several thousands. Attacks on major Ukrainian cities has raised the level of catastrophe. Cluster bombs are being used by Russians in Mariupol. 406 civilians have lost their lives since the war started. 1.8 million have suffered non-fatal injuries. Also reported that 1.9 million Ukrainian children are stranded and that adoption procedures for volunteer parents in countries like US are being eased. More than 100 buildings are damaged and 1.5 million people have been internally displaced. The Russians have installed a 40 km long military trucks to besiege Ukraine. Many Ukrainians have decided to fight for their country and are well supplied with ammunitions by their western neighbours. They are determined to fight for democracy and freedom without fearing for their lives. 66,200 Ukrainians have returned to their country to fight the Russians. They are being inspired by their president who has taken the risk of facing all dangers in the interests of his country. He has asserted that Ukraine is not only fighting for themselves but also safeguarding the interests of all democratic countries of the world. There are people coming back to Ukraine to help people evacuate or fight the Russians. Ukraine military is also putting up fierce resistance. The Nazi type attacks planned and executed by Putin is very much condemned by the free world.

B. Brutal Bombardment of Populous Ukraine Cities:

Vladimir Putin is determined to attack Ukraine until he brings it under Russian control. Frequent shelling is observed in cities like Lviv, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Irpin, Sumy and Mariupol. Though it was partially agreed at peace talks, people evacuating are also targeted by Russian shelling and bombardments. Though a 12 hour ceasefire was agreed, it is reported that 1,300 civilians have been killed. Putin is also alleging that the west is engaged in manufacturing fake news against him and all information of killing



Source: UK MoD / Institute for the Study of War (21:00 GMT, 6 March)

BBC

C. Ukraine's Defense:

Putin is ramping up attacks and the damages are described as 'apocalyptic'. Heavy artillery is being moved to populous cities. Russia is also being accused of using chemical weapons. Russians are also targeting food supplies provided by humanitarian organizations to Ukrainian civilians. US President is avoiding direct confrontation with Russia but is attempting to break the backbone of the economy

and plundering are utter falsehood. Russians have taken control of two nuclear plants and are moving towards the third. Though there is no prospect of a nuclear conflict, there are images of damage inside the NPP. A radiation leakage is reported at Chernobyl nuclear plant but it has been brought under control. Ukrainians flee as Russians target civilian areas. Putin is reported to be using chemical bombs in the populous city of Mariupol. They are given food and other essentials by humanitarian organizations as they enter Pzennol in Poland. "More deaths, more suffering and more destruction are in store for the Ukrainians" asserted the NATO co-ordinator. They destroy cultural sites. Putin's plan is to annex Ukraine and install a new government that will be friendly with Russia. The capital Kyiv is being encircled by Russian forces. That is why Zelensky, the Ukrainian leader is asking for more and more weapons including lethal weapons. A Russian helicopter was recently shot

of Russia. Mariupol, the port city has been frequently bombed by Russia and 1582 civilians have been killed. Mariupol has no electricity, heat and water. 50-100 missiles were directed to Mariupol daily. Nearly 400 people have evacuated Mariupol. It is reported hypersonic missiles have been used for the first time in the combat. These missiles have the capacity to descend low and evade defense systems. Recently Putin attacked Mariupol with a hypersonic missile and 44 Ukrainian military personnel were killed. The Russians also shelled a Mosque in Leviv. Ukrainian fighters have continually tried to give lot of opposition to Russian soldiers moving along the streets and it is reported that 5-6 thousand Russian troops have been killed. Russian forces also attacked the Ukrainian military base in Mykolaviv in the south. About 1.7 million refugees have fled to Poland and NATO allies are giving humanitarian aid with the full cooperation of the Polish government. The President of Ukraine is continually asking the US and NATO allies to provide arms and humanitarian aid to the Ukrainians. He also wanted no-fly Zone over in addition to evacuation corridors for the Ukrainians to flee to neighbouring countries safely. A Theatre in which children (130) were hiding was bombed and several children were killed. The Eastern city of Kharkiv was shelled heavily and schools, hospitals and homes were damaged. Though it was agreed to allow 10 humanitarian corridors, they were not found to be safe. Though both parties have met four times they have not reached any agreement. Russia has insisted that Ukraine should surrender the Mariupol port city and also remove their forces but Ukraine president has refused to accede to their request. Ukraine President Zelensky said that the NATO and the west should help to stop Russian aggression in order to preserve Ukraine, democracy and world order.

Ukrainian refugees in neighboring countries

Data: UNHCR; Map: Jared Whalen and Will Chase/Axios

down and many Ukrainians are keen on fighting the Russians and evict them. Shaheed Sharia asserted that European countries should fully stop buying oil and natural gas from Russia. US should produce oil and natural gas in huge quantities and also remove Trump's sanctions on the oil exports of Iran and Venezuela. World's needs of oil and natural gas should then be easily met and Russian economy could be shattered. Antony Blinken, US secretary of state said that Russia should not be able to make cyber attacks on western countries. There are also protests against the war in Russia and nearly 4,600 people have been detained by the army. A Maternity and Children's Hospital has been bombarded by Russians and several mothers and children have been killed or injured. Children in a Jewish orphanage are removed by train to Moldavia for safety. About 200,000 Ukrainians have fled to Hungary. The bombardment of major cities in Ukraine continues and the number of refugees seeking asylum in neighbouring countries continues.

D. The Situation at the end of One Month's Massacre:

After four weeks of intense fighting, Putin finds that he has not realized his objectives and escalates his heinous attacks on the populous cities of Ukraine, especially Kyiv and Mariupol. Zelenski is seeking for negotiations with Putin to end this senseless annihilation. The world has not seen such a vast destruction of human lives and infrastructure in recent times. The US and western allies have provided arms, money and humanitarian aid to enable Ukraine to up a fight to preserve democracy. They have also helped countries sheltering refugees like Poland, Moldavia, Latvia and Rumania. Russia is being isolated economically. Though Russia has increased Naval activities around Ukraine port, Ukraine has succeeded in destroying a Russian ship loaded with arms and ammunitions in Berdyansk. Ukraine should succeed in defending its territories from Putin's unlawful aggrandizement and brutal war. The US and its allies conferring in Belgium must decide to provide the best possible aid for Ukraine to remain as a free democratic country.



The Ethics of Animal Testing



By: Mithusha Partheepan

The concept animal testing is one of varied controversy. This procedure is frequently used to ensure that medicines, cosmetics, and cleaning products are safe for humans to use. In the United States of America, many organizations are debating whether or not animal testing should be banned. Some people believe that there are some reasons why animal testing should be done. But others believe that animal testing is completely wrong. Various experts and scholars believe that there are other options available that can be done instead of testing on animals. It is clear that despite the debate, the use of animals to test the efficacy and safety of certain products is wrong. Regardless of the purpose of the research, a point should be made that the pain and suffering forced onto the tested animals is not worth it. Animal testing is harsh and unethical, even if it is lawful. When the benefits of the tests outweigh the negative consequences of this form of animal cruelty, humans regard this practice to be justified, when this should not be the case at all.

