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The Tamil Community in Canada

Special Coverage by Monsoon Journal

1980s

1990s

2000s

2010s

2020s



Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple, Concept and now



Founding of the First Tamil Co-operative Home, Toronto in 1988 & Yarl Co-operative Homes work began in Mississauga in 1993



Tamil Business Community Celebrates Business Excellence at Roy Thompson Hall



First Tamil Canadian elected to the Federal Parliament, Rathika Sitsabaesan in 2011 & subsequently first Tamil Canadian parliamentarian elected to governing party in Ottawa, Gary Anandasangaree in 2015



Work-in-progress for the Tamil Community Centre, with the support of Federal, Provincial, Municipal and the Community.

1983 was a tumultuous year for the Ceylon Tamil community and Sri Lanka. Well, it has been 40 years since then. The Tamil diaspora is across many nations of the world owing to the continuing non-resolution of the ethnic conflict in Ceylon/Sri Lanka since its independence in 1948 from

Britain. Of that diaspora, the Ceylon Tamil community in Canada today is the largest one outside its homeland and it is a well-integrated sizable community within the Canadian fabric. Yet, the whole Tamil population in Canada in 1982 could have easily been accommo-

dated in one high-rise building. With the liberalization of immigration policies in the 1970s, Canada attracted many immigrants from several other parts of the world – the Horn of Africa, Middle East, Asia, and South America. However, in relative terms, the growth and stability of the Tamil

community is distinct in the last four decades. How did it happen? What were the factors that influenced it? Await for the special coverage by the Monsoon Journal in the coming issues to celebrate the decades of the Tamil community in Canada.

Kumar Nadesan, Managing Director of Express Newspapers Ltd., Publishers of "Virakesari", Sri Lanka's premier daily, receives India's prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award

By Siva Sivapragasam

Kumar Nadesan, Managing Director of the 92-year-old "Virakesari" newspaper published by Express Newspapers, is the only Sri Lankan among 27 others selected globally to receive the coveted Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award. The Award is given by the President of India to honour exceptional and meritorious contributions in their chosen field/profession both in India and abroad. The "Virakesari" newspaper is 92 years old and is the premier Tamil daily with over millions of readers in print and online editions in Sri Lanka and world over. Mr. Nadesan serves as Sri Lanka Press Institute Chairman and rep-



resents the Newspaper Society of Sri Lanka. In addition, he serves as Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka Chairman. He is also the President of the Global organization of people of Indian origin (Sri Lanka) and has also been

a recipient of the "Service above Self" from Rotary International for Community work. The President of India Droupadi Murmu will confer the awards. Please see Page 10 for More Coverage...

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CANADA NEWS 

Gary Anandasangaree, Member of Parliament, Scarborough-Rouge Park, praises Ontario enrollment in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System



Dec 19-2022

As of Dec 31, families in Ontario, enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System will see their child care fees cut in half. This is an incredible milestone in making child care affordable for families and building a better future for all.

Via twitter.com



Premier Doug Ford Shares New Year's Greetings

January 01, 2023
Office of the Premier

TORONTO — Today, Premier Doug Ford issued the following statement to mark the start of the New Year:

“As we turn over the calendar to begin a new year, it’s important to take a moment and reflect on just how far we’ve all come over the past twelve months.

I have been so proud to see the Team Ontario spirit on full display as the people of this province got back together and back to business. As Premier, I’m particularly proud of the progress our government has made implementing our plan to build Ontario.

Our government passed new legislation that will help achieve our goal of building 1.5 million homes over 10 years. This next step in our plan will ensure cities, towns and rural communities grow with the mix of housing types they need, so that more families can realize the dream of home ownership.

We’ve made real progress in building highways, transit and other key infrastructure. We started construction on a bridge crossing over the future Bradford Bypass and awarded contracts to build the southern portion of the Ontario Line and to design and supply the Ontario Line fleet of trains. We are purchasing three new trainsets to bring back northeastern passenger rail service connecting Timmins and Toronto, unlocking the full economic potential of northern industries, resources and minerals. The expanded Highway 401 from Mississauga to Milton recently opened and is already helping to relieve gridlock.

Our government will never stop working for workers. We are breaking down barriers that prevent newcomers from contributing to our economic growth. We are investing in training people to enter rewarding careers in the skilled trades so that they can help build our great province, including our youth.

As all Canadians continue to struggle with inflation and the cost of living, our government is taking concrete action to put more money back into



the pockets of Ontarians, including by scrapping licence plate sticker fees and permanently removing tolls from Highways 412 and 418. Most recently, we extended the gas and fuel tax rate cuts for another year, saving Ontario households \$195 on average between July 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023.

Our government continues to invest in our province’s health system, including by hiring thousands of additional nurses, doctors and personal support workers. Since 2018, there are over 14,500 more nurses and over 1,060 more doctors registered to practice and work in Ontario. We also have a pipeline of talent in training, with nearly 30,000 nursing students currently enrolled in colleges and universities across the province. At the same time, the government has made investments to support the enrolment of thousands more personal support workers in public and private colleges and school board programs since April 2022.

As we enter the year 2023, our future is bright and Ontario’s best days are still ahead.

While we celebrate everything we have to be thankful for, we will never take anything for granted. As the world continues to face economic uncertainty, our government is hard at work building an economy that works for everyone and can weather any storm. For 2023 and beyond, Ontario will continue to be the greatest place to live, work and raise a family.

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, I want to wish everyone a safe, healthy and prosperous 2023!”

Via news.ontario.ca

Statement by Minister Hussen on Tamil Heritage Month

From: Canadian Heritage
STATEMENT

OTTAWA, January 1, 2023

January marks the beginning of Tamil Heritage Month in Canada, a time to reflect on the rich history, culture, resiliency, and strength of Tamil communities across the country.

Canada is the proud home of one of the largest Tamil diasporas in the world, and Canadians of Tamil heritage have been instrumental in making it the country it is today. Whether it’s in the world of business, politics, the arts, or other fields, Tamil communities continue to play a vital and inspiring role in our society.

Over the course of this month, members of the Tamil community will come together to celebrate the many great contributions that they have made and continue to make, and it serves as an opportunity for everyone to acknowledge and honour their tremendous achievements.



As Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, and on behalf of the Government of Canada, I invite Canadians from coast to coast to coast to join in on the celebrations and to learn more about the Tamil language and culture throughout the month of January and beyond.

Happy Tamil Heritage Month!

Via canada.ca

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International Day of Education 2023: Advocate a cause of investing in people, prioritizing education in addressing the challenges of our time

By **Harrish Thirukumar**

"The time has come to reignite our collective commitment to education" stated Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations (UN). Education is a human right, a public good and a public responsibility.

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 January as International Day of Education, in celebration of the role of education for peace and development. Education offers children a ladder out of poverty and a path to a promising future. But about 258 million children and adolescents around the world do not have the opportunity to enter or complete school; 617 million children and adolescents cannot read and do basic math; less than 40% of girls in sub-Saharan Africa complete lower secondary school and some four million children and youth refugees are out of school.

Furthermore, without inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong opportunities for all, countries will not succeed in achieving gender equality and breaking the cycle of poverty that is leaving millions of children, youth and adults behind.

In that sense, the international community recognized that education is essential for the success of all 17 of its goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustain-

able Development in September 2015. Sustainable Development Goal 4, in particular, aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030.

The fifth International Day of Education will be celebrated on 24 January 2023 under the theme "to invest in people, prioritize education". Building on the global momentum generated by the UN Transforming Education Summit in September 2022, this year's Day will call for maintaining strong political mobilization around education and chart the way to translate commitments and global initiatives into action. Education must be prioritized to accelerate progress towards all the Sustainable Development Goals against the backdrop of a global recession, growing inequalities and the climate crisis.

Renowned physicist, Albert Einstein, noted that "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school." Action should be committed throughout our local communities in the Greater Toronto Area regarding the public school system. Advocate ways we can invest in people, prioritize education to address the challenges of our time.

Canada Historic Milestones

On January 2, 1881, Frederick Varley was born in Sheffield, England. He moved to Canada in 1912. Eight years later, he helped to found the Group of Seven. While the Group of Seven is best known for paintings inspired by Canada's vast landscapes, Varley specialized in portraiture. In 1981, Canada Post paid tribute to Varley with a stamp featuring his self-portrait. (Via: Library & Archives Canada)



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Monsoon Journal Wishes

festive greetings to readers, advertisers,
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January 1: Happy New Year, 2023

January 14: Thai Pongal, Makara Sankranti

We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution.
Each of us is the result of a thought of God.

- Pope Benedict XVI - (16 April 1927 - 31 December 2022)

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

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CANADA NEWS 

Spread the Word: Local Pharmacies now a One-Stop-Shop for Thirteen Common Ailments

Highly trained pharmacists able to prescribe for common ailments with no cost for the visit

December 28, 2022

Health

TORONTO — Ontario is making it more convenient for people to connect to care closer to home by launching pharmacist prescribing for some of the most common medical ailments.

As of January 1, 2023, Ontarians will be able to stop in at pharmacies across the province to receive prescriptions for thirteen common ailments, including rashes, pink eye, insect bites and urinary tract infections with just their health card. This service makes it more convenient to access care by removing a doctor's office visit and will come at no extra cost to Ontarians.

"Stopping by your local pharmacy for quick and easy access to treatment for some of your most common ailments increases your access to the care you need closer to home," said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "Expanding the ability of pharmacists to provide care

is one more way we're putting people at the centre of our health care system, making it easier, faster and more convenient to access health care in their community."

Pharmacists will be able to offer prescriptions for:

- hay fever (allergic rhinitis);
- oral thrush (candidal stomatitis);
- pink eye (conjunctivitis; bacterial, allergic and viral);
- dermatitis (atopic, eczema, allergic and contact);
- menstrual cramps (dysmenorrhea);
- acid reflux (gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD));
- hemorrhoids;
- cold sores (herpes labialis);
- impetigo;
- insect bites and hives;
- tick bites (post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent Lyme disease);
- sprains and strains (musculoskeletal); and
- urinary tract infections (UTIs).



Allowing pharmacists to prescribe for these common ailments will make it more convenient for Ontarians to receive the care they need, while offering patients more convenient choices for how they access and receive health care. With a large, provincewide footprint, pharmacist prescribing will help to increase access to care in rural

parts of Ontario.

In addition to providing more convenience, pharmacy prescribing will also help free-up doctors' bandwidth to provide care for more complex needs, helping to reduce wait times for these services.

Via news.ontario.ca

Statement by the Prime Minister to mark the New Year

December 31, 2022

Ottawa, Ontario

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement to mark the New Year:

"Tonight, Canadians across the country will gather with loved ones to celebrate the accomplishments of the past year and ring in the new one.

"We have a lot to be thankful for this past year. We got back to doing the things we love, like gathering with friends and family. As our economy reopened, we experienced one of the strongest economic recoveries in the G7 – creating more jobs than we lost to the pandemic. And we welcomed the world back to Canada over the summer to share the natural beauty that we're all so proud of.

"This year also had challenges, but when things got hard, we were there for each other. We rolled up our sleeves, looked out for our neighbours,



and supported each other. We got boosted to protect ourselves and our loved ones. We came together to help Atlantic Canadians in the wake of Hurricane Fiona. We have been there to support the people of Ukraine as they bravely defend their country. And as global inflation drove up the cost of living, we delivered much-needed relief to those who need it the most – to help with groceries, rent, child care, and to ensure kids get the dental

coverage they need.

"As we look ahead to the New Year, the Government of Canada will continue to build an economy that works for all Canadians. We will keep attracting historic investments in our electric vehicle supply chain – from critical minerals to manufacturing – which are already securing tens of thousands of jobs across the country. We will continue our work to make our communities safer by strengthening



gun control. And we will continue to be there for people by making life more affordable.

"In 2023, let's continue to show up for one another, and together, let's build a better future for everyone. On behalf of our family, Sophie and I wish you and your loved ones a wonderful night and all the best for the New Year.

"Happy New Year everyone!"

Via pm.gc.ca

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COMMUNITY WATCH

Apsares - A House of Beauty outlet opens at Majestic City Mall in Toronto

Apsares launched their beauty boutique in Majestic City Mall this past Saturday, January 7, 2023 surrounded by clients, co-vendors, and friends. An exciting line of their exclusive liquid lip colours named after various Apsares's was unveiled by Sylvie Aloysius of ImSylvie, an established Makeup Artist amongst the Toronto's makeup artist circle.

This was followed by Fiona Kingsley Boyer, a true enthusiast of trend setting fashion showcasing the new collection of fashion jewelry inspired by the beautiful Temple Designs of the world. Apsares offers a large array of hair extensions, instant up-do, and free consultation for your hair accessorizing needs. They will serve your fashion and styling needs for all of your special occasions.

Seen here are some pictures taken at the event.



Royal College Old Boys Association Dinner Dance 2022

Royal College Old Boys Association in Toronto held their annual dinner dance recently. The event was house full with variety in entertainment including dancing, Raffle draw and a sumptuous dinner. Seen here are some pictures taken at the event. *(Picture Courtesy: Sri Lanka Anchorman)*





2023 will be 'critical year' plan to turn around the economy says Sri Lanka President Wickremesinghe in New Year's message



PTI Updated: January 01, 2023
17:15 IST

Colombo, Jan 1 (PTI) Sri Lanka President Ranil Wickremesinghe on Sunday said 2023 will be a "critical year" for the cash-strapped country, as his regime desperately scrambles to inject much-needed impetus to galvanise the beleaguered economy.

Sri Lanka was hit by an unprecedented financial crisis in 2022 due to a severe paucity in foreign exchange reserves that also sparked political turmoil in the island nation that led to the ouster of the all-powerful Rajapaksa family.

"We are looking at the New Year 2023 after having undergone the bleakest of times, immense hardships, as well as the uncertainties and hopelessness of the last year," Wickremesinghe said in his New Year's message, as Sri Lanka turns 75 as an independent nation later this year.

"I understand the great burdens that are placed on all of us and the setbacks that a majority of us have suffered due to the country's abject economic collapse," he said.

From April to July, chaos reigned supreme on Sri Lanka, with miles-long queues forming at fuel stations and irate residents coming out in thousands blocking roads with empty cooking gas cylinders.

The Sri Lankan government in May last year declared a debt default on over USD 51 billion in the foreign loan - a first in the country's history.

"Indeed, 2023 will be a critical year in which we plan to turn around the economy. 2023 is also the 75th year of independence from the British Empire," he noted.

National Day, also known as Independence Day is celebrated on February 4 to commemorate the country's political independence from British rule in 1948.

The resignations by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in July and his elder brother Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa in May 2022 amid massive anti-government protests subsided with the formation of a government led by their ally Wickremesinghe, who is now

tasked with stabilising the economy and restoring the financial health of the economy, already hit badly by the pandemic.

"We must boldly implement the proposed social, economic and political reforms to build a prosperous and productive Sri Lanka in the coming decade," Wickremesinghe explained.

While explaining the roadmap ahead, the President assured that the worst in the country's financial crisis may be over.

"Yet I believe that we have already gone through the worst of these times," he noted.

Wickremesinghe, 73, thanked the citizens for their patience and courage as the government took the critical steps to stabilise the economy.

In August last year, Wickremesinghe said Sri Lanka's economic woes would last for another year and it will have to think outside the box and look at new sectors such as logistics and nuclear energy to revive the bankrupt economy.

The President also lamented that Sri Lanka was trailing behind some of the other countries that attained independence from Great Britain around the same time.

"Looking back, it is obvious that we have not done as well as other ex-colonies. This is why the youth of our country are calling for a system change - especially at this juncture. This cannot be ignored," he added.

Last year, Sri Lanka and the IMF agreed on a staff-level agreement to release USD 2.9 billion over 4 years.

But the much-anticipated IMF bailout will have to wait as the country pursues talks with creditors to meet the global lender's condition for the facility.

President Wickremesinghe recently said that India and Sri Lanka held "successful" talks on debt restructuring and the country will also begin discussions with China, as it tries to get assurances from major bilateral creditors to close the crucial deal with the IMF.

Via PTI

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 100 years old mother passes away

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mother Heeraben Modi passed away at age one hundred and PM Modi posted a heartfelt message announcing the demise of his mother on his Twitter handle



Heeraben Modi had turned 100 on June 18. PM Modi had paid her a visit during her birthday at her residence in Gandhinagar, where she lived with the Prime Minister's younger brother, Pankaj Modi. She always set an example as the mother of the Prime minister, contributing in every small way she could to Indian society. Only recently, during the Gujarat elections, she was seen casting her vote at a polling station despite her frail age and health conditions- ensuring she exercised her franchise.

Modi's brother Prahlad Modi had

said that their mother was just 15-16 years old when she got married. The family had financial constraints due to which she never got a chance to study, but she wanted all her children to be well-educated. He also said that they never had any money to pay school fees, but their mother never borrowed any money. He said that she would do some job to ensure that there was money for the children's education.

PM Modi is lauded for his long working hours and hard work. "The inspiration came from my mother," he has said.

Ferry service between KKS and South India

The service is expected to have a positive impact on Northern Tourism to generate foreign exchange

By Siva Sivapragasam

Sri Lankan companies have shown interest in launching a ferry service between South India (Puducherry) and Kankesanthurai (KKS) and is expected to commence in January/February this year.

Two more ferry services from Puducherry to Trincomalee and Puducherry-Colombo too are to be launched increasing the maritime connectivity between the two countries.

The local companies have also tied up with business their counterparts in South India to begin marketing activities for the first ferry service, according to an official of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Aviation said.

"There are many quality passenger boats that are used in India and the local operators are also looking at entering into a joint venture with them to lease these passenger ships to the Sri Lanka operation," he said. They plan to have daily ferry services and the new service will carry 300 to 400 passengers per trip that will take



about 3 ½ hrs. The distance between the two destinations is 56 nautical miles. The one-way fare is expected to be around US \$60 per passenger and they will be permitted to carry 100 kg of luggage. Minister of Ports,

Shipping and Aviation, Nimal Siripala de Silva said that the Indian Government has extended consent for the service.

The service is also expected to have a positive impact on Northern Tourism to generate foreign exchange," according to a government official.



WORLD NEWS

Public service in Sri Lanka is not an eight-hour job: President Wickremesinghe

PTI

2 January, 2023 05:00 pm IST

Colombo, Jan 2 (PTI) Public service in Sri Lanka is not an eight-hour job, President Ranil Wickremesinghe said on Monday, as he urged public servants to work overtime to make the cash-strapped island a prosperous nation this year.

Sri Lanka was hit by an unprecedented financial crisis last year due to a severe paucity of foreign exchange reserves that also sparked political turmoil in the island nation which led to the ouster of the all-powerful Rajapaksa family.

"Each person's duties (public servants) cannot be limited to 8 hours a day and 5 days a week. Let's all work with commitment. By the end of 2023, I hope to take this country forward with the support of all of you and restore normalcy," news portal newsfirst.lk reported, quoting Wickremesinghe as saying during an event held at the President's Office here on Monday.

The President said no public servant can shirk responsibility as 2023 was a crucial year for the country's economy.

Incidentally, Sri Lanka turns 75 as an independent nation later this year.

National Day, also known as Independence Day, is celebrated on February 4 to commemorate the country's political independence from British rule in 1948.

From April to July, chaos reigned supreme in Sri Lanka, with miles-long queues forming at fuel stations and irate residents coming out in thousands blocking roads.

In May last year, the Sri Lankan government declared a debt default on over USD 51 billion in foreign loans – a first in the country's history.

The resignations by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in July and his elder brother Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa in May 2022 amid massive anti-government protests subsided with the formation of a government led by their ally Wickremesinghe.

Wickremesinghe, 73, is now tasked with stabilising the economy and

restoring the financial health of the economy, already hit badly by the pandemic.

"Five and a half months ago, we took over a historic task at this office. During those five and a half months, we took steps to establish normalcy in the country at a time when the government had collapsed and the economy had also collapsed. However, not all our economic problems are over yet. Nevertheless, today we have the ability to provide fuel, gas, foodstuff and fertilisers as required," Wickremesinghe said.

Last year, Sri Lanka and the IMF agreed on a staff-level agreement to release USD 2.9 billion over 4 years.

But the much-anticipated IMF bailout will have to wait as the country pursues talks with creditors to meet the global lender's condition for the facility.

Wickremesinghe recently said that India and Sri Lanka held "successful" talks on debt restructuring and the country will also begin discussions with China, as it tries to get assur-



ances from major bilateral creditors to close the crucial deal with the IMF.

"We have to move forward by implementing the debt-restructuring programme. Moreover, we have to build an economy that can compete with the new world. The opinion of the majority is that there is a need for a change in the political system of this country," he added.

Via PTI

India Gears its Health System Up Amid COVID Surge in China

December 29, 2022 6:04 AM

by Anjana Pasricha

NEW DELHI —

India has stepped up surveillance and is preparing its health system for a possible surge in cases of COVID-19 following a spike in infections in China.

Experts, however, are optimistic that with a large part of its population vaccinated or exposed to the virus, India, which has reported the world's second-highest number of infections, may escape another deadly wave of the pandemic.

The health ministry has asked states to ensure that hospitals are prepared to handle a possible influx of cases and are equipped with adequate supplies of oxygen and ventilators. Officials say the country will also increase the genome sequencing that makes it possible to detect new strains of the virus.

India has not reimposed mask mandates that were relaxed earlier this year but last week Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged people to return to COVID-appropriate behavior and don masks. Authorities are also calling on those who have not taken vaccines to get the shots.

India has been hit with three waves of the pandemic — the deadliest one occurred in the summer of 2021 when the country grappled with a massive shortage of hospital beds and oxygen and reported tens of thousands of deaths.

But the pandemic has waned in the world's second most populous country and in recent months, India has been reporting the lowest number of infections since it began. The country presently has about 3,500 cases.



Amid the surge in COVID-19 cases in China, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has urged people in India to return to COVID-appropriate behavior and don masks.



India dropped mask mandates earlier this year as the pandemic waned but experts are advising caution.

Concerns however have resurfaced following the surge in cases of COVID-19 in China since it relaxed its zero-COVID policy this month. Domestic media reports on Thursday quoted health ministry officials as saying that India may experience a spike in cases over the next month. They pointed to the trend of India being hit about 30-35 days after an outbreak in East

Asia.

Still, public health experts are hopeful that India is no longer as vulnerable to the virus as it was at the start of the pandemic in 2020.

"India has a fair amount of immunity both from exposure of a large section of the population to the virus and high immunization rates," according to K. Srinath Reddy, head of the Public

Health Foundation of India. "More than 90% of the adults are vaccinated with two doses and more than 50% of adults have taken a booster dose. So even if cases rise, the likelihood of a severe wave resulting in hospitalization and deaths is very unlikely."

The government has made it mandatory for travelers arriving from China, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Thailand to produce a negative test report and ordered random testing of 2% of passengers on international flights to India.

Other experts concur with that view.

"The government is being cautious and that is good. But I don't expect any major spread of the present virus driving infections in China or any other variant because a lot of people were infected during the three waves of the pandemic," according to virologist, T. Jacob John. "India will not have a major problem because of the immunity it has gained over the last three years."

However, as the country celebrates the holiday season, and people pack markets, restaurants, flights and tourist destinations, experts are reiterating the call to wear masks in public places and crowded areas.

"We need to be alert for a more deadly non-omicron variant emerging. While we may consider it a low probability, we will need to watch out. People should protect themselves against infection," according to Reddy.

India has reported about 44 million infections so far and about half a million deaths. Several experts however have said that those numbers may not be an accurate count of the devastation wrought by the pandemic in the country of 1.4 billion.

Viavoanews.com



Joint statement from foreign ministers on the Taliban's ban on Afghan women working for national and international NGOs



From: Global Affairs Canada STATEMENT

December 29, 2022 - Ottawa, Ontario - Global Affairs Canada

The following is a statement from the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States and the High Representative of the European Union.

"The Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States and the High Representative of the European Union are gravely concerned that the Taliban's reckless and dangerous order barring female employees of national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from the workplace puts at risk millions of Afghans who depend on humanitarian assistance for their survival. We call on the Taliban to urgently reverse this decision.

"Women are absolutely central to humanitarian and basic needs operations. Unless they participate in aid delivery in Afghanistan, NGOs will be unable to reach the country's most vulnerable people to provide food,

medicine, winterization, and other materials and services they need to live. This would also affect the humanitarian assistance provided by international organizations, as international organizations utilize NGOs to deliver such materials and services.

"The Taliban continue to demonstrate their contempt for the rights, freedoms, and welfare of the Afghan people, particularly women and girls, and their disinterest in normal relations with the international community.

"We support the Afghan people's calls for girls and women to return to work, school, and university, and for women to continue to play essential roles in humanitarian and basic needs assistance delivery, and we urge the Taliban to respect the political, economic, social, and cultural rights of women and girls in Afghanistan.

"To this end, we are in close contact with the United Nations, who are urging, also on behalf of all international donors, that the Taliban reverse this decision immediately. This would avoid any disruption and allow the continuation of all humanitarian operations of international and national NGOs."

Via canada.ca

Ms. Sargam Koushal from India was chosen as Mrs. World recently



Sargam Koushal hails from Jammu and is a postgraduate in English literature. She did her schooling from Presentation Convent Senior Secondary School, Gandhi Nagar Jammu and completed her Masters in English Literature from Jammu university. She also did her B. Ed from Government B. Ed College Jammu.

Sargam who started out as a teacher soon decided to join the glamour world as a model. The beauty with the brains is a painter and a content writer too.

Sargam tied the knot with Aditya Manohar Sharma, an Indian naval officer in 2018. While Sargam started her career as a teacher, after her marriage she decided to pursue her dream and started taking part in beauty pageants.

She is the daughter of retired Chief Manager, the Bank of India GS Kaushal and Reema Khajuria, and has a brother Manthan Koushal who is 7 years younger to her.

Chennai-Jaffna flights open investment opportunities

Flights between the Chennai Airport and the Jaffna International Airport launched last December have opened up multiple investment opportunities in the North and the East.

Hospitality veteran and Chairman, Tourism Bureau, Northern Province, Sunil Dissanayake told 'Sunday Observer Business' that the flights are very successful as it maintains a 90% seat factor which is praiseworthy for a new airline.

The flights which operate four times a week also feed a large number of Indian travellers to Jaffna hotels giving them unexpected Dollar revenue. "This will also see Jaffna hotels hiring more staff opening up new hospitality sector jobs for youth."

Dissanayake said that the average stay of the Indian travellers is around three days and they also take excursions

to Anuradhapura, the Meneriya national park, Sigiriya and other tourist attractions opening up new avenues of employment for the transport sector in the Northern Province. "Some Indian tourists also take the Jaffna-Colombo luxury train for their travels to Anuradhapura and Colombo and back."