Animal testing is when scientists use different kinds of products, vaccinations, or things they develop for humans, and gauge their efficacy on animals before releasing the prototype to the public. Scientists use all kinds of animals, but the most common that are used are rats, mice, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Often, the procedures can cause a great deal of suffering for each animal. Most animals are killed as a result of the experiments, whilst the remaining survivors may be re-used for future tests. When the rise of industrialism and capitalism began in the mid— to late nineteenth century, the number of animals used in tests began to increase with the number of tests conducted. Various drugs that founded life-saving cures and treatments were a result of animal testing. Millions of people have benefitted from the information gathered in animal testing and research, at the expense of animal

cruelty. When scientists do drug tests on animals, it does not benefit the creatures whatsoever. It is very sad and depressing to see animals under pressure to perform without any comprehension of the situation. The harmful use of animals in experiments is not only cruel, but also unfair. Animals often do not contract the same diseases that humans do, such as specific forms of heart disease, cancer, sexually transmitted diseases, etc. Results founded on animal research do not accurately determine how a human will react due to differences between body processes, structure, and digestion. Those who advocate for animal testing reject the notion that animals should have rights and that people should not exploit animals for the benefit of humankind. Before these innocent animals are killed, some are subject to their spines crushed, are forced to inhale toxic fumes, are paralyzed in restraining devices, or even have holes drilled into their skulls and their skin burnt off. Animal testing is both cruel and unnecessary.

Animal testing is more expensive than other testing methods and it is a waste of money. This is because there are moments where the tests are not useful, overall very inefficient. Animals are terrible test subjects to test chemicals successfully because they do not give accurate results and scientist cannot predict all the side effects and other factors. In many instances, medical discoveries are delayed as researchers vainly waste time, money, and effort, with animal lives as they're just making an animal model of a human disease. Animal testing generally costs an enormous amount of money, as the animals must be nurtured and housed while also funding the materials necessary for experimentation. There are companies in the United States who breed animals specifically for testing, allowing others to purchase their animals for the same purpose as well. Not only is this research cruel, but the billions of dollars are wasted on

animal studies funnels money away from truly beneficial human-based research (i.e. computer modeling, tissue cultures, etc.).

Using animals in research to gauge the safety of products for humans has been a hot topic for debates for a long period of time. Although humans sometimes benefit from successful animal research, the ethics behind it are questionable. Each animal is suffering, going

through pain and often pass away due to experiments. Animals and people are alike in many ways; both of which feel, think, behave, and experience pain. Animals must be treated with the same respect as humans. Humans cannot make life better for themselves by torturing and executing so many animals each year to perform laboratory experiments or to test products on them.



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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



LIGHT POLLUTION AT NIGHT MAY INTENSIFY AIR POLLUTION

Create Awareness During International Dark Sky Week

By OUE Research Institute

International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) hosts International Dark Sky Week (IDSW) to raise awareness about light pollution's many adverse effects. IDSW awareness and activities are approaching during the week of April 22-30, 2022. IDSW is always held when the sky is darkest and the stars most visible. This annual event was created in 2003 by a high-school student, Jennifer Barlow. Since then, International Dark Sky Week has become a worldwide event and a key component of Global Astronomy Month.



Background

Nature tries to clean the mix of air molecules from all the factories and cars at night. The nitrate radical, a particular form of nitrogen oxide, helps clean the air under cover of darkness. This radical help breaks down chemicals that would otherwise create smog and ozone. Chemical compounds that become oxidized and removed from the air are due to contact with NO or NO₂. The process stops when the sun rises because sunlight breaks down the nitrate radical.

The nitrate radical (NO₃) arises from the oxidation of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) by ozone (O₃) and occurs principally in the nighttime atmosphere due to its rapid photolysis in the sunlight and its reaction with NO (Wayne et al., 1991; Brown and Stutz, 2012).



The electromagnetic spectrum is a wide range of energy frequencies that extend from radio waves to gamma waves. Energy (E) from the sun is electromagnetic energy. This energy is dependent upon the frequency (ν) of the wave. Energy can be calculated by the following formula: E=hν. The letter h represents Planck's constant. Planck's constant relates the energy of a photon to the frequency of the electromagnetic wave.

Air Pollution

Looking up at the night sky in the city, even if the sky is clear, the number of stars that can be seen

has become less and less, mainly due to the light pollution caused by the city's bright lights at night. However, scientists have recently discovered that light pollution can cause problems for astronomers and may even make global air pollution more and more serious.

According to a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) study, a chemical called nitrate is limited and hindered by road lights that can be decomposed by cars and factories.

Harald Stark, a scientist at the NOAA in Los Angeles, showed that light from buildings, streetlights, and car lights could inhibit nitrate. "Our preliminary findings have shown that city lighting can slow down night cleaning by 7% and increase 5% of the starting chemicals that cause ozone pollution the next day," Stark said, "We need the next step." More accurate quantification of its impact, how much ozone is produced in our city the next day. It is essential to do this because many cities are close to the limits of ozone control, so even if it is so small, the response may also have a huge impact."

Solutions

Stark also noted that city lights had wavelengths and intensities that drive radical nitrate photolysis. Different street lights have different photolysis rates. Photolysis is a process in which molecules are broken down into smaller units by absorbing light.



Although the artificial light is much darker than the sun, it still has an adverse effect that is hard to ignore. To this end, Stark proposed a possible solution, which is to change the color of the light to a less influential red, but this may not be practical. Stark has another, more straightforward remedy to change the direction of the light down. Because the less light up, the less impact the nitrate in the atmosphere.

Unawareness

Light pollution is the silent enemy. Light pollution has not inhabited the spotlight like air and water pollution. Of course, the subject we have become immensely aware of is the urgent need to reduce energy consumption. It is more suitable to say that we are more motivated to save energy because of the negative impact on our budgets.

Even people who religiously recycle their waste and minimize their carbon footprint are often unaware of light pollution – the silent enemy. Yet



the impact of this lesser non-evil is no less than its more famous peers. Many of you perhaps have heard about light pollution but without any fundamental understanding of what is meant by the notorious light pollution.

Findings

According to a study by scientists at the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES) at the University of Colorado, the light at night can contribute to air pollution. Findings indicate that uplight from outdoor lighting contributes to the skyglow over cities also interferes with chemical reactions that naturally clean the air during nighttime hours.

Every night, chemicals from vehicle exhaust and other anthropogenic sources are broken down and prevented from becoming smog, ozone, or other irritants by a form of nitrogen oxide called the nitrate radical. Sunlight destroys the naturally occurring nitrate radical, so this process occurs only in hours of darkness.

Measurements taken over Los Angeles by aircraft show that light pollution from cities is suppressing the radical. Though the lights are 10,000 times dimmer than the Sun, the study's first results indicate that city lights can slow down the nighttime cleansing, and they can increase the starting chemicals for ozone pollution the next day.

Many cities are near to their limits of allowable ozone levels. This news is expected to generate immediate interest in light pollution reduction to improve air quality among the city, state, and federal bodies, including the Environmental Protection Agency.