He said that to encourage investments they have now contracted, the Urban Development Authority and other government bodies in the Northern Province and have identified a large land bank to offer investors.

"We propose to offer them to Indian and local entrepreneurs for investment. We see opportunities for real estate, hospitality and shopping malls to be constructed in this area."

Dissanayake who is also the CEO of the BMICH, said that there are also



plans to extend the Jaffna airport runway which would allow larger aircraft such as Airbus A 320, to land.

An official from the Indian consulate in Jaffna said that there is an increased demand for Indian visas after the launch of international flights between the Chennai and Jaffna airports. This flight is special in many ways as its Alliance Air's maiden international foray and it also connects Chennai to Jaffna after several years. SurainEdiriweera representing Alliance Air local GSA, said that the

airline will also explore the possibility of increasing flights and even flying to Ratmalana from mid next year.

For the first time Northern passengers will get the opportunity to connect to international destinations such as Dubai and Muscat. They could also get connections to Indian destinations such as Delhi, Coimbatore, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Mumbai and Trivandrum.

However, there were concerns of the high tax of Rs. 22,000 per sector per ticket which is adding to the fare of around Rs. 19,000 which has increased the price of a ticket to around Rs. 40,000 and a return ticket to over Rs. 60 000.

"We have brought this issue to the Minister of Aviation, NimalSiripala De Silva who has promised to address it."



SPECIAL FEATURE

India's highest honour award to Kumar Nadesan

Sri Lankan born Indian Origin Kumar Nadesan to be conferred India's Prestigious PBS Award - 2023

Compiled by : R Surendran

Kumar Nadesan, Managing Director of the 92-year-old Virakesari newspaper, published by Express Newspapers Ceylon Ltd (ENCL), is the only Sri Lankan among 27 eminent personalities from across the world named as recipients of India's coveted Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2023. Conferred by the President of India, the Awards honour exceptional and meritorious contributions by the recipients in their chosen field/profession, both in India and abroad.

Nadesan serves as Chairman of the Sri Lanka Press Institute, Chairman of the Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka and represents the Newspaper Society of Sri Lanka, is also President of the Global organization of people of Indian origin (Sri Lanka). He has been a recipient of the 'Service above Self' from Rotary International for community work. The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is being conferred on him in recognition of to contribution to community welfare

The 17th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held from January 8 to 10 in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India.

About the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman



The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman (Overseas Indian Honour/Award) is the highest Indian award for Non-resident Indian and Overseas Citizen of India or an organisation or institution established and run by Non-Resident Indians or Persons of Indian Origin, constituted by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Government of India in conjunction with the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (Non-Resident Indian Day), to honour exceptional and meritorious contribution in their chosen field/profession. The award is given by the President of India. Since 2016, the Government of India has doubled the number of awardees each year to 30 after a decision to grant the award once every two years.

Pravasi Bharatiya Samman (PBS) is conferred for outstanding contributions in any of the following areas:

- "Social and humanitarian causes in India or abroad"
- "Better understanding of India"
- "Support to India's causes and concerns in a tangible way"
- "Building closer links between India, the overseas Indian community and their country of residence;"
- "Welfare of the local Indian community"
- "Philanthropic and charitable work"
- "Eminence in one's field or outstanding work, which has enhanced India's prestige in the country of residence; or"
- "Eminence in skills which has enhanced India's prestige in that country (for non-professional workers)."

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PBSA - Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is the highest honor conferred upon Indians living abroad, including Non-Resident Indians, Persons of Indian Origin, or organizations/ institutions established and run by them.

2023 - 27 awardees from across categories will be receiving the awards (Indian Ministry of External Affairs).

Award given by - President of India *Droupadi Murmu (Indore, Madhya Pradesh)*

Full Name : Sivakumar Nadesan
D.O.B : 1946 June 28 (Age 76)
Spouse : Suhasini **Children :** Sabita Nadesan M.A (Daughter), Karthik Nadesan J.D, Sanjay Nadesan M.D (Son)'s
Alma mater : St. Thomas College Mt. Lavinia (SL) / Loyola College / Madras university / Lincoln's Inn, UK

Career - President of the Sri Lanka chapter of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin/Sri Lanka Press Institute(Chairman), Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka(Chairman), MD at Express Newspapers (Ceylon) (Pvt) Limited, and Asian Media Publications (Pvt) Limited.

Global Recognition - Recipient Rotary International's 'Service Above Self' award for community work.

Sources : IHC,newsonair.gov.in By Suren (freelancer Info.g)

List of Overseas Indians Chosen for the Honour

Person	Country	Field
1 Jagdish Chennupati	Australia	Science & Technology/ Education
2 Sanjeev Mehta	Bhutan	Education
3 Dilip Loundo	Brazil	Art & Culture/Education
4 Alexander Maliakel John	Brunei Darussalam	Medicine
5 Vaikuntam Iyer Lakshmanan	Canada	Community Welfare
6 Joginder Singh Nijjar	Croatia	Art & Culture/Education
7 Ramjee Prasad	Denmark	Information Technology
8 Kannan Ambalam	Ethiopia	Community Welfare
9 Amal Kumar Mukhopadhyay	Germany	Community Welfare/Medicine
10 Mohamed Irfaan Ali	Guyana	Politics/Community Welfare
11 Reena Vinod Pushkarna	Israel	Business/Community Welfare
12 Maqsooda Sarfi Shiotani	Japan	Education
13 Rajagopal	Mexico	Education
14 Amit Kailash Chandra Lath	Poland	Business/Community Welfare
15 Parmanand Sukhumal Daswani	Republic of Congo	Community Welfare
16 Piyush Gupta	Singapore	Business
17 Mohanlal Hira	South Africa	Community Welfare
18 Sanjaykumar Shivabhai Patel	South Sudan	Business/Community Welfare
19 Sivakumar Nadesan	Sri Lanka	Community Welfare
20 Dewanchandrebhose Sharman	Suriname	Community Welfare
21 Archana Sharma	Switzerland	Science & Technology
22 Frank Arthur Seepersad	Trinidad & Tobago	Community Welfare/Education
23 Siddharth Balachandran	UAE	Business/Community Welfare
24 Chandrakant Babubhai Patel	UK	Media
25 Darshan Singh Dhaliwal	USA	Business/Community Welfare
26 Rajesh Subramaniam	USA	Business
27 Ashok Kumar Tiwary	Uzbekistan	Business

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and Gomathaa pooja to Cow that represents
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Upcoming Festivals

- | | |
|--|--|
| 19.01.2023 Pradosha Viratham | 02.02.2023 Pradosha Viratham |
| 21.01.2023 Thai Amavasai Viratham | 04.02.2023 Thai Pooam |
| 21.01.2023 Abirami Pattar Vizha | 04.02.2023 Pournami Viratham |
| 24.01.2023 Chathurththi Viratham | 08.02.2023 Sankatahara Chathurththi Viratham |
| 29.01.2023 Parani Viratham | 17.02.2023 PradoshaViratham |
| 29.01.2023 Kriththikai Viratham | 18.02.2023 Maha Sivarathiri Viratham |

Regular Service Timing

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 07:00 am Temple Opens | 05:00 pm Temple Opens |
| 10:00 am Morning Prayer | 06:30 pm Evening Prayer |
| 12:00 pm Afternoon prayer | 09:00 pm Night Prayer |
| 12:30 pm Temple Closes | 09:05 pm Temple Closes |
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Thai Pongal Messages

*Dr. Sivasri. Panchadchara Vijayakumara Kurukkal,
Chief Priest, Sri Varasiththi Vinaayagar Hindu Temple*



May Lord Varasiththi Vinaayaga let the benevolent God Surya Bhagwan rise on Sunday 14.01.2023, and bring blessings to all of us as a bright guide. 'Thai piranthaal vali pirakkum' as the month of Thai beginning may Lord Varasiththi Vinaayagar bless you with continued auspicious events in your life without hindrance.

May the differences between people of all ethnicities, religions, languages, and cultures be removed and united by love, the sense of friendship in the world may increase, patience may increase and husbands, wives, children, brothers, relatives and friends in every family may love each other and live happily and harmoniously.

May the students excel in academics and be virtuous in leading a good society, business leaders, businessmen, investors surpass and contribute to charities, those who need jobs get good jobs, and

those who are in jobs get promotion. I wish those suffering from diseases, specially the elderly with a disease-free life, and that our children may grow up to be a well-cultured society that preserves our ethnic identity based on our language, religion, art, and culture.

Join us at Sri Varasiththi Vinaayagar temple at 10:00 am on 14.01.2023 in thanking God Surya Bagawan for give us the energy and guiding us to live healthy. Prey to Gomatha (cow) for being the mother to all and giving all the fortune in our life. Let's thank to all farmers for providing us with grains and vegetables.

With blessings Lord Varasiththi Vinaayagar I bring my best wishes to happy, peace, healthy, prosperous life to all our devotees and the Canadian Tamil community on this holy day and wish them well in the year 2023.

SPECIAL FEATURE

*Message from Vina Devadas, President,
Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce (CTCC)*

Thai Pongal is the beginning of the festive harvest season for the Hindu Tamil community world over and somewhat similar to the Thanksgiving Day in Canada.

Thai Pongal is dedicated to the Hindu sun god thanking him for providing agricultural abundance beginning from the month of January.

We trust that the year 2023 will offer prosperity to the Tamil business community which has been somewhat affected during the recent two years due to the Covid pandemic.

The month of January is also special to the Canadian Tamil community as it coincides with the Tamil Heritage month. The Tamil language is regarded as one of the oldest languages in the world and abundant with literary works. The Tamil Heritage month is celebrated to recognize the contributions that Tam-



il-Canadians have made to Canadian society.

The CTCC Board of Directors and I are pleased to offer our blessings and wishes to the Canadian Tamil community as they celebrate Thai Pongal and Tamil Heritage month.

Sivan Ilanko, President, Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC)

On behalf of the Canadian Tamil Congress, we wish Monsoon Journal's management and its readers a very happy new year and Tamil Heritage Month. With Thai Pongal celebration and recognition of Tamil Heritage Month, January is a significant month for the Tamil community. Thai Pongal is a very special festival because of its inclusive nature as it is celebrated by all Tamils regardless of any religious background.

Poet Subramania Bharathiyar's dream that "Our sweet Tamil will echo and re-echo throughout the world" is a reality now with the Tamil diaspora around the world and making efforts to preserve our Heritage. In this regard, Tamil Canadians are making significant contributions in creating awareness about Tamil heritage among multicultural communities while celebrating and passing down our



heritage to the future generation.

As Canadian Tamils, we should also be very proud of our collective achievements in various fields. May the new year bring continued success and prosperity to everyone as the saying goes "Thai piranthaal vali pirakkum".

*Message from Harsha Kumara Navaratne,
High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in Canada*

On behalf of the Sri Lanka High Commission in Ottawa and the Consulate Generals Office in Toronto, I wish the Canadian Tamil community a very happy Thaipongal and a prosperous 2023.

Thaipongal, is a celebration of paying gratitude to nature for her abundance and saluting Surya bagawan for his benevolence to bring in a bountiful harvest and self - sufficiency in food. It also marks the end of an old year and a beginning of a new one.

Thaipongal is a good time to also reflect and pay tribute to everyone who has helped Sri Lanka in its difficult times and to open up dialogue and take steps to heal wounds in its journey back to a prosperous people and country. It is also a time to appreciate the contributions of the Sri Lankan Tamil Canadians to the social fabric of Canada and Sri Lanka. Therefore, we take the opportunity to thank you all during this auspicious time.



The High Commission and the Consulate Generals Office in Toronto will continue to have an open door policy welcoming all and in providing services to the public. May Thaipongal usher in prosperity that we all seek for ourselves and people of Canada and Sri Lanka.

Happy Thai Pongal!

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Recognizing the Critical role of Physician Assistants at SHN

Physician assistants (PA) play a critical role when it comes to healthcare, from reducing emergency room wait times to increasing access to primary care and improving the quality of seniors' care. PAs work alongside physicians and other health professionals, including nurses, to positively impact the patient experience at Scarborough Health Network (SHN) by helping to remove barriers to healthcare.

Aurthi Muthukumaran describes herself as a PA advocate, who is looking to shed light on the important and necessary work of PAs across SHN and the province.

SHN's Network News recently invited Aurthi to participate in the following Q-and-A, where she explains why PAs are so important as a profession, how to enter the field, and what she finds most rewarding about her role.

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



PAs in Canada, I became passionate about joining this trailblazing community close to home. I think part of joining the PA profession in Canada comes with the responsibility to advocate for the role, whether it's in the work you do or actively taking on initiatives such as this.

My passion for advocacy started when I opened an Instagram account (@aurthi.pa) the summer before starting PA school, to share my journey as a UofT PA student, showcasing the training we go through and—fast forward over three years—what life as a practicing physician assistant is like now.

Throughout the past few years, I've done interviews to talk about the profession and my training, as well as talks for high school and university programs about the profession. I am only two years into practice and I definitely look up to some of my senior PA colleagues as role models, who've been practicing for five to eight-plus years at SHN—definitely something I thought worth highlighting this year for National Physician Assistant Day!

Describe a day in the life of a PA.

A day in the life of a PA will vary depending on the speciality:

- When I was in the ED, I typically worked 10-hour shifts, with start times spanning from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; the shift work reflects the 24-hour coverage in the ED. We collaborate with the supervising physicians on shift, and a new doctor would come in every couple of hours throughout the day.

Our scope of practice mirrors that of our supervising physician, so we would do anything from seeing a patient and starting the visit with a history and physical; discussing the case with the doctors to order appropriate investigations and treatment options; calling specialists for consults or handover cases for admission; as well as assisting with procedures such as suturing a laceration, casting/splinting a broken bone, performing incision and drainage for abscess, and more! The awesome thing about working alongside the doctors is that there's opportunity to bounce ideas, learn around cases, and assist and learn new procedures.

- My day in the life as an orthopaedic surgery PA: the schedule is more consistent, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday; however, there are days I start early to assist in the operating room and stay late to help with consults. I usually start the day with pre-rounding and reviewing patient charts on our clinical information system, Epic, followed by attending bullet rounds with the team of allied health professionals.

I then see patients on the ward, manage them medically, consult other specialists as needed, attend family meetings, and then later on in the afternoon, I help with assessing and discharging same-day surgery patients, which include hip- and knee-replacement patients. I also assist in the fracture clinic as needed, and will also see consults in the ED when they come up, collaborating with the orthopaedic surgeon on-call.

Any words about working at SHN and your team members?

SHN is a great place to help new graduates grow with supportive staff members and the opportunity

to pursue your interests.

For example, I am currently enrolled in the health equity certificate program, which involves a series of sessions conducted by experts in different fields, discussing the impact of social determinants of health and exploring innovative approaches to address health disparities. These sessions have been eye-opening in highlighting the barriers to accessing care in the community I serve and have sparked an interest to pursue further work in this field.

All the staff members from physicians, to nurses and allied health professionals are supportive and great to work with in both the ED, surgical floor, and operating room.

Specifically, the PA group shares a sense of community, where the senior PAs are like mentors; even some of your supervising physicians become friends as you continue to work and grow alongside them. This is important and it helped us deal with the burnout from working long and tiring days in the ED during the pandemic.

Is there anything important you would like the community to know about your work?

Considering PAs are a growing profession in Canada, I think it's important to celebrate when a group of well-established PAs in a hospital network impact patient care. I hope showcasing them will help patients and other community members identify PAs as a vital aspect of their visit to the ED departments or the orthopaedic surgical services.

So, next time you visit an SHN hospital, make sure to keep an eye out for PAs. We're part of the SHN healthcare team and are excited to continue making a positive impact in your care!

STAYING SAFE THIS WINTER

With an increase in seasonal viruses, Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is managing significant patient volumes in all three emergency departments (ED).

All of SHN's hospitals are safe places for anyone who needs emergency care. The EDs remain open and the community has access to best-in-class inpatient beds, diagnostic tests, and ambulatory services.

However, SHN is encouraging community members to consider alternate options if their needs are not an emergency: In the community

- Family doctors, urgent care, walk-in, or after-hours clinics
- Health Connect Ontario (call toll-free to speak to a registered nurse at by dialing **811** or TTY: **1-866-797-0007**)
- For non-emergency medical care, visit the Central East Healthline website

At SHN

- Scarborough Virtual Urgent Care Clinic for adults and children over three months of age
- Kids After Hours Clinic for children that need direct access to a pediatrician to treat common medical issues – please note: our clinic has moved to online bookings
- Cold, Flu and COVID Clinic for medical assessments by a physician at our General Hospital, and a new dedicated kids' clinic at our Birchmount Hospital

SHN thanks all of its employees and medical staff, who are working together with a profound sense of service to others and each other, for enabling SHN to continue delivering exceptional healthcare to our community, and SHN thanks our patients for their patience and understanding during this challenging time.

How to stay healthy throughout cold and flu season

- **Get your flu & COVID booster vaccine** – Go to your family physician or local pharmacist, or visit www.scarbvacine.ca for COVID vaccine clinics in Scarborough.

- **Reduce the spread of germs** – Clean your hands often with soap or hand sanitizer, wear a face mask or covering, and maintain physical distancing if possible.

- **Stay active** – Bundle up, spend time outdoors, and take advantage of winter sports and activities.

- **Eat healthy** – Eat well-balanced meals to maintain good health and nutrition.

Have questions about vaccines and treatments for COVID-19 and mpox (monkeypox), childhood vaccines, flu vaccines, or preventative health counselling? Speak with a VaxFacts Clinic physician today: www.shn.ca/vax-facts

What led you to a career as a physician assistant?

I did my undergraduate studies in the science stream of kinesiology with a minor in medical sciences at Western University. I was always interested in medicine but wanted a career option with lateral mobility (in other words, the ability to switch specialities), shorter schooling and less costs endured financially. I came to hear about the PA profession when playing a varsity tennis match against a McMaster PA student, which then led me to apply for PA school.

I did my PA training at the University of Toronto and started at SHN's emergency department in January 2021. It was definitely intense to start working on the frontline during a pandemic but the team of PAs and supervising physicians were super supportive to help with the steep learning curve in the emergency medicine speciality.

In January 2022, I switched to orthopaedic surgery to help with maternity leave coverage. I have enjoyed working with the orthopaedic surgeons to manage patients on the surgical floor, as well as assisting in the OR. I still got to keep in touch with emergency medicine by seeing ortho consults and picking up ED shifts to help my PA colleagues with coverage. I will be returning back to the ED in the new year but will still be involved with ortho in some capacity to facilitate patient care between the two departments.

What excites or rewards you about being a PA?

I think what makes any job exciting and rewarding is thoroughly enjoying what you do. What excites me the most about being a PA is the ability to practice medicine and be a part of a supportive group of interprofessional healthcare team members to make a positive impact in patient care. PAs share the workload with their supervising physicians, reducing ED wait times and physician burnout; spend more time with patients for appropriate counselling and discharge instructions; and much more!

Personally, it's also rewarding to serve here in Scarborough because it allows me to speak and connect with so many Tamil patients, helping them navigate the healthcare system and providing me with a sense of giving back to the community I'm from.

Recently, you helped with how SHN and SHN Foundation recognized our PAs on social media (and internally) for National Physician Assistant Day in November. What drove you to go above and beyond in leading how we share your colleagues' incredible work?

As I did more research and shadowed practicing



RETIRED TEACHER FINDS NEW LEASE ON LIFE WHILE LIVING WITH KIDNEY DISEASE

“I’m alive,” 65-year-old teacher James Shortt (who goes by Jeff) told a crowd of nephrology healthcare professionals proudly.

After being diagnosed for polycystic kidney disease (PKD), he was treated through the regional nephrology program at Scarborough Health Network (SHN). The program serves more than 6,000 patients from across Scarborough and beyond every year, including Jeff from Thornhill, who is now enjoying his retirement—something he wasn’t sure would be possible 20 years ago.

Jeff was recently invited to speak at the launch of SHN’s Genetic Kidney Disease Clinic, which provides specialized services and interventions to treat patients whose kidney disease is caused by a hereditary condition. As someone who has seen first-hand the effects of autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease, an inherited form of PKD, he was able to share his own lived experience and highlight the importance of SHN opening this new clinic.

It all started in his late forties. Jeff was going in for regular health check-ups when he was diagnosed with PKD, even though he didn’t notice any symptoms at the time.

“Knowing my family history (my father lived with PKD), my doctor was looking for any abnormalities,” he remembered.

“I was scared when I received the diagnosis. I lived through what this disease did to my father back in the 1970s and 1980s; the last four or five years of my father’s life were not good. He slept about 16 hours a day because he didn’t have the energy to do anything else, and his last six months were spent in hospital. At the end, he was allowed to come home for Christmas and died on January 1, two months shy of his 63rd birthday.”

Admitting the diagnosis still scares him today, Jeff is encouraged by how far kidney disease treatments have come since his father’s illness. For example, the understanding that some forms of kidney disease are often hereditary means screening for patients begins earlier, which means treatment can begin earlier, too.

For this reason, Jeff’s nephrologist Dr. Janet Roscoe, truly a patient advocate, recommends regular check-ups for those who know they have a family history of the disease.



Jeff Shortt was invited to speak at the launch of SHN’s Genetic Kidney Clinic

“We want to try to intervene early so we can help these people have a better life for themselves; help the kidneys last longer so patients aren’t on dialysis in their formative years, or their early career and when bringing up their children,” said Dr. Roscoe.

Since his diagnosis, Jeff has taken an active role in his healthcare journey, from trying to learn and understand his blood readings, to changing his lifestyle, which include dietary considerations such as caffeine and potassium intake.

Even still, Jeff has made some significant life decisions because of his understandable concerns of having the disease, including not marrying or having children.

“If we could intervene even earlier and make a person feel confident they would have a long life and not leave their kids at an early age, that is the whole goal in medical care,” remarked Dr. Roscoe.

“We aim to treat and relieve a burden of symptoms and to help that patient have a joyful and fulfilling life.”

For 25 years, SHN’s regional nephrology program has been shaping the future of care. As the largest in Ontario, the program continues to expand to better serve patients—most recently with the introduction of the Genetic Kidney Disease Clinic, made possible with the support of Otsuka Pharmaceuticals. As part of SHN’s larger Multi-Care Kidney Clinic, genetic kidney disease patients may also receive counselling, further treatments to slow progression of their CKD, as well as testing or treatments needed to manage their conditions.

In addition, SHN aims to raise awareness about kidney disease, as well as promote research and advocate for patients and their families. Jeff is one of those patients and today, he is thriving.

“When I say that I’m alive it means I am enjoying retirement, I’m two months past my 65th birthday and I am teaching pottery, curling, and enjoying many other hobbies, like using my senior’s discount,” he laughed.

For more information about kidney disease and treatment, visit shn.ca/nephrology.

FOUR HOSPITALS COMING TOGETHER TO HELP ADDRESS CRITICAL CARE NURSING SHORTAGES

Four GTA hospitals are combining recruitment efforts to create a special team of critical care nurses who can be deployed to help fill staffing gaps, and provide additional patient care capacity.

North York General Hospital, Michael Garron Hospital, Scarborough Health Network (SHN), and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, received support from the Ministry of Health to launch the pilot project, which will recruit and orient nurses to work across the critical care units of the four partner hospitals.

“Nursing vacancies continue to be one of our greatest challenges across the system and in critical care, in particular, where vacancies continue to be high,” said Susan Woollard, VP, Clinical Services, Quality and Long-Term Care & Chief Nursing Executive, North York General Hospital. “Critical care is one of the safety-nets of our health system and we cannot afford to have this area short staffed. The specialized critical care team across our four hospitals will be one of many solutions we’re implementing to ensure patients have access to life-saving care during this extraordinary time.”

Each hospital will recruit five nurses for the team, for a total of 20, who will receive training and orientation to the critical care units across the four organizations. Staffing levels on the

units are monitored daily and when a need arises, members of the team can be assigned to work at whichever hospital needs help.

“We are pleased to collaborate with our fellow partner hospitals who share a one-team vision and approach to caring for patients and their loved ones during their greatest time of need,” said Kevin Edmonson, Director of Michael Garron Hospital’s (MGH) Critical Care and Emergency Departments. “As we navigate increasing pressures and demands on Ontario’s healthcare system, we recognize that it takes the collective efforts of all our inter-professional teams and health system partners to care for our communities and each other. We look forward to the opportunity to expand our exceptional critical care team together with our partners.”

When the nurses are not needed in other hospitals, they will work as a member of the critical care teams in their home institution, where they were recruited initially.

“This is a tremendous opportunity for nurses to get a wide range of experience working with other teams and hospitals,” said Ru Taggar, EVP and Chief Nursing and Health Professions Executive, Sunnybrook. “An important part of the program is the hands-on mentoring and career coaching that will be provided for every member of the team. There is also an emphasis on wellness for the



team that ensures there’s not only a focus on skill development but also, the emotional well-being of each nurse is a key element of success.”

“Our patients are acutely ill. Proper staffing levels ensure we can provide a level of care for patient conditions that can change rapidly – in a matter of minutes, in most cases,” said Sam Michael, a frontline nurse at SHN’s Centenary ICU. “The complexity of the patient’s condition also must be considered when determining appropriate staffing levels and how impactful it can be when even one team member is missing. The ICU depends on a full team environment for exceptional, life-saving care.”

Recruitment for the team began in November and interested applicants should refer to the Human Resources department of the participating hospitals. The pilot will run for a period of two years and it is hoped this model could be replicated for other professions.



SPECIAL FEATURE

Right Attitudes for Righteous LIVING

By: J A Rajah

The Beatitudes are the guidelines given by Jesus Christ to lead a righteous life. He expressed these ideas during his sermon on the mountain which proved to be magnetic and energizing. His charismatic expressions and powerful energetic words reached the very hearts and souls of the listeners, igniting the minds of his disciples, followers and people in general. At the same time, their words and thoughts provoked the religious authorities who felt that he was trying to undermine their traditional ways of worship and callous hypocrisy. They thought of him as a revolutionary trying to upset the ancestral, cultural and long-held cultural values. His teachings appeared to nullify and break the laws of Moses. Jesus was shaping the minds of people to seek genuine justice and happiness. His disciples called him the great master or Rabbi. Love, faith, prayer, giving, fasting, healing and more-all part of Jesus's sound spiritual and practical way of living. These ideas are found in Matthews, Chapters 5-7. He preached and presented the image of God as a loving father. To him, God was a living presence, now active in the world in spite of the violence and in harmonizing conditions. Jesus showed his people have to live in the midst of the subjugation and oppression of Roman rule.