IDA Goal

This study will encourage cities to adopt environmentally responsible dark sky lighting practices that include using fully shielded fixtures, minimum lighting levels, and lighting only when necessary. The LED outdoor lighting will also allow cities to utilize adaptive lighting controls to dim or turn off lights when not needed. Not only will this reduce energy consumption, based on this new research, it could also improve air quality. It reinforces IDA's long-term goal to reduce total lumens in the environment.

IDA has held yearly educational briefings for both houses of U.S. Congress to raise federal awareness of light pollution. After the 2008 event, eleven members of Congress signed a letter to EPA Administrator Johnson requesting support for research and education on the environmental,



health, and safety effects of artificial light at night. EPA to review light pollution to monitor and reduce atmospheric discoloration of the night sky under the Clean Air Act. During the week, dark sky defenders worldwide connect over a shared goal to protect the night. Everyone is invited to join International Dark Sky Week 2022.



BUSINESS / FINANCE

How Future Technology may Impact Canadian Businesses

By: **Muraly Srinarayanathas**

It is becoming increasingly evident that the world is entering the fourth industrial revolution powered by technology. The rapid technological advancements will reshape the organization of businesses and how they work in the next few decades.

I discussed the 2022 technology trends Canadian businesses should monitor in a previous blog, and this month I'm going one step further and examining how increasing technological improvements and adoption will forever transform different business aspects.

ingly rely on collaborative and content sharing platforms, cloud technology, and other tools designed with remote work in mind to create a sense of community, a shared culture, and seamless processes to support employees working from home.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Will Play a Major Role in Cybersecurity

As we all know, AI is crucial to helping organizations automate more processes, market more effectively, and reduce costs. Whether creating content or powering chatbots that answer customers' queries, we can't deny the importance of AI for modern

data.

An AI can also increase the resistance of a system having ongoing attacks, which could cause the attacks to increase. Additionally, a breach in security can go undetected for an extended period because of the lack of human involvement.

AI has a long way to go before it is a viable security solution on its own. In the meantime, both small and large organizations need to take the necessary steps to prevent cyber attacks.

The Future Is Meta

I've already spoken about the vital role metaverse may play in my previous blogs in the upcoming years.

industry will have far-reaching effects on Canadian businesses in the years to come. It would be best to keep up with the latest trends and upgrades to stay informed.

Discover the pros/cons of future tech and its impact on Canadian businesses. Subscribe to my blog to keep up with the latest news in the tech industry. Send me your feedback through my website or one of my socials — I always look forward to hearing from you.

Resources

<https://home.kpmg/xx/en/blogs/home/posts/2022/01/the-top-10-tech-trends-of-2022.html>



Hybrid Work Model Is Here to Stay

With new COVID-19 variants cropping up everywhere and employees still reluctant to return to the workplace, it does not look like hybrid and remote work is going away anytime soon. Many successful companies have taken this in stride and use the hybrid work model to restructure how, where, and what work will look moving forward.

As businesses embrace the future hybrid workforce, they will increas-

Canadian businesses.

Another important field in which AI is showing tremendous potential is cybersecurity. With organizations of all sizes becoming more vulnerable to cyber attacks, this idea has been getting more traction in recent years.

Though AI can be a very effective cybersecurity tool, there are also several challenges in leveraging AI-based systems for cybersecurity. AI systems require tremendous resources as they need to be trained with a new database of malicious and non-malicious

This "extended reality" where users connect and their surroundings through the internet and AR and VR headsets can reshape how organizations work. Though the technology for metaverse is still in its infancy, it will be wise for businesses to start preparing for a radical transformation.

Several big brands like Nike and Adidas have already started experimenting with the metaverse concept and have begun working on virtual shoes.

The rapid evolution of the tech

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2022/02/01/six-digital-transformation-predictions-for-2022/?sh=b40949119cb6>

<https://fsc-ccf.ca/research/technological-change-and-the-future-of-work-in-canada/>

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Lent Season - 'Period of Christian Revival'



The period from Ash Wednesday (March 2nd) to Easter Sunday (April 17th) is the period of Lent which is used by Christians for dedicated worship and resurgence of their faith. Ash Wednesday focuses on Christian's heart on repentance and prayer. They also remember the sufferings of Christ, his crucifixion and resurrection. Judas betrayed Christ for 32 pieces of silver. Rev. Jos Stevens of the Tamil Christian Church of Canada speaking at the Lentern service stated

that Judas was outwardly committed to Christ but inwardly plotted against Him. God provided all comforts for man at Eden. All that joy and comfort was lost due to man's greed and desire to get more and more. Jesus died on the cross to save humanity from the torments of sin. His death gave us the chance to taste eternal joy-'eternal life'. The cross has ensured life-eternal for all mankind. Unlike Judas, we should be inwardly committed Christians. We want to be in our places

of comfort. We follow Jesus from a distance. We should be committed Christians. Pastor Jos elucidated: We should bear witness to truth, We must bear witness to our transformed lives. We must bear witness in times of trials and tribulations. Then only we can experience the power of salvation. For committed Christians, Jesus is all-sufficient. The Lent season provides Christians the time to re-examine their Christian lives and revive their faith in God. Jesus brought home

the idea that death is no end to life. Those who have faith in Christ will be resurrected like Jesus and live everlasting lives. This is available for all who live Christ-like lives.

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,

That were an offering far too small,
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life my all".

(Isacc Watts)

Quotable Quotes - 2022

By: Siva Sivapragasam

“They said it”



“Ukrainian people have inspired the world. They have inspired the world with their bravery, their patriotism, their defiant determination to live free”

– U.S. President Joe Biden



“The painful reality is that we are still very much dependent on Russian gas and oil. We have got to do it step by step.”

– Netherlands President Mark Rutte



“We need a leader that can build the multi-cultural, multi-faith and value-driven coalition necessary to win....That leader is me”

– Patrick Brown on PC Leadership



“(Biden) has been clear, repeatedly, that the United States will work with our allies to defend every inch of NATO territory and that means every inch”

– Jake Sullivan, White House National Security Advisor



“I urge people across the country to join the national effort and offer support to our Ukrainian friends. Together, we can give a safe home to those who so desperately need it”

– Michael Gove, Britain's Housing and Communities Secretary



COMMUNITY WATCH

Jaffna Medical Faculty Overseas Alumni Funds for Intermediate Care Centre

ICC - Intermediate Care Centre, A shelter for child abuse and domestic violence survivors, was declared open on March 23, 2022 by Our President Dr. M. Mylashan and the RDHS – Killinochchi Dr. N. Saravanabavan.

This project was funded by JMFOA Canada (JMFOA- Foundation) and implemented by World vision Sri Lanka. The centre was handed over to Akkarayankulam District Hospital, and the centre will be supported, monitored & evaluated by RDHS Killinochchi, World vision Sri Lanka and JMFOA- Canada.