A. The Philosophy of Love.

Jesus knew every human weakness and he was able to evolve a philosophy of love that catered or successfully blotted each and every human failure. The Beatitudes are the ideas that enunciate his philosophy of love. Those who have the spirit of humility were easily able to humble themselves. Those who humble themselves were able to believe in the power of God and are able to admit the power of God to change them. Humility brings openness and with peace of mind enables us to do the will of God. Mourning is declared as a blessing because if we mourn our sinful nature, we will be able to renew ourselves and follow our God in paths of righteousness. Mourning implies for the people in our lives, and we will be comforted by the grace of God. A person who is meek will have self-control. We are encouraged to be meek and submissive to the will of God though it is difficult and tiresome. Such meekness will bring peace and tranquility in this world and the next. A perpetual approval



for justice and virtue will guide us in the attainment of that desire-a development and reformation to righteousness. Mercy is the benevolent nature of God and the righteousness towards those who suffer. Love, empathy and mercy towards a family member or neighbor will bring peace to our relationship. To be pure in heart means to cleave from selfish purposes and self-seeking nature. Jesus as the ultimate example of such character as he sacrificed his own life for the redemption and salvation of mankind.

B. The Main Concepts of the Beatitudes and their Effects on Human Lives:

Peace means not only to manifest peaceful living but also willing to share peace and friendship with others to cultivate peace between God and man. However, we cannot give others what we do not possess and must strive to active peace within ourselves. Jesus said, many times that those who follow him will be persecuted. The importance of showing willingness to suffer for Christ is that even if we are wrongfully persecuted for belief or devotion to God, we shall be blessed eternally in the kingdom of God.

C. Radical Ideas that changed the World.

The ideas propagated by Jesus aimed at all the prized dispositions and virtues and their worldview. These are laser-guided

bombs on the culture that Jesus was preaching to. Jesus went against tradition and spoke for the good of the 'broken people'. He said that they are the ones who will inherit the kingdom of God. The people realized that they are poor in spirit. Jesus clearly proclaimed the righteousness of the broken mind exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, they will not enter the kingdom of God. He defined what is Godly devotion and what man truly needs. He was put to death on the cross by the vested interests of those days for challenging the traditional laws and lifestyle of those times. He was a revolutionary in every sense of the term. In summary, the inner happiness spoken through the beatitudes is God's gift of blessing granted to those who chose to be his disciples. The blessing is the result of the realization of a person's spiritual poverty and the acknowledgement of one's total dependence on God. When we apply the beatitudes or beautiful attitudes in our lives we will be praying for others before ourselves and making God a part of our everyday life through devotions, uplifting entertainment, attending church and giving back to the community. Being meek means never standing up for yourself or letting people abuse you. The Beatitudes are the superlative teachings of Jesus. They are a radically bold statement of Jesus's intent to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth, which will bring peace and freedom for all who dare to follow him. Beatitudes or the beautiful attitudes give a succinct statement of the kingdom of God- a world of peace and harmony.



AVIATION AND THE ROLE OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SERVICES

By: Kane Siva

Air traffic control (ATC) is a Yeoman service facilitated by air traffic controllers who are mainly on ground. They direct the aircraft through a section of airspace which is controlled. The foremost function of an ATC is to prevent collisions, provide efficient flow of air traffic, provide information to the pilots to have a safe flight at all times. We never realize that millions of square kilometers of air space are monitored from a small glass Dome, Cab, or Circle box, by dedicated personnel and is called control towers,

Air Traffic Control

Air Traffic Control Begins

At right is Archie W. League, usually regarded as the first air traffic controller. The 1929 photo shows him dressed for cold weather at St. Louis, where the airport operator employed him to prevent collisions between



required services from other entities but the one that plays a major role is the service of the ATC. In the good old days, there was no worry about aircraft collisions, or air misses but was to get from point A to B. The most memorable days in aviation evolved in this era. Pilots used landmarks, outline of the country, oceans, small islands, clear skies, stars and the sun as navigation aids. In the early 1920s when there was an increase in air travel mainly for mail services. Postal route planes used bonfires as navigational aids to do their services and were quite successful with their ingenuity. The mail service's success opened the doors for the first "Airways or Air routes" for modern aviation. The people helped the planes by waving flags of different colours to give instructions to pilots. The first rules of Air Traffic Control were formalized in 1926 by the "Air Commerce Act" legislation and thus ATC was born legally. Records Indicate late ARCHIE. W. LEAGUE is usually referred to as the first Air Traffic Controller. In 1929,

employed him to prevent collisions between aircraft. His communication tools were simple: a red flag for "hold" and a checkered one for "go."



Above, League is shown on duty in his summer office. Note the rolled-up flags in the wheelbarrow, and the dangling lunch box. His other equipment included a folding chair, drinking water, and a pad for taking notes. (National Archives photo)

League joined the Federal service in 1937. He eventually became FAA's Air Traffic Service director and retired as an Assistant Administrator in 1973.

Archie was employed by the airport operator at St. Louis to prevent collision between aircrafts on the ground. He used the "First and Foremost" tools of Navigation to perfect his duties. "A red flag to Hold, and A Chequered flag to Go". His other accessories were a folding chair, notepad, wheelbarrow, umbrella, and bottle of drinking water. Archie can be easily called The God Father of ATC Profession. Archie joined the FAA in 1936 as a federal government employee and retired as its assistant director in 1973 after a distinguished career. FAA honors his services with an annual "Archie Air Safety Award". Some say, New Jersey's William Whitey Conrad was the First Air Traffic Controller. 1930 saw the birth of Rotating Beacon lights and Radios to aid communication with the pilots. Cleveland airport became the first to have a Control Tower, and as aviation



Mr. Athula Dissanayaka
Former ATC controller SL

evolved so too ATC. WW2 made the British, develop Radar which aided them to win the war. US airports increased the usage of Radar from 1950. The Air traffic control services is much more complex, and strenuous. At least roughly about less than 1000 aircrafts are in the US airspace



ATC - small aircraft control tower | Airport design, Airp...

at any given time and is a big stress on the ATC. US airspace is divided into 21 zones and each into sectors. The divisions, within 50mile radius is called Terminal Radar Approach Control. FAA manages the ATC in these air space divisions. Air traffic Control System Command Center, oversees all ATC. Air Route Traffic Control Centers manage air traffic within Centers. Air Traffic Control Towers handle all Take off, landings, and ground control traffic at the airports. Flight Service System facilitates information on weather, route Terrain Flight plan for private pilots.

In Canada, NAV Canada, manages the ATC which covers 18million square Kilometres of Canadian and oceanic airspace. They direct flights from a Control tower, Area Control centers or from Radar control, 24 hours, 7 days throughout the year guiding all types of aircrafts from single engine to the largest planes. No aircraft can move from an airport without the permission of the ATC or even to start up the engines they must request permission from ATC and cannot fly from point A to B without filing an ATC flight plan. Air traffic controllers ensure aircraft maintain vertical, lateral separation while following strict protocols. First time I saw an ATC tower was in 1956/57 when our Jaffna Central College Primary School was taken on a trip to the Palaly airport by our late teacher Mrs Richards. I was privileged in 1972, third day after joining Air Ceylon flight operations and was taken to the Control tower at Katunayaka airport by our senior flight operations officer PHS. Ajantha to familiarise myself with Air Traffic Control Services since we had to file ATC clearance for the aircraft to proceed on flights. I cannot forget this day. Year 1949 saw the birth of ATC in Sri Lanka. Late S. Sarapanapawan was our first Air Traffic Controller and B.D.M. Karunaratna was the

second, many followed. I had the pleasure of working with them during my Career at Air Ceylon and later at Condor. Late Capt. Raju, De Saram, Anton Rodrigo, Piyasena, Pulleperuma, Nada, and the living legends Athula Dissanayaka, Suraweera, Ramachandra, Mahesh de Silva, and Capt. Senthorsevan all in Sri Lanka & Suby in Melbourne. Ratmalana airport control tower became the Area Control. The Katunayaka ATC was established in 1960 and this became our Approach Control. In 1974, Katunayaka got the Radar Control thanks to "Non-Aligned Conference", since I remember working at that time with my colleague Capt. GAF. Our first Radar Controller was, late John De Saram, Anton Rodrigo, and Ramachandra. This was the first time I watched the working of Radar control system and can't still forget the round radar screen with the blip moving around. Me, my colleague GAF, & Vetha, when we have no flights to monitor most



of our time was spent at the Katunayaka Control Towers in the good old days. The mammoth role played by the air traffic controllers and their colleagues from Metrological office is unbelievable and we never realize their dedicated service to keep us safe while we fly, land, and reach our homes. Their services are multifaceted and challenging. I remember in the US and other busy airports of the world the



controllers wanted their working hours reduced from long hours to 6 hours because of the Stress. The real challenge for Air traffic controllers is the weather. Weather patterns are unfathomable and is erratic whatever the forecast may be, it can change any time.

We Sincerely Thank all these unsung heroes on the ground who keep watching us without blinking their eye from the time we are airborne and till we land safely at our destination. The world of aviation salutes the Air traffic controllers by declaring October 20th as the "International Day of Air Traffic Controllers"

Bravo Guys!

Mucho Gracious, Bohoma Isthuthi, Nantri, Merci Boku, and Thank you very much for all the dedicated Ladies and Gentleman Air traffic controllers.

K.N. Sivagnanasunderam (Blue)
Former Flight Operations Officer,
Air Ceylon Ltd,
Kanesiva6@gmail.com



Enjoy this inspiring reminder of how simple it is to accept the chance of this lifetime.

Incredible Opportunity



Collectively, as human beings on the face of this earth, appreciating what you have is more important than appreciating what you don't have.

The truth is, And what I have to say is, "Why do you appreciate those things that you don't have, rather than appreciate those things that you do have?"

All those things that you don't have, you think about them. "Oh, I wish I could have this. I wish I could have this. I wish I could have this." And what has this bad habit eventually done to us as mankind, as human beings? We no longer appreciate the planet we have.

This is a unique place! Trillions and trillions and trillions of trees live here. When I first saw the pictures of Mars, I was just as intrigued as anyone else. But then I realized, not one single tree. Nowhere to be found. I, all of a sudden, became very proud of my earth, my earth that I live on. Because it is magnificent.

Mars may be intriguing; earth is beautiful. But we have lost the appreciation for where we are.

Appreciating what you have is more important than appreciating what you don't have." - Prem Rawat

This blue marble is unlike anything out there, and what do we sit there and think about? "Well, are we alone?"

Seven-point-nine billion people on the face of this earth and you get lonely? You have been given an incredible opportunity. To be alive, not on Mars, but on the face of this most magnificent planet. And if all those gifts were not enough, there is another gift that you have been given, and it is the gift of peace.

And here's the killer. And all you have to do is want it. Wow. All you have to do is want it. You don't have to go create stars. You don't have to create planets; you don't have to create rivers; you don't have to create lakes; you don't have to lay an egg. All you have to do ... is say "yeah," acknowledge the need you have for peace. It's all it takes.

If You Want to Win

A clear and simple way to win in this life is by turning inside.

If you can in your life embrace that which is good, then that's all you need to do. You don't need to go chase the wrongness and say get out of here, you don't need to do that.

Everybody gets caught up in "This is wrong, and this is wrong, and this is wrong."

And of course, things are always going to be wrong. Always.

You cannot destroy wrongness. That would be wrong.

It's always there.

And that's not the point. The point is, so is that which is good. And if you can in your life embrace that which is good, then that's all you need to do.

You don't need to go chase the wrongness to say "Get out of here." You don't need to do that.

A lot of people think, "Oh yeah, I have to remove all the darkness in my life, all the things that are wrong in my life." You can't do it. It's not possible. It's not physically possible. You can't push it out.

You look at people, and what do they get affected... What do you get affected by? Most trivial thing; somebody said something bad about you so you get affected by it. Don't you? "Oh, how can he say that!"

So have you been affected? No. But do you feel affected? Yes.

And how long does that game go on? It goes on forever. Forever.

How do you win? How do you win? How do you teach somebody to win in this world? Because the winning is losing in this world. And if you want to win, you have to turn inside. That's the only way. You can't go anywhere else. You've got to turn inside.

Everyday to live this life consciously, to be real.

- Prem Rawat

www.premrawat.com

www.timelesstoday.com



SPECIAL FEATURE

BLINDFOLDED THE LOVERS' EYES



By: Kumar Punithavel

A inkurunuru which literally means five hundred short ones. This anthology of poems belongs to the Sangam era which is 600 BC to 200AD. There are eight anthologies collectively called Ettuthokai. This is the third of them. The Tamilian landscape was divided into five different terrains. The five hundred songs have been divided equally, hundred each for each terrain. In this study we will look into poem number 293 which falls into Kurinji landscape, which is the hilly terrain. This particular poem was composed by a Sangam poet Kapilar.

Kapilar was a great Tamil poet who has contributed about 206 poems in Sangam literature. Kapilar also authored Inna Narpathu, a didactic work of the Sangam literature, comprising of forty verses in Venpa meter (Quatrain). He was a contemporary of Karikala Cholan and King Paari a great philanthropist. Karikala Cholan is known for conquest on many countries, and during his reign, he unified the three kingdoms of Chola, Chera and Pandya kingdoms as one country. Further he is very famed in history for building of great anicut across Kaveri River.

Though a king of a small kingdom, the benevolence of King Vel Paari too is legendary. His fame as a kind monarch, earned him many powerful envious kings as enemies. He was so kind hearted, it is told that he had abended his chariot for a (Mullai) Jasmine vine to lean on.

In this poem Ainkurunooru # 293, the bard has composed the verse as if the hero expressing his thought. It is an accepted form of having a feigned quarrel between the lovers, which will make the union of lovers more pleasurable. The famed Thirukkural which is a book of ethics, too as its last couplet refers to such a feigned quarrel between lovers;

*A 'feigned aversion' coy to pleasure gives a zest;
The pleasure's crowned when breast is clasped to
breast.* 1330

ஊடுதல் காமத்திற் கின்பம் அதற்கின்பம்
கூடி முயங்கப் பெறின்

In this episode the hero was tracking the foot prints of a deer, to hunt. He had come to the edge of an over grown lands of the hilly terrain and reached the farm land which is called the Marutha terrain. His dear lover who was waiting sentry to chase away the birds away from the field which was ready for harvest. The lover seeing him walking in the edge of the field, stealthily goes behind our hero and covers the hero's eyes. The hero must have been more like Sherlock Holms, for he does some forensic deduction. He starts mentioning his observations about the fragrance of the hands that covered his eyes and says it smells like flame-lily, a flora common in Tamil region of mountainous slopes.

Like the fragrance of flame-lily of mountain slopes
சிலம்பு கமழ் காந்தள் நறுங்குலை அன்ன

His eyes still covered by his lovers' hand, our hero goes on to continue his deduction and describes her hands. He says they were gorgeous hands that which has closed his eyes.

With your gorgeous palms you covered my eyes
நலம் பெறு கையின், என் கண் புதைத்தோயே,

The scent not only alerts our hero who it was who covered his eyes, but also reminds him how coyly she joined him on the bed the previous night hugging him with the long bamboolike smooth arms. Smell has a very strong impact in one's mind. Even after decades if a man goes back to his childhood house, the familiar smell of the place will bring him nostalgic memories of the past. Here too our hero is reminded of the good time he has had with the lover the previous night on the mat where she was gorgeously grand like a peacock. He goes on to describe the hands that hugged

him the previous night to be smooth and strong like bamboo, the shoulders. He continues with his deductions as follows;

*Coyly joined me on the mat, grand like a
Peacock with bamboolike slender shoulders,*
பாயல் இந்துணை ஆகிய பணைத்தோள்
தோகை மாட்சிய மடந்தை,

He goes on to challenge her asking who else will be in his mind other than her? In the last line of the poem, he ends with a question asking who else she thought it could be other than his beloved? Here is the last line of Kurunthokai #293 by Bard Kabilar;

Other than you who else it could be in my heart?
நீ அலது உளரோ என் நெஞ்சு அமர்ந்தோரே?

Let us look at the whole poem together:

Like the fragrance of glory-lily of mountain slopes
With your beautiful palms you covered my eyes
Coyly joined me on the mat, grand like a
Peacock with bamboolike slender arms,
Other than you who else it could be in my heart?
Kurunthokai #293 by Bard Kabilar;

ஐங்குறுநூறு 293, கபிலர், குறிஞ்சித் திணை - தலைவன் தலைவியிடம் சொன்னது சிலம்பு கமழ் காந்தள் நறுங்குலை அன்ன நலம் பெறு கையின், என் கண் புதைத்தோயே, பாயல் இந்துணை ஆகிய பணைத்தோள் தோகை மாட்சிய மடந்தை, நீ அலது உளரோ என் நெஞ்சு அமர்ந்தோரே?

In five lines the poet Kabilar has vividly described the rendezvous of the lovers which had happened two thousand years ago, made immortal by his lovely poem. No wonder it is told word is mightier than sword. There are many such ancient songs by poets in Tamil literature during the Sangam era for those who could spend the time to look into the Tamil Sangam literature.

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BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM



Ananth Kirubai » Thulasi Muttulingam
December 27, 2022 at 4:01 AM

Why herbs/ green leaves (we use them for good taste and smell like coriander or karapinchcha) are mentioned as 'fine herbs'?

3 comments

Like Comment Share

Thulasi Muttulingam
I'm not sure I've come across the term.
However writers frequently employ words to attract and convince readers: exotic, extraordinary, superfoods etc.
Might be an example of that.

Like Reply 1w

Thulasi Muttulingam
Or it might mean this. It's a French term apparently
<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fines%20herbes>

MERRIAM-WEBSTER.COM
Definition of FINES HERBES

Like Reply 1w

Ananth Kirubai
Thulasi acca! Thanks a lot got the explanation, still a small question mark is there



Christmas Themed Meeting
18th December 2022 @ American Corner
JAFFNA TOASTMASTERS CLUB

Jaffna Toastmasters Club
December 22, 2022 at 12:27 PM

Srikumar Selvarajah Kanagaratnam and 33 others

2 comments

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Srikumar Selvarajah Kanagaratnam
Congratulations

Like Reply 2w

Thulasi Muttulingam
December 27, 2022 at 7:52 AM

Sarvarakshani Thambalah is at The Gallery Cafe
December 27, 2022 at 6:29 AM · Colombo, Sri Lanka

Pineapple crown Christmas Tree 🍍 What a brilliant idea!

Like Comment Share

Laani Buddhibhashika
I went to Gallery Cafe last week and took a photograph of this but didn't notice this 🍍 Brilliant idea indeed

Like Reply 1w



Thulasi Muttulingam
December 26, 2022 at 1:28 PM

Good to be in a rural setting again.

In Karainagar currently, enjoying the beautiful of regaining Humans of Northern Sri Lanka. Stay tuned!

Like Comment Share

Dilani Senarathne
Pls keep us posted!

Don Karanaka
Beautiful photos!

Duspreet Fernando
Oh WOW! Do register! Always felt it was 'Living there in exile'... for a month to fall...!

Like Reply 1w

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அனைவருக்கும் இனிய
நத்தார், புதுவருட வாழ்த்துகளை
தொர்வித்து கொள்வதில் மகிழ்ச்சியடைகிறோம்.
உங்கள் அன்புக்கும், ஆதரவுக்கும்
எம் மனமார்ந்த நன்றி!**



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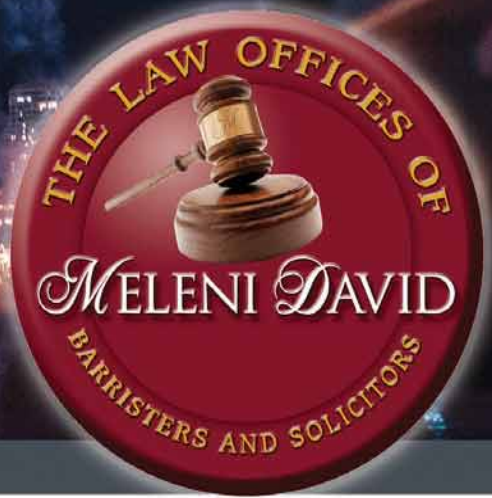
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அனுபவத்துடன் கூடிய அன்பான
சேவையை வழங்குகின்றோம்.

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A GOOD SAMARITAN

C. Kamalaharan



Walking along the street
 With unsteady tottering feet
 He manages to walk with the stick
 His bald head covered by the wick

Maintaining his body fit and slim
 He daily goes to the pool to swim
 Accompanied by his erstwhile peer
 On whom he depends without fear

His meal is always vegetarian
 In occupation he is a librarian
 At home a strict disciplinarian
 In public life a humanitarian

Taking medicine he is systematic
 His duty without fail is automatic
 Visiting the family doctor is periodic
 And the specialist doctor specific

Listening to carnatic music is a necessity
 Viewing tele dramas is an inevitability
 Going to a Tamil cinema is a probability
 Visiting the library is always productivity

In the evening as usual seated in the open
 He enjoys witty comments and jokes spoken
 By passers-by returning from their official work
 After performing official duty without shirk

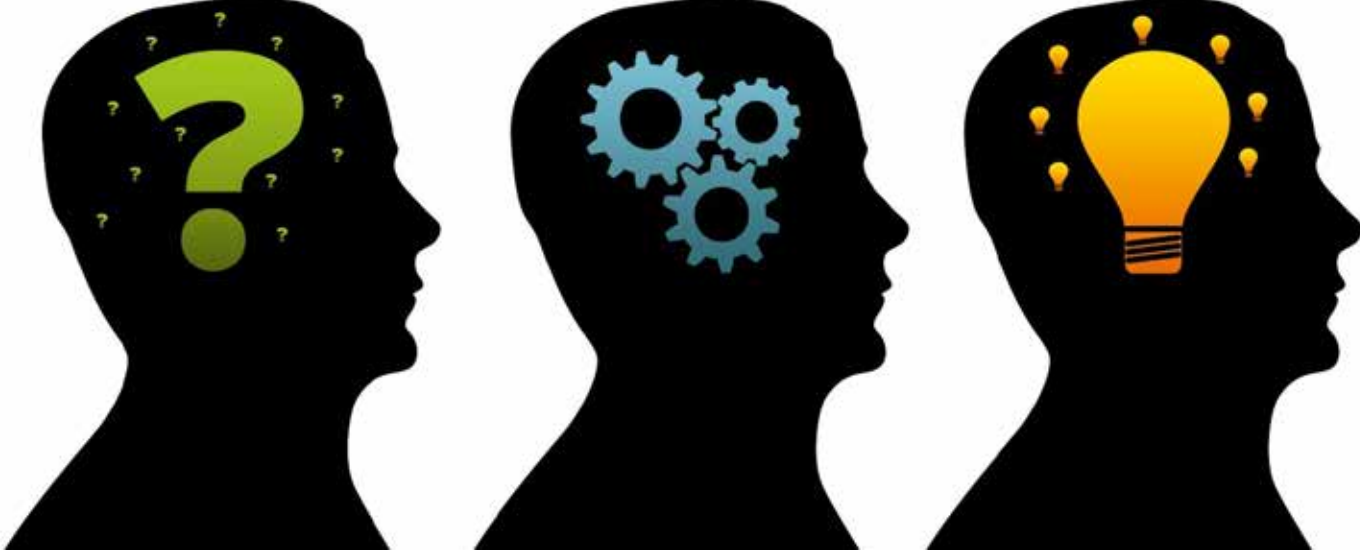
Later after enjoying a heavy shower
 He settles down under the bower
 To sip a glass full of strong foreign whisky
 Not at all worried about the serious risky

After a sumptuous vegetarian dinner
 In the prevailing coldest winter
 He settles down to continue his duty
 And goes to sleep in piety.



The Beauty of Learning

By: J A Rajah



*“Kunji alagum kodunthanak kodalakum,
Manjal alagum alakallsa- nenjaththu,
Nallamyam ennum naduvu nilamayal,
Kalvi alagae alagu”*

Beauty of locks of hair, beauty of garment's circling folds, beauty of saffron tint: these are not true beauty. Integrity of the soul that brings conscious peace is learnings's gift. Therein lies true beauty. In other words- Well-combed hair, well adorned dresses, and well put- on make-up do not bring real good looks for a person. Education that imparts and induces for a person to lead a righteous life is the excellent adornment that a person could hope for. Such education will guide them to traverse the middle path of flawless living.

Education will help a person in this world as well as in the future .You do not lose your knowledge and education by giving it or teaching others. It will remove all your worries and anxieties and make you fit to face all problems that face you successfully. An educated person will be honoured even if he is born in a lowly family. A person cannot be deprived of his education. No one can steal it from him. It will stay on and multiply and give him increasing ability and nobility of character. There are numerous books for a learned man to read and absorb knowledge. His life time may not be sufficient for him to read all the books. Like the swan that drinks only the milk even if it mixed with water, a learned man will be able to separate the good books from the worthless ones and make the best use of them. Education is thus the acquisition of the art of utilizing knowledge. Valluvar similarly stated that the ability to understand and apply what has been learnt it indispensable. The ability to understand and apply the acquired knowledge and experience becomes wisdom-which

is a formidable tool in one's arsenal to protect him against destruction. Like Plato, Valluvar said that wisdom is that which helps a person achieve good and useful things. Wisdom restraints the wayward mind and leads it from evil to good. Education is the ultimate tool that builds a beautiful frame of mind - essential to lead a beautiful and awesome life.


(Naaladiyar: 131-135)

தேவகுமாரன் தோன்றினார்,

பாரில் பாவம் அகல பதியான பெத்தலையில் - தேவகுமாரன் தோன்றினார்.

சரணம்: ஆவலாய் ஞானிகள் கூடிவரவே நாடி-
முவர் சந்நிதியில் முன்னணை நின்றிட - தேவகுமாரன் தோன்றினார்.

1. மாட்டுத்தொழுமத்தில் மாநிலத் அதிபன்,
காட்சிக் எளியவராய்க் காசினில் வந்தார்,
ஆட்சி செய்யவும் தேவ ராட்சியம் விட்டே - சாட்சியம்
சாட்சி யேசுவாம் சாந்த குமாரனாய் - தேவகுமாரன் தோன்றினார்.
2. விந்தைகள் புரிந்து அல்லல்கள் அறுத்து,
விண்ணக வாழ்வினை எம்மவர்க்கீந்து,
அழுபவர் துயர் நீக்க அவனியில் வந்துதித்தார்,
ஆண்டவர் எமக்கென்றும் அருள் பொழிந்திட இங்கு - தேவகுமாரன் தோன்றினார்.
3. மானிட வாழ்வினை மேம்படச் செய்து
மறுமையில் நாம் என்றும் நீடுழி வாழ,
எம்முடன் இருந்து எமையே உயர்த்திட
எங்குமே இன்பம் சுடர்விட்டு ஜொலித்திட - தேவகுமாரன்
4. நித்திய வாழ்வை களிப்புடன் வாழ்ந்து
தமையே தந்து தரணியை மீட்டு--
விண்ணுலக வாழ்வை நாமே அடைந்திட,
தன்னையே தந்து தரணியை மீட்டிட - தேவகுமாரன்
5. பாவங்கள் சாபங்கள் போக்கிட வந்தார்
பரிசுத்த பரனாய் புவியில் பிறந்து,
என்றென்றும் நாமவர் சீடராய் இலங்கிட,
மாமகன் இயேசுவின் திருவருள் பெருகிட - தேவகுமாரன் தோன்றினார்



By: J A Rajah



SPECIAL FEATURE



"Virakesari" newspaper staff members were recipients of Awards at a recently held event in Colombo. Picture shows the Award winners with Managing Director of "Virakesari" Kumar Nadesan standing in the centre. "Virakesari" is the premier Tamil Daily newspaper in Sri Lanka with over a million readership in print and online editions.