Thank you, RDHS Dr. Saravanabavan, for your leadership and the Killinochchi Judicial Medical Officer – Dr. R. Dhanushan, for this initiative. We are thankful to the entire World vision Sri Lanka team for this implementation. Thanks to Mr. Alexander Samson, the Area Program Manager for world vision – KILLINOCHCHI, Mr. Jonathan (Head Office) and Mr. Gayan (Head Office) for all the complex work.

Thank you, Dr. Mylashan, for your presence in Sri Lanka and for implementing all projects.



Jaffna Medical Faculty Overseas Alumni inaugurates an Educational Training Program for Jaffna Nurses

The Community Cancer Educators Training program was inaugurated by JMFOA-Canada and its stakeholders at Nursing Training School, Jaffna.

This Training program is funded by JMFOA- Canada (JMFOA Foundation) and implemented by CANE (Cancer Aid North & East), Nursing Training School Jaffna, Provincial Director of Health Service, Teaching Hospital Jaffna and Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna.

25, 1st-year students from the Nurses training school of Jaffna were selected on their interest and willingness to help the communities and trained to be cancer educators. This certificate program comprises theatre workshops, Cancer, psychology, community medicine lectures, six months of fieldwork, and a project report.





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

Eat more, learn more!

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

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

Mushroom pepper fry

Serves 2

This simple yet flavour packed recipe is the perfect way to include your daily protein allowance as part of breakfast or dinner. The ease with which the dish comes together, combined with the relatively few ingredients needed makes it one that will keep you warm and cozy during these last chilly spring days.



Ingredients:

- ✓ 200g chestnut mushroom, chopped
- ✓ 1 clove garlic, minced (optional)
- ✓ 100g Bombay/ pink onions, diced
- ✓ ½ tsp cumin seeds
- ✓ ½ tsp black pepper, ground
- ✓ ½ tsp fennel seeds, ground
- ✓ 1 tsp sesame oil
- ✓ Salt

Method:

The secret to a good mushroom fry is heat management.

Start on a low heat. To your pan, add the oil followed by the cumin seeds and garlic. Once the garlic has started to brown add the onions and turn up the heat to a medium high. When the onions begin to brown, add in your mushrooms and saute for 2 minutes or until you see them brown and shrivel. Switch off the heat and add salt along with the pepper and fennel. This dish tastes really good on buttered toast, or as an accompaniment to chapathis'

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

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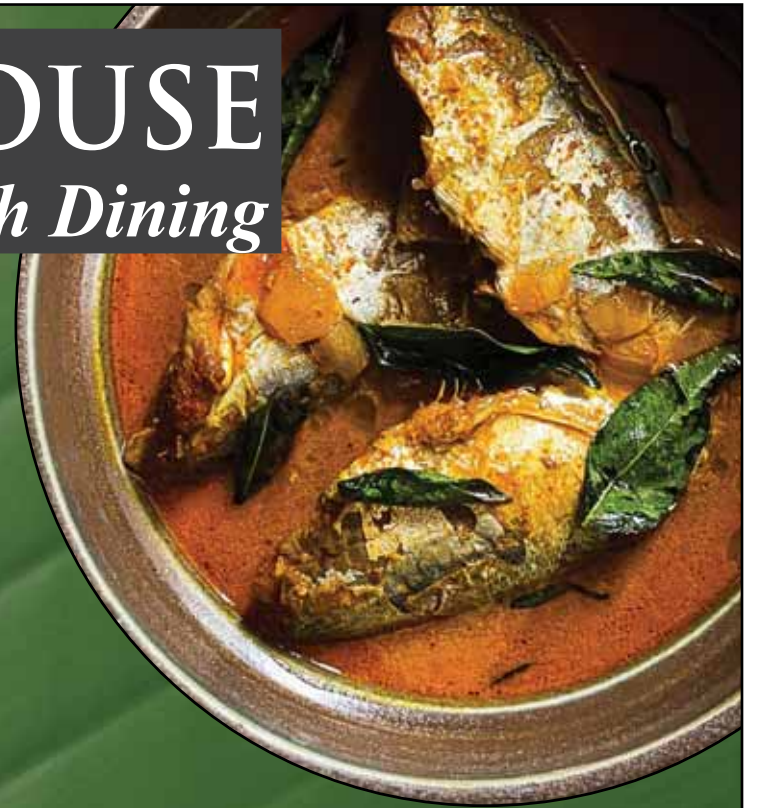
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SPECIAL FEATURE



YMCA BEST PERFORMANCE APPRECIATION AWARDS 2022

Examination Results from 2020

The YMCA Best Performance Appreciation Awards Ceremony was conducted on Saturday 19th February 2022 at 3:00pm at the Jaffna YMCA. This event was sponsored by the Direct Family Financial Support (DFFS) Canada. DFFS Canada is a non-profit organization which was established by late Mr. M.C. Francis of Waterloo, Ontario. His vision was to enhance the motivation of the students who sit for the GCE A/L in all streams. In addition to encourage abilities such as debating, bilingualism (Tamil/Sinhala) and all-round performance.

First and Second rank achievers in the field of Mathematics, Biology, Biotechnology, Science, Commerce and Arts among others were awarded.

The Awards Recipients are shown in the brochure along with awards categories were presented at the ceremony:

The following are the winners of the rest of the awards.

YMCA Debate Shield to the winner of Inter School Debate each Participant received cash voucher of Rs.5,000.	
St. Patricks College <i>(Winners of the Shield)</i>	Kokuvil Hindu College
Mas. Vimalathas Ajin Desno	Mas. Sivakumar Theesan
Mas. Jegarajan Krishanth	Mas. Balasubramaniyam Thivakaran
Mas. Alexander Sabeeran	Mas. Sandrakumar Sharujan

■ **Bilingual Award Rs. 25,000 (two awards)**
Ranganathan Sivanesan and Veeramamunivar Award
Miss. Thirusagini Sasikaran and Miss. Nesaraththinam Oviya

■ **Best All-rounder Award Rs. 35,000 (two awards)**
Sir William Twynam and C. Y. Thamothersampillai Award
Male –Mr. A. Siron Fernando and Female– Miss. B. Barathy

■ **Best School Awards - M.C. Francis Award**
Kilinochchi / Tharmankerny GTM School and
Mullaitivu / Karippaddamurippu GTM School

THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION - JAFFNA
NORTHERN PROVINCE
GCE A/L EXAMINATION 2020
BEST PERFORMANCE APPRECIATION AWARDS
SPONSORED BY DFFS CANADA
19.02.2022