Sri Lanka's Media industry affected by the prevailing economic crisis

Sri Lanka's Media industry has been badly affected by the prevailing economic crisis as money spent on advertising decreased by around 70 percent while production costs were on an incessant rise.

Due to the power cuts during prime time telecasts, the number of commercials received by TV stations has decreased and in the cur-

rent economy, they have to bear high costs to produce programs.

Journalists representing newspapers pointed out that due to the increase in production costs including the shortage of paper, there has been a major setback in the publishing industry including newspapers. They also pointed out that because of this situation, the



pages of the newspapers had to be limited and the prices increased.

They further pointed out that due to the reduction of newspaper pages, there is no space for the news sent by provincial journalists and they have not even been able to make payments for published material. It was also revealed that it is difficult to even pay salaries to the permanent staff of some newspaper organizations. They also pointed out that in this situation newspaper printing has decreased by 60%-70%.

Thus, newspaper journalists pointed out that the circulation of newspapers among the people has been greatly reduced due to economic issues, non-publication of local news, etc. In addition to the economic crisis, it was also revealed that the newspapers and radio have to face a major challenge due to the current digital media trends including social media.

It was further expressed that the government should make a joint effort to reach one goal by all media organizations to prepare the people to face the current crisis. Attention was drawn here to the need to act in the same way that the media acted in times like the tsunami disaster, defeating terrorism and overcoming the covid crisis.

Paying attention to all these comments and suggestions, the committee chairman said that based on these facts, he is expected to include proposals related to the media sector in the next report and submit them to the National Council. Journalists representing mainstream media organizations such as television, radio and newspapers as well as web media and social media were invited to this meeting.

Vanni Aid Canada facilitates low-cost housing units in North & East of Sri Lanka

Jan 1, 2023: Toronto, ON – Vanni Aid Canada says it is pleased to announce that it will be coordinating the donation of houses to needy citizens in the North-East of Sri Lanka. This effort is part of Vanni Aid Canada's ongoing commitment to improving the lives of those in need in the war-affected areas of Sri Lanka.

The houses, which were generously donated by individuals and families in Canada, will be given to those who lost their homes due to natural disasters or conflict. The recipients will be selected based on need, with priority given to those who are most vulnerable.

The house in the picture here was recently funded and handed over to a recipient in Paranthan, Northern Sri Lanka by Tamil Church of the Living Saviour in Toronto, Canada.

According to Vanni Aid Canada spokesperson, S.Senthivel, this ongoing project is being facilitated in partnership with Lions Club of Modera/Mattakkuliyaya. It was coordinated by retired Major General, Ravi Ratnasingham, with construction completed by troops of 551 Infantry Brigade.

"We are so grateful to be able to give back to the community in this way," said Vanni Aid Canada spokesperson, S.Senthivel. Housing is a basic necessity, and we are thrilled to be able to provide a safe and secure place for these families to call home."

The house donations will be distributed in partnership with local

organizations on the ground in Sri Lanka. These organizations will also provide support and assistance to the families as they transition into their new homes.

Vanni Aid Canada is a registered charity based in Toronto, with a mission to improve the lives of those in need through direct aid and support. The organization has previously provided disaster relief, education and medical support to communities in the North & East of Sri Lanka.

For each housing unit, Canadians can donate \$8,000 in remembrance of their loved ones and build a house at current prices and donate it to a needy recipient.

For more information on how to participate, please contact S. Senthivel at 416-707-1236 or Yogi Rajasingam at 416-659-1781.





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SWEDISH SCIENTIST AWARDED NOBEL PRIZE IN MEDICINE

The 2022 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for work on human evolution

The 2022 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded to Svante Pääbo “for his discoveries concerning the genomes of extinct hominins and human evolution.” Svante Pääbo pioneered the study of ancient DNA from archaeological samples

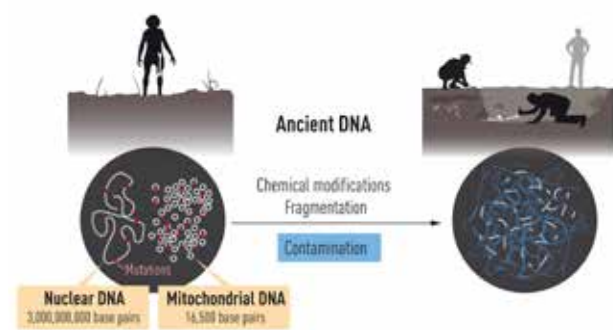


and extinct species, including hominins. His work changed how we understand human evolution and has implications for modern-day human physiology. The prize, arguably among the most prestigious in the scientific world, is awarded by the Nobel Assembly of Sweden’s Karolinska Institute and is worth 10 million Swedish crowns (\$900,357).

His key achievements include sequencing an entire Neanderthal genome to reveal the link between extinct people and modern humans. He also brought to light the existence of a previously unknown human species, the Denisovans, from a 40,000-year-old fragment of a finger bone discovered in Siberia. Still, it typically takes many years for any given research to be honored, with the committees charged with picking the winners looking to determine its full value with some certainty amongst what is always a packed field of contenders. Svante Pääbo’s most cited paper in the Web of Science was published in 1989, with 4,077 citations, said David Pendlebury, from UK-based scientific data analytics provider Clarivate. “Only some 2,000 papers out of 55 million published since 1970 have been cited dis many times.” The following are some of the Key Highlights of Svante Paabo’s Research.

Human Evolution:

Homo sapiens first appeared in Africa approximately 300,000 years ago, while closest known relatives, Neanderthals, developed outside Africa and populated Europe and Western Asia from around 400,000 years until 30,000 years ago, at which point they went extinct.



Genome Sequencing of Neanderthals:

After sequencing Neanderthals’ genes, it is found that archaic gene sequences from our extinct relatives influence the physiology of present-day humans. The Denisovan version of the gene EPAS1 confers an advantage for survival at high altitudes

and is common among present-day Tibetans. Other examples are Neanderthal genes that affect our immune response to different infections. Discovery of Denisova: In 2008, a 40,000-year-old fragment from a finger bone was discovered in the Denisova cave in the southern part of Siberia. The DNA Sequencing of this bone led to the discovery of a previously unknown hominin, which was given the name Denisova.

Coexistence of Different Human Species:



The ancestors of modern humans, Neanderthals, and Denisovans co-existed for about 20,000 years, during which they not only interacted with each other but also inter-bred. In modern humans of European or Asian descent, approximately 1-4% of the genome originates from the Neanderthals. Further, gene flow also occurred between Denisova and Homo sapiens. This relationship was first seen in populations in Melanesia and other parts of Southeast Asia, where individuals carry up to 6% Denisova DNA.

Novel Methodology:

It is difficult to amplify and sequence ancient DNA because it is highly fragmented and contaminated by microbes like fungi and bacteria. Over time, DNA tends to degrade and become chemically modified. Therefore, Pääbo decided to study mitochondrial DNA from Neanderthals. Mitochondria, popularly called the cell’s powerhouse, is an organelle inside the cell with its DNA. Although the mitochondrial genome is small and only contains a fraction of genetic information in the cell, it is present in thousands of copies. This increases the chance of its successful sequencing.



Significance:

The conceptual breakthrough is of paramount importance in understanding human evolution. Dr. Pääbo’s research has resulted in the rise of a new scientific discipline called Paleogenomics, which is the study and analysis of genes of ancient or extinct organisms.

Who were Neanderthals?

Neanderthals, the closest relatives of the present-



day human species, lived in Europe and West Asia – as far as southern Siberia and the Middle East – before disappearing around 30,000 years ago.

Impossible Achievement

Homo sapiens are known to have first appeared in Africa around 300,000 years ago, while our closest known relatives, Neanderthals, developed outside Africa and populated Europe and Western Asia from about 400,000 to 30,000 years ago when they went extinct. That means that about 70,000 years ago, groups of Homo sapiens and Neanderthals coexisted in large parts of Eurasia for tens of thousands of years. To study the relationship between present-day humans and extinct Neanderthals, DNA needed to be sequenced from archaic specimens with only trace amounts of DNA left after thousands of years.

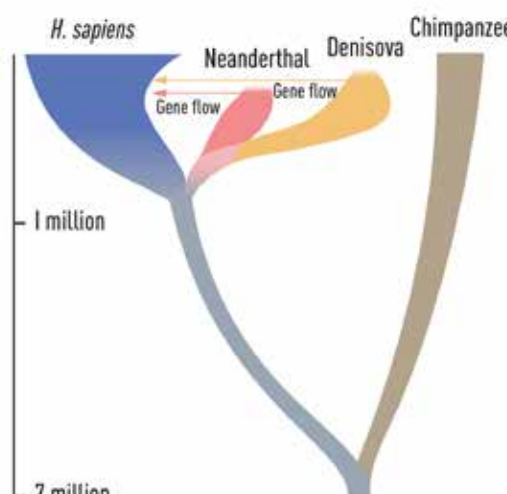
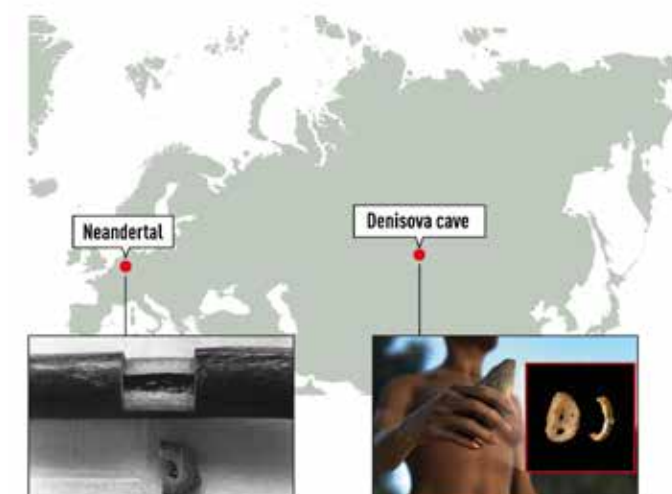
In 1990, Paabo managed to sequence a bit of mitochondrial DNA from a 40,000-year-old piece of bone. “For the first time, we had access to a sequence from an extinct relative,” the Nobel jury said. Comparisons with contemporary humans and chimpanzees showed that Neanderthals were genetically distinct. Paabo then “accomplished the seemingly impossible,” the Nobel committee said, publishing the first Neanderthal genome sequence in 2010. It showed that the most recent common ancestor of Neanderthals and Homo sapiens lived around 800,000 years ago.

Paabo and his team showed that DNA sequences from Neanderthals were more similar to those from contemporary humans originating from Europe or Asia than those from Africa. “This means that Neanderthals and Homo sapiens interbred during their millennia of coexistence,” the Nobel jury said. In modern-day humans of European or Asian descent, around 1% to 4% of the genome originates from Neanderthals.

In 2008, Paabo and his team went on to sequence a 40,000-year-old bone fragment found in the Denisova cave in southern Siberia. It contained exceptionally well-preserved DNA. “The results caused a sensation: the DNA sequence was unique compared to all known sequences from Neanderthals and present-day humans.” Paabo had discovered a previously unknown hominin, which was given the name Denisova. Comparisons showed that gene flow had also occurred between Denisova and Homo sapiens. When Homo sapiens migrated out of Africa, at least two extinct hominin populations inhabited Eurasia: Neanderthals lived in western Eurasia, whereas Denisovans populated the eastern parts of the continent.

Svante Pääbo’s discoveries have unlocked new understandings of genetic relationships between modern humans and our ancient relatives. Pääbo’s groundbreaking research has led to many novel discoveries about our evolutionary history and what makes us “uniquely human.” Notably, he and his colleagues successfully sequenced the entire Neanderthal genome.

These findings led Pääbo to help establish Paleogenomics, a novel field of science based on reconstructing and analyzing ancient DNA from extinct specimens. Pääbo’s discoveries have provided good insights into how the gene flow from our ancient ancestors to modern-day humans influences physiological functions such as sleep cycles, immune responses to certain infections, and survival in high-altitude settings. Pääbo has previously published work in the Journal of Proteome Research, where he and his team analyzed differences in protein expression between humans and primates.



BUSINESS / FINANCE

Top 5 Tips for Starting a Business in a Foreign Country



By: **Muraly Srinarayanathas**

Starting a business is not easy, and if you are planning to start a business overseas, you have a lot more to do. It can be financially and emotionally rewarding if you prepare well for the move and set realistic expectations and goals. If you are still deciding where to start your business, check out this list of countries most suitable for setting up a business.

Apart from choosing a country with stable economic conditions and a suitable climate, you must consider many other factors to make your move smooth and fruitful. Keep reading to learn more.

Evaluate the Market

Every entrepreneur should be aware of the customer personas and the competition they might face when entering a foreign market. If there are companies that do something similar to what you do, learn what worked for them and their customers' reactions to products. Knowing your competitors' market performance will help you understand your own potential for growth.