	Rev. J.T. Arulanantham Award Arts Stream - First Rank MISS NILANI BATGUNANAYAKAM J.Chirvakascheri Hindu College Gift of Western Tamil School Canada	
	Rev. G.U. Pope Award Arts Stream - Second Rank MISS SUMITHTHIRA VARATHARASAN J.Kokuvil Hindu College Gift of DFFS Canada	
	S.K. Sandrasegeran Award Maths Stream - First Rank MR. THANARAJ SUNDARAVAN J.Chirvakascheri Hindu College Gift of DFFS Canada	
	Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Award Maths Stream - Second Rank MR. SUBENDIRAN PRANAVAN J.Hartley College Gift of DFFS Canada	
	Kamaladevi Ramalingam Award Commerce Stream - First Rank MR. SRIKANTHAN PRASATHI J.St. John's College Gift of Dr. Thulasidas Sivanesan	
	Dr. C.W.W. Kanangara Award Commerce Stream - Second Rank MISS MAKENTHIRAN DARBICA Ks/St. Theresa Girl's College Gift of DFFS Canada	
	Mr. & Mrs. M.C. Francis Award Bio Stream - First Rank MISS KAVINA KANAKESHWARAN J.Meesalai Veerasingam Central College Gift of DFFS Canada	
	Dr. E.M. Thillyampalam Award Bio Stream - Second Rank MISS AVANIKKA VARATHARASA J.Vembady Girl's High School Gift of DFFS Canada	
	K. Velumailum Award Bio Technology Stream - First Rank MISS KAMALANATHAN MATHUJA Jaffna Hindu Ladies College Gift of Monsoon Journal of Toronto	
	Dr. Samuel F. Green Award Bio Technology Stream - Second Rank MR. KALISTALAN ANISTALAN Jaffna Hindu College Gift of DFFS Canada	
	V.J.A. Mariathan Award Engineering Technology Stream - First Rank MR. VASANTHARAJ MATHIVARMAN J.Hartley College Gift of DFFS Canada	
	Swami Vipulananthar Award Engineering Technology Stream - Second Rank MR. RASAN JANANTHAN J.Skandavarodaya College Gift of DFFS Canada	

Award for Best Undergraduate of the Jaffna University		
Name	Subject	Name of Sponsors
Mr. G. Vaikunthan		
Mr. Joseph Andrew Vasanthan	Medical Science	Dr. S. Tulasidas
Miss. Mathurya Senthilrajah	Physical Science	Dr. S. Tulasidas
Mr. R.M.L.M. Prasanga		
Rathnathilaka	Civil Engineering	Dr. S. Tulasidas
Miss. Thurka Balapaskaran	Nursing	DFFS - Canada
Mr. Premanath Gowtham	Computer Engineering	Dr. S. Tulasidas
Miss. Priyanka Ganeshamoorthy	Agriculture	DFFS - Canada



All Recipients



SPECIAL FEATURE



Dance Performance



Debate Judge

Chief Guest:

Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin B Gnanapragasam, The Bishop, Roman Catholic Diocese of Jaffna

Guest of Honour:

Mr. K. Mahesan, District Secretary, District Secretariat, Jaffna

Special Guests:

Mr. T. John Quintuss, Additional Provincial Director of Education, Northern Province

Mr. M. Rathakrishnan, Zonal Director, Zonal Education Office, Jaffna

Mr. J. Vilvarajah, Founder, Western Tamil Schools Association, Canada



Lighting The Oil Lamp

Best Performance Appreciation Award

Memory of Dr S Mahadeva
Faculty of Medicine - University of Jaffna

Memory of Thangarani Francis
Faculty of Nursing - University of Jaffna

Memory of Dr Nagula Sangary
Faculty of Computer Eng - University of Jaffna

Memory of Eng V Thevathasan
Faculty of Civil Eng - University of Jaffna

Memory of S Theyagarajah
Faculty of Physical Science - University of Jaffna

Honour of Jaffna Farmers
Faculty of Agriculture - University of Jaffna

Cash grant
35,000/=
(Each)

Gift of Dr Tulasidas Sivanesan & DFFS Canada

Cash grant
35,000/=
(Each)

Sir William Twynam and C Y Thamotherampillai Award
BEST ALL ROUND SCHOLAR (MALE AND FEMALE)
excelled in Sports, leadership and Extra Curriculum activities

Gift of Western Tamil Schools Canada
& Tamil Heritage Schools of Waterloo Region & Quelph, Canada.

Ranganathan Sivanesan Award
BILINGUAL AWARDS (MALE AND FEMALE)
Cash Rs 20,000 and shield

Cash grant
20,000/=
(Each)

Gift of Dr Tulasidas Sivanesan & DFFS Canada

Library Books
50,000/=
(Each)

Mr.M.C.Francis Award
SPECIAL BEST SCHOOLS IN DIFFICULT AREAS
Kn/ Tharmankerny GTM School
& Mu/ Karippaddamurippu GTM School

Gift of Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region, Canada
& Tamil Heritage Schools of Waterloo Region & Quelph, Canada.

YMCA Shield Debate

Inter School Debate Each Participant will receive Voucher for Rs. 5,000

Kokuvil Hindu College VS St.Patrick's College

Gift of Western Tamil Schools Canada



Lighting The Oil Lamp

SPECIAL FEATURE



Debate Runner Ups



Debate Winners



Mr. Vilvaraj Speech

As the Chief Guest and the Special Guests were from the field of education, their speeches were on the present educational performance in the peninsula and were of use to the present generation.

The Clergy, Principals, Heads of other educational institutions, NGOs, Members and well-wishers participated and encouraged the students.

A major awareness was extended to the public through the prime local newspapers such as Uthayan, Valapuri and Thinakkural. Media representatives were invited and collected information.

Parents and well-wishers appreciated the sponsor DFFS Canada and the YMCA for encouraging the students as the educational performance was poor at present ground situation.

The President, Board of Directors of the YMCA Jaffna thanks the DFFS and Donors for conducting the BPAA and encouraging the students. We thank the

Chairman of organizing committee Rev. V. Daniel Jeyaruban and the members Rev. P. Thevamithran, M/s. A. Donald, P. Andrew Praveen and S. Vasekaran.

DFFS Canada would like to thank the donors Dr. S. Tulasidas, Western Tamil Schools Canada, Monsoon Journal of Toronto, Thamil Heritage School of Waterloo Region and Guelph, Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region for their generous contributions. We welcome participation from anyone who are interested in sponsoring these awards or other awards in the future. For further information, please contact DFFS via email dffscanada@gmail.com

General Secretary/YMCA Jaffna
(Mr. S. Jeyarajasingham)

Secretary/DFFS Canada
(Mrs. Malathi Jeeva)



First Prize



First Prize



Shields



Second Prize



Second Prize



Vote Of Thanks



SPECIAL FEATURE

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA A HINDU MONK AND PHILOSOPHER

Compiled by : KIDAMBI RAJ



Early Life

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) was born **Narendranath Dutta**, into an aristocratic Bengali family of Calcutta, on January 12, 1863 on **Makara Sankranti**. He was one of eight children of Vishwanath Dutta and Bhuvaneshwari. His father was a very successful attorney and had considerable influence in the society. His mother had a strong and god-fearing mind and she had a great impact on her son. Narendranath was interested in spirituality from a young age and used to meditate before the images of deities such as **Shiva, Rama, Sita**, and **Hanuman**. He was fascinated by wandering ascetics and monks. Narendra was naughty and restless as a child, and his parents often had difficulty controlling him.



His mother said: *'I prayed to Shiva for a son and he has sent me one of his demons'*.

Education

Narendranath, as a young boy displayed sharp intellect. His mischievous nature belied his interest in music, both vocal and instrumental. He also excelled in his studies. He started his studies at the Metropolitan institution and later went to the Presidency College in Calcutta. By the time he graduated from the college, he had acquired a vast knowledge on different subjects. He was active in sports, gymnastics, wrestling and body building. He was an avid reader and read up on almost everything under the sun. **William Hastie** (Principal of Christian College, Calcutta, from where Narendranath graduated) wrote: *'Narendra is really a genius. I have travelled far and wide but I have never come across a lad of his talents and possibilities, even in German universities, among philosophical students. He is bound to make his mark in life'*. He was known for his prodigious memory and the ability at speed reading. He perused the Hindu scriptures like the **Bhagavad Gita** and the **Upanishads** on one hand, while on the other, he studied western philosophy, history and spirituality by David Hume, Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Herbert Spencer.

Spiritual Crisis and Relationship with Sri Ramakrishna

His well-studied knowledge led him to question the existence of God and for some time he believed



in Agnosticism. Yet he could not completely ignore the existence of a Supreme Being. He became associated with the **Brahma Samaj** which recognized one God, unlike the idol-worshipping, superstition-ridden Hinduism. A host of philosophical questions regarding the existence of God, that were agitat-

ing his mind, remained unanswered. During this period of spiritual crisis, Narendranath first heard about Sri Ramakrishna from **William Hastie**, the Principal of the Scottish Church College.

Earlier, to satisfy his intellectual quest for God, Narendranath visited prominent spiritual leaders from all religions, asking them a single question: *'have you seen God?'* Each time, he came away without a satisfying answer. He put forward the same question to Sri Ramakrishna at his residence in Dakshineswar Kali Temple compounds. Without a moment's hesitation, Sri Ramakrishna replied: *'Yes, I have. I see God as clearly as I see you, only in much deeper sense. God can be seen. One can talk to him. But who cares for God? People shed torrents of tears for their wives, children, wealth, and property, but who weeps for the vision of God? If one cries sincerely for God, one can surely see Him'*. For the first time, he was face to face with a man who asserted that he had seen God. For the first time, in fact, he was hearing that God could be seen. He could feel that Ramakrishna's words were uttered from the depths of an inner experience. They could not be doubted.

On one occasion, Sri Ramakrishna proposed to transfer to Narendranath, many of the spiritual powers that he had acquired as a result of his ascetic disciplines and visions of God. Narendranath had no doubt concerning the Master's possessing such powers. He asked if they would help him to realize God. Sri Ramakrishna replied in the negative but added that they might assist him in his future work as a spiritual teacher. *'Let me realize God first'* said Narendranath, and then I shall perhaps know whether



or not I want supernatural powers. *'If I accept them now, I may forget God, make selfish use of them, and thus come to grief'*. Sri Ramakrishna was highly pleased to see his chief disciple's single-minded devotion.

He begged his Master to teach him meditation and Sri Ramakrishna's reply was a source of comfort and strength. The Master said: 'God listens to our sincere prayers. I can swear that you can see God and talk with Him as intensely as you see me and talk with me. You can hear His words and feel His touch'. Further the Master declared: *'You may not believe in divine forms, but if you believe in an Ultimate Reality who is the Regulator of the universe, you can pray to Him thus: 'O God, I do not know Thee. Be gracious to reveal to me Thy real nature. He will certainly listen to you if your prayer is sincere'*. That day marked the complete spiritual awakening of Narendranath and he found himself drawn to an ascetic way of life.

Life of a Monk

During the middle of 1885, Sri Ramakrishna, who had been suffering from throat cancer, fell seriously ill. So, in September of 1885, Sri Ramakrishna was moved to Shyampukur in Calcutta and a few months later Narendranath took a rented villa at Cossipore. Here, he formed a group of young people who were

ardent followers of Sri Ramakrishna and together, they nursed their Guru with devoted care. On August 16, 1886, Sri Ramakrishna gave up his mortal body.

After the death of Sri Ramakrishna, about fifteen of his disciples including Narendranath began to live together in a dilapidated building in Baranagar in North Calcutta, which he named **Ramakrishna Mutt**, the monastic order of Sri Ramakrishna. Here, in 1887, they formally renounced all ties to the world and took vows of monkhood. The brotherhood rechristened themselves and Narendranath emerged as **Swami Vivekananda**, the *bliss of discerning wisdom*.

The brotherhood lived off on alms donated voluntarily by patrons during holy begging, performed yoga and meditation. Vivekananda left the Mutt in 1886 and went on a tour of India on foot. He travelled the length and breadth of the country, absorbing much of the social, cultural and religious aspects of the people he came in contact with. He witnessed the adversities of life that the common people faced, their ailments and vowed to dedicate his life to bring relief to these sufferings.

At the World Parliament of Religions

During the course of his wanderings, he came to know of the World Parliament of Religions being held in Chicago, in 1893. He was keen to attend this meeting, to represent India, Hinduism and his Guru Sri Ramakrishna's philosophy. He found assertion of his wishes while he was meditating on the rocks of Kanyakumari, the southernmost tip of India.

The Swami was encouraged by **Professor Wright** to represent Hinduism in the Parliament of Religions, since that was the only-way he could be introduced to the nation at large. When he announced, however, that he had no credentials, the professor replied, *'To ask you, Swami, for your credentials is like asking the sun about its right to shine.'* He wrote about the Swami to a number of important people connected with the Parliament, especially to the chairman of the committee on selection of delegates, who was one of his friends, and said, *'Here is a man more learned than all our learned professors put together'*. Professor Wright bought the Swami railroad ticket for Chicago. On September 11, 1893, the World Parliament Religion sessions started and the delegates arose, one by one, and read prepared speeches, but the **Hindu Sannyasin** was totally unprepared. He had never before addressed such an assembly. When he was asked to give his message, he was seized with stage-fright, and requested the chairman to call on him a little later. Several times he postponed the summons. As he admitted later: *'Of course my heart was fluttering and my tongue nearly dried up. I was so nervous that I could not venture to speak in the morning session.'* At last, he came to the rostrum and Dr. Barrows introduced him. Bowing to **Goddess Saraswati**, the Goddess of Wisdom, he addressed the audience as *'Sisters and Brothers of America it fills my heart with joy unspeakable in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us'*. Instantly, thousands arose in their seats and gave him loud applause. They were deeply moved to see, at last, a man who discarded formal words and spoke to them with the natural and candid warmth of a brother. It took a full two minutes before the tumult subsided, and the Swami began his speech by thanking the youngest of the nations in the name of the most ancient monastic order in the world, the Vedic order of sannyasins. The keynote of his address was universal toleration and acceptance. He told the audience how India, even in olden times, had given shelter to the religious refugees of other lands, for instance, the Israelites and the Zoroastrians and he quoted from the scriptures the following two passages revealing the Hindu spirit of toleration: *'As differ-*

SPECIAL FEATURE

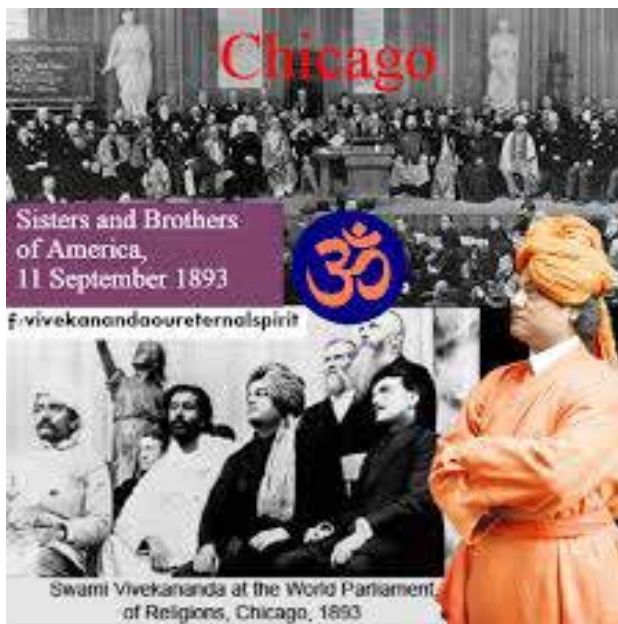


ent streams, having their sources in different places, all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee. Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him. All men are struggling through many paths which in the end lead to Me'. In conclusion he pleaded for the quick termination of sectarianism, bigotry, and fanaticism. The response was deafening applause. It appeared that the whole audience had been patiently awaiting this message of religious harmony. A Jewish intellectual remarked to the press, years later, that after hearing Vivekananda he realized for the first time that his own religion, Judaism, was true, and that the Swami had addressed his words on behalf of not only his religion, but all religions of the world. Whereas every one of the other delegates had spoken for his own ideal or his own sect, the Swami had spoken about God, who, as the ultimate goal of all faiths, is their innermost essence. He had learnt that truth at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, who had taught incessantly, from his direct experience, that all religions are but so many paths to reach the same goal. The Swami gave utterance to the yearning of the modern world to break down the barriers of caste, colour, and creed and to fuse all people into one humanity.

In the final session of the Parliament, Swami Vivekananda said in the conclusion of his speech: *'The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor is a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth'*. If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world, it is this: *'It has proved to the world that holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character'*. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: *'Help and not Fight,' 'Assimilation and not Destruction,' 'Harmony and Peace and not Dissension'*.



The young, unknown monk of India was transformed overnight into an outstanding figure of the religious world. From obscurity he leapt to fame. His life-size portraits were posted in the streets of Chicago, with words *'The Monk Vivekananda'* written beneath them and many passers-by would stop to do reverence with bowed heads. Dr. J.H. Barrows, Chairman of the General Committee of the Parliament of Religions, said: *'Swami Vivekananda exercised a wonderful influence over his auditors,'* and Mr. Merwin-Marie Snell stated, more enthusiastically: *'By far the most important and typical representative of Hinduism was Swami Vivekananda, who, in fact, was beyond question the most popular and influential man in the Parliament....He was received with greater enthusiasm than any other speaker'*. Christian or pagan. The people thronged about him wherever he went and hung with eagerness on his every word". The most rigid of orthodox Christians say of him, *'He is indeed a prince among men!'* Newspapers published his speeches and they were read with warm interest all over the country. The New York Herald said: *'He is undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation'*. The Boston Evening Post said: *'He is a great favourite at the Parliament from the grandeur of his sentiments and his appearance as well. If he merely crosses the platform he is applauded; and this marked approval of thousands he accepts in a childlike spirit of gratifi-*



cation without a trace of conceit....At the Parliament of Religions they used to keep Vivekananda until the end of the programme to make people stay till the end of the session....*'The four thousand fanning people in the Hall of Columbus would sit smiling and expectant, waiting for an hour or two to listen to Vivekananda for fifteen-minutes'*. The chairman knew the old rule of keeping the best until the last.' It is one of the outstanding traits of Americans to draw



out the latent greatness of other people. America discovered Vivekananda and made a gift of him to India and the world. The reports of the Parliament of Religions were published in the Indian magazines and newspapers. The Swami's vindication of the Hindu faith filled with pride the hearts of his countrymen from Colombo to Almora, from Calcutta to Bombay.

Teachings and Ramakrishna Mission

Swami Vivekananda returned to India in 1897 amidst warm reception from the common and royal alike. He reached Calcutta (present Kolkata) after a series of lectures across the country and founded the Ramakrishna Mission on May 1, 1897 at Belur Mutt near Calcutta. The goals of the Ramakrishna Mission were based on the ideals of *Karma Yoga* and its primary objective was to serve the poor and distressed population of the country. The Ramakrishna Mission undertook various forms of social service like establishing and running schools, colleges and hospitals, propagation of practical tenets of Vedanta through conferences, seminars and workshops, initiating relief and rehabilitation work across the country.

His religious conscience was an amalgamation of Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa's spiritual teachings of Divine manifestation and his personal internalization of the *Advaita Vedanta Philosophy*. He directed to achieve the divinity of the soul by undertaking selfless work, worship and mental discipline. According to Swami Vivekananda, the ultimate goal is to achieve freedom of the soul and that encompasses the entirety of one's religion. Swami Vivekananda was a prominent nationalist and had the overall wel-



fare of his countrymen topmost in his mind. He urged his fellow countrymen to *'Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached'*.

Death

Swami Vivekananda had predicted that he will not live till the age of forty. On July 4, 1902, he went about his days' work at the Belur Mutt, teaching Sanskrit grammar to pupils. He retired to his room in the evening and died during meditation at around 9 PM. He is said to have attained *"Mahasamadhi"* and the great saint was cremated on the banks of river Ganga.

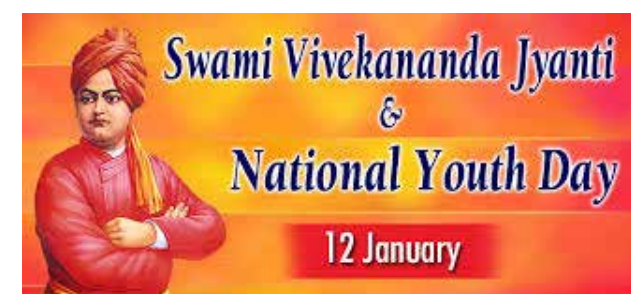
Legacy

The Swami one day had a symbolic dream, in which he saw Sri Ramakrishna walking into the water of the ocean and beckoning him to follow. He also heard the authoritative word 'Go!' In response to a letter that he had written to Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, she gave him her blessings for the fulfilment of his desire, knowing that it was Ramakrishna's wish that he should undertake the journey to America. And now, at last, he felt sure of his call.

Swami Vivekananda's absorbing biography presents his vast knowledge of Eastern and Western culture, deep spiritual insight, brilliant conversation, broad human sympathy, and colorful personality. Swami Vivekananda, was the India's first spiritual and cultural ambassador to the West, proclaimed the universal message of Vedanta: the non-duality of the Godhead, the divinity of the soul, the oneness of existence, and the harmony of religions. *'It may be that I shall find it good to get outside my body - to cast it off like a worn-out garment. But I shall not cease to work. I shall inspire men everywhere, until the world shall know that it is one with God'*. said Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda revealed to the world the true foundations of India's unity as a nation. He taught how a nation with such a vast diversity can be bound together by a feeling of humanity and brotherhood. *Netaji Subash Chandra Bose* once said: *'Swami-ji harmonized the East and the West, religion and science, past and present. And that is why he is great. Our countrymen have gained unprecedented self-respect, self-reliance and self-assertion from his teachings'*. Swami Vivekananda was successful in constructing a virtual bridge between the culture of the East and the West.

Sri Aurobindo regarded Vivekananda as the one who awakened India spiritually. Mahatma Gandhi counted him among the few Hindu reformers *'who have maintained this Hindu religion in a state of splendor by cutting down the dead wood of tradition'*.



Celebrations

While *National Youth Day* in India is observed on his birthday, 12 January, the day he delivered his masterful speech at the Parliament of Religions, 11 September 1893, is observed as the *World Brotherhood Day*. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in India officially observed 2013 as the occasion in a declaration. The 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated in India and abroad. To commemorate that day, a Five Rupees Postage Stamp was released.

Making a difference, one home at a time

- Royal College old boys join hands in Sri Lanka

Point Pedro, Jaffna

Showing its compassion towards the well-being of one more former woman combatant of the LTTE, now living in abject poverty with her two children and the husband, built a new house for her in Point Pedro area and formally warmed it on Monday 21st of March 2022, during a simple ceremony.

The house construction project, carried out by 16 Sri Lanka Light Infantry troops and SFHQ troops was made possible due to financial sponsorship, provided by Dr. Vallipuram Sivakumar, a past student of the Colombo Royal College (1980 Tamil medium batch) through the coordination of Major General (Retd) Ravi Rathnasingham.

The beneficiary, Mrs. Nirojin Yoham, a mother of two children worked as an LTTE woman combatant after

she was forced to join the organization and worked in Visuvamadu area before 2009. After rehabilitation, she was living a hand to mouth life with two children and her husband, a mason who is not very physically fit.

The house-warming ceremony at Point Pedro saw Major General Sujeewa Senarath Yapa, Commander, Security Forces - Jaffna as the Chief Guest deliver keys of the new house to the beneficiary in the presence of the Divisional Secretary for Point Pedro and several Senior Officers. Mr. Wasanthan Balasubramaniam, representing Dr. Sivakumar, state officials, beneficiaries and their family members.

“Currently, there are lot of former LTTE combatants living in abject poverty with their families in North and East of Sri Lanka. They are neglected in all ways both by administration and

Tamil community. They live in small huts with poor hygienic conditions. Day to day they are facing and going through lot of hardships which I feel is very pathetic. When my school classmate and friend retired Major General Ravi Ratnasingam approached me about his intentions of this project, I was delighted and wanted to be part of it. I sincerely thank from bottom of my heart to Sri Lanka light infantry troop and SFHQ troop showing their compassion and generosity towards these underprivileged family and providing their man power free to construct the house” said Dr. Sivakumar.

During the same ceremony, dry ration packs and a stock of school accessories and equipment, organized by the SFHQ-J were also awarded to the family as incentives.

Dr. Vallipuram Sivakumar is a

trustee of Gandhi Illam NZ trust and has been doing various projects in N-E of Sri Lanka for the past 15 years. Projects include sponsorship of children with Sivan Arul foundation in Thiruketheeswaram, Special meals support, Children welfare project in the village of Amanthanavalli (Vaharai district, Batticola), financial assistance to medical students in Jaffna and supporting elders home in Thevipuram in Mullaitheevu. He is an old boy of Royal College, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The old boys of Royal College (Tamil medium class 1980) live in Canada, UK, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, India and USA. They have been supporting housing projects in the North of Sri Lanka in the past and donated dry food to needy during covid19.



Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region proudly present

Tamil New Year

Celebration 2022

Saturday, April 23rd 6.00pm - 10.00pm
Forest Heights Community Centre
1700 Queen's Blvd, Kitchener.

Local & Toronto Artists - Indian Classical Music, Singers, Indian group dance
 & **South Indian style Dinner** served on Banana Leaf

Ticket: \$20/Member, \$25/Non Member Free: Kids under 5 years



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Ticket and other info: mail@tamilculturewaterloo.org

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.

DTA's International Women's Day

DTA proudly celebrated virtual International Women's Day. We enjoyed the evening with inspirational stories and entertainment from Sri Lanka, Canada, Australia & India. We are truly thankful for all the presenters who shared their stories with us. It was an amazing experience.



DTA's Business Workshop for Young Entrepreneurs

March Break Free Program

DTA provided a business workshop for young entrepreneurs during the March Break. The workshop allowed kids to explore their creativity and leadership skills so that the kids can build-up their own business one day. Thank you to our talented DTA youth volunteer Sayaani Koneapillai for spending your time to teach our kids.



DTA's Coding for Teens & Web Development with HTML & CSS Workshop

March Break Free Program

Our kids learned about HTML/CSS and how to create their own website. Also, they learned basic techniques and concepts of web development, how to create a website with images and styling, problem solving skills and how to bring their ideas to life. Thank you to our talented DTA youth volunteer Jordan Francis for spending your time to teach our kids.



DTA's Family Ice Skating

March Break Free Program

During the March Break, our kids with their families got to enjoy indoor ice skating. Thank you to DTA's Talented Youth Volunteer figure skater Venkat Durairaj (Gold Medalist Provincial Level) who showed inspirational skating moves to the youth. We are proud to see our very own youth skaters teaching the other kids.



DTA's Annual General Meeting and Talent Show

DTA's AGM and Talent Show went very well. It was an in-person gathering and everyone enjoyed getting to meet each other. Thank you for all the talent show performers. Our Youth Volunteers were fantastic and helped us run a very smooth program. Thank you to Sayaani Konesapillai for helping with creating the background slide shows. Thank you to Sveta Manorathan (Youth Leader) for helping with the audio and video. Thanks to the MC's Mano Pancharatnam & Hanthan Manikavsagar. Special thank you to our Sponsor, Showtha Thushijanthan from Re/Max Royal Properties for sponsoring the food. Overall, thanks to everyone who attended the event and supported DTA.

Tamil School

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

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

Please register online at durhamtamils.org

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

DTA's Seniors

DTA is keeping our seniors fully occupied with multiple free virtual classes and programs. We run 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 our fantastic volunteers who do not expect anything and are serving the community voluntarily. DTA is truly grateful for your continued support.



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

Unity Is Strength



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(South Asian Community Monthly English Newspaper)

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Lent Dates in 2022

Ash Wednesday: March 2, 2022

Palm Sunday: April 10, 2022

Holy Monday: April 11, 2022

Holy Tuesday: April 12, 2022

Holy Wednesday: April 13, 2022

Maundy Thursday: April 14, 2022

Good Friday: April 15, 2022

Holy Saturday: April 16, 2022

Easter Sunday: April 17, 2022



MONSOON JOURNAL 16TH YEAR IN CIRCULATION

Content Writer, Monsoon Journal

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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