Localize Your Idea and Expectations

Knowing about the local culture is essential for any entrepreneur starting a business. There can be diverse cultural behaviors, attitudes, and sensitivities that can affect your business. In some countries, religious customs may affect how a business is operated.

Try to find a mentor who can guide you in understanding the culture and local customers. If you don't know anyone, try using social media platforms like LinkedIn and check if any of your connections can refer you to someone in that country.

Learning the local language can also help you settle down quickly with your business and the people there. You can take the help of classes or apps and slowly try to get comfortable with the local language.

Check Local Regulations

Research the local laws concerning setting up a new company there. Check for the visa requirements that allow employment and business ownership. Learn about the regulatory processes like getting local licenses, registering a company, immigration

rules, financial regulation, taxation, and employment law.

If your business is into importing or exporting goods, you will need to check on regulations and associated costs. Checking with a local attorney experienced in international law would be a great asset when you kickstart your business.

Build a Network

Before moving, try to get in touch with people and businesses who can help you start. The network you will have in the new land can support you in many ways for the company and help build long-lasting relationships. Try to email noteworthy entrepreneurs in the area or use the power of social media to start a meaningful conversation.

Start with Freelancers

Hiring freelancers is a good idea when you are in the early stages of your business and have yet to build a customer base. Managing employees entails adhering to regulations concerning employee compensation, workplace conditions, and much more. Freelancers can help you with your work without the need for formal

employees in your office, and they can be paid by the hour or when the task is completed.

There is much more to starting a business in a foreign country, but you can succeed anywhere with proper planning and research. If you want more insights on such topics, you could start with my brilliant set of resources in the form of blogs, podcasts, and videos. You can also follow me on social media for the latest updates.

Muraly Srinarayanathas,
Executive Chairman of
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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.

Masala Chai



Masala chai is the perfect winter warming drink that both has health benefits and is very tasty. Sharing our original Tamilfood masala chai recipe that has always been a crowd pleaser.

Ingredients:

Serves 2

- ✓ 3 cardamom pods
- ✓ 2 cloves
- ✓ 1 inch of Ceylon cinnamon
- ✓ 4 black peppers
- ✓ 2 tsp of loose leaf black tea
- ✓ 2 cups water
- ✓ 1 cup whole milk

Method:

Gently pound all the whole spices and add them to a heavy based pan with the water, on a low heat, bring to a boil and add the loose leaf tea. Reduce the heat to a sim and add the milk to boil. Once the milk comes to boil strain and sweeten according to taste.

Try using these spices this month and hashtag #monsoonjournal on Instagram and send us your pics, comments and feedback. Spread the love (and our tips!)

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Appointments & Achievements - by Siva Sivapragasam

Darshan Sritharan appointed Director of CTCC

Darshan Sritharan has been appointed Director to the vacant Director position by the CTCC board. His career began at TD where he worked as Mobile Mortgage Specialist. He later held a similar role with CIBC. Darshan is now a mortgage agent with Dominion Lending Centres, and has often been recognized with awards for his dedication and performance



Wazeer "TJ" Jalal has assumed the role of Executive Vice President, Computek College

Wazeer "TJ" Jalal has assumed the role of Executive Vice President, Computek College, effective January 3, 2023. He is also cross-appointed as the inaugural Senior Vice President, International Education and Training, 369 Global.

TJ completed his B.Com. at Loyola College, M.Com. at the University of Madras in Tamil Nadu, India, and is admitted to the Executive MBA program at the Ivey Business School at Western University.



Kumaran Nadesan appointed Co-Founder and Deputy Chairman of 369 Global

Kumaran Nadesan has been appointed Co-Founder and Deputy Chairman of 369 Global, effective January 3, 2023.

Kumaran has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) in English and Psychology from the University of Toronto Scarborough and an Executive Certificate in Strategic Public Management from the Schulich School of Business - York University. Prior to joining 369 Global, Kumaran was an Ontario public servant for nearly 15 years holding senior roles at the Ministries of Government and Consumer Services, the Solicitor General, and the Attorney General.



Dinesh Weerakkody appointed as Chairman of the Board of Investment (BOI) Sri Lanka

Dinesh Weerakkody has been appointed as Chairman of the Board of Investment (BOI) by President Ranil Wickremesinghe.

Dinesh Weerakkody is a former Chairman of Hatton National Bank PLC and Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC. He is also a former Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce Sri Lanka and Vice Chairman of the Sri Lanka Institute of Directors. Other board members are Dr. Dushny Weerakoon, Ms. Chandani Wijewardena and Mr. Eraj de Silva.



Sandith Samarasinghe appointed Consul General of Sri Lanka to Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania

Sandith Samarasinghe Consul General of Sri Lanka to Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. He assumed duties at the Consulate in Melbourne.

Sandith's expertise is in the field of Communication, Radio, Television, and Digital Communication. He received his degree from the University of Canberra. He is an old boy of Trinity College, Kandy.





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“Monsoon Journal” has entered its 17th year of uninterrupted publication

“Monsoon Journal” is pleased to announce to its readers and advertisers that the newspaper has entered its 17th year of uninterrupted publication and reached a 100,000 readership with its print and online editions thanks to their support extended over the past years.

The quality editorial content supported through independent and

professional journalism of an experienced team of journalists helped us to achieve this remarkable readership.

Our editorial content over the seventeen years has always been backed by quality articles and contributions by journalists and writers well versed in the subjects they pen the articles.

The articles and contributions in our newspaper have always maintained

moral ethics in journalism combined with independent and thought - provoking content. The contents have strictly followed quality and excellence in journalism.

The above factors have helped us to reach high levels of readership among our community and welcomed by our advertisers from the business sector in the community to promote their

businesses.

While thanking our readers and advertisers for their generous support we also extend our greetings to our writers and contributors to the support they have extended for the newspaper.

Also, our sincere wishes for a prosperous 2023 to our team of regular writers.

Exemplary contributions in Journalism & Management of Media Organizations

Siva Sivapragasam

Siva Sivapragasam is a Media Professional who received his high school education at the prestigious Royal College, a premier educational institution in Sri Lanka. He later graduated from the University of Sri Lanka with an Economics Honours Degree.

His interest and passion for Journalism made him join Lake House, the largest Newspaper group in Sri Lanka. At Lake House he worked for the Daily News, the premier English Daily in Sri Lanka in the capacity of Finance Editor for the newspaper. He later joined the Virakesari Group of Newspapers and functioned as the Secretary and Marketing Manager for the Virakesari Group for more than 30 years.

Since his arrival in Canada, Mr. Sivapragasam has continued his Media work and was managing “Thamilar Mathiyil”,

the Tamil Business & Information Directory. He was also a Director of the Canadian Tamils’ Chamber of Commerce and handling Publishing work for the Chamber. He was functioning as the Editor of the Chamber’s annual Souvenir titled “Enterprise”.

The highlight of Siva’s journalistic contribution was the article on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi titled “The beginning of the Modi Era” and selected as Chapter one in the book “Modi’s Blueprint for India” published by Pentagon Press, New Delhi. He is currently the Executive Editor of “Monsoon Journal”. Mr. Sivapragasam possesses over 50 years of Media experience.



Exemplary contributions in Journalism



Thulasi Muttulingam

Exemplary contributions in Editorial Writing



Harrish Thirukumar

Exemplary contributions in Science Feature



Dr. Uthayan Thurairajah, PhD

Exemplary contributions in Editorial & Sports Feature



Tashvir Narine

Exemplary contributions in Editorial & Special Events



Krishni Narine

Exemplary contributions in Health and Wellness & Sports Feature



Dr. Shiyam Loganathan, MD

Exemplary contributions in Creative Design



Santosh Kumar Nair



Suren Rasadurai

Exemplary contributions in Web Development



Sam Daniel

Exemplary contributions in Culinary Arts Feature



Rajini Nathan



Niranjini Mandalia

Exemplary contributions in Feature Writing



Raymond Rajabalan



Chelvadurai Kamalaharan



Jesudason
J. Atputharajah



Kidambi Raj



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DR. VAITHILINGAM MAHALINGAM

A LEADER IN SRI LANKAN LIBRARY SCIENCE EDUCATION

By V. Vivekananthan in Tamil. Translated by V. Vaheesan
In Commemoration of the 1st Death Anniversary of Dr. Mahalingam



If you look at the history of library science education in Sri Lanka – then Ceylon – the late Dr. Vaithilingam Mahalingam would be clearly seen as a leader of it. He was born on July 8th of 1931 in the northern Malaysian city of Sungai Petani. He started his early education in the same city. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Vaithilingam, were from Urumpirai, Sri Lanka. Upon returning to Sri Lanka, Mahalingam continued his intermediate and higher education at Urumpirai Hindu College. He then went to Calcutta, India to continue his university education. After graduating, Mahalingam returned to Sri Lanka and started teaching at Hartley College in Point Pedro.

His interest in library science led him to pursue higher education in this field. In 1957, he went to McGill University in Quebec, Canada to pursue a master's degree in library science. With his master's degree in hand, he returned to Sri Lanka and joined the Ceylon Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research (CISIR) as a librarian.

In the meantime, librarians who had worked in the fields of science and technologies in Sri Lanka united to revitalize library science education in Sri Lanka. The Free Education Bill brought by then-Minister of Education Dr. C.W.W. Kannangara in 1944 was one of the primary impulses which encouraged the Dr. Mahalingam to revitalize library science in Sri Lanka. The Free Education Bill made free education possible for all in the nation from the grade one to university level. It increased attendance in schools. Schools also worked hard to excel in education. Good education required good libraries and good libraries needed well qualified librarians. It was during this time when nine librarians worked together to form the Ceylon Library Association in August of 1960. Included in that list of librarians were: Margaret Gooneratna, Ishvari Corea, Vaithilingam Mahalingam, Manil Silva, S. C. Block, and W. B. Dorakumbura.

When the library association was started there were 60 members. However, only nine were qualified librarians. S. C. Block, the librarian of Ceylon University of that time, was the first president of the Ceylon Library Association, while Mahalingam was the secretary. Mahalingam was also appointed to the newly created position of Library Education Officer. Therefore, Mahalingam became the first secretary and library education officer of the Ceylon Library Association.

Sri Lankan library science education was forwarded on two fronts. The first was a diploma level education of library science in the country's universities. The second was

part-time education for those who worked at the libraries. A comprehensive examination for library science students was carried out in 1961 under Mahalingam's leadership.

In 1957 CISIR carried out a year-long training regime in library science for the librarians from several sectors. That training was sponsored by Queens University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada under the Canada-Colombo Plan. Donald A. Redmond, the primary librarian of Queens University, supervised that training. Once Redmond returned to Canada, Mahalingam and his team took over the training activities. From continued training, librarians from public schools, teachers' training college, technical colleges, private schools, and special libraries all reaped the benefits. The technical facilities which were in the hands of CISIR also helped Mahalingam to further enhance library science education.

In 1960, with the support of the Education Department, Mahalingam held a library science seminar. With financial support from Asia Foundation, Mahalingam printed and distributed the Dewey Decimal Classification booklet to all those librarians who participated in this seminar. The Dewey Decimal Classification method allowed new books to be added to a library in their appropriate location based on subject.

To have more librarians and library assistance for public sector, school, college, and technical school libraries, Mahalingam developed a curriculum for training. His curriculum contained beginner, intermediate, and advanced level training. Passing of GCE O/L was set to be the entry requirement for the beginner level training. The first beginner level training in English language took place in Colombo in 1961 by the Ceylon Library Association. In 1963, the same training was carried out in Kandy and Jaffna in English. At the end of 1965, the Library Association had already trained and certified 75 librarians. In 1972, the beginner level training in Tamil language was carried out in Jaffna.

In 1965, Mahalingam was awarded a Fulbright scholarship and went to pursue his doctoral study in library science at Columbia University in New York. In 1968, after completing his doctoral studies, he then settled in Canada. The same year, in June, he became the Bracken Health Sciences library at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario as the Head Librarian. There he headed the Cataloguing Division and the Document Unit.

Later he also worked as the librarian for a year in the Law department. Soon all of the branches of Science Department libraries came under his management. Well loved and respected, Mahalingam was called "Maha" by his colleagues and his students. In 1972, Mahalingam was elected to be the Chairman of the Professional Librarians Association of Queens. After serving Queens University for 18 years, Mahalingam retired in 1986.

I had the chance to meet Mahalingam in person in the summer of 1984. He was the first Tamil person I met in Canada. He was a very simple person. He invited me with full enthusiasm and excitement. When I said I studied library science in the Tamil language in 1978, in Jaffna, he was very happy. Unfortunately, I lost contact with him after that.

After his retirement, he moved to India and immersed himself in spirituality. His faith in Sathya Sai Baba made him the librarian at Sri Sathya Sai Higher Education center. He served there for 20 years.

Though he returned to Canada in 2006, he continued to serve at the library of Sri Sathya Sai Baba center in Scarborough, Ontario in summer and then at Sri Sathya Sai Publication unit and Sri Sathya Sai University back in India during the winter. Once Covid-19 hit the world, he stopped traveling to India, but continued to support the India team over the phone, even at the age of 90.

Mahalingam passed away on January 27th of 2022 after accomplishing a remarkable service to Sri Lanka, Canada, and India. Even though his stint was short in Sri Lanka, his footprint in Sri Lanka's library science field is strong. Those who study library science in Sri Lanka or study the history of Sri Lankan library science cannot avoid spelling his name. Moreover, Queens University and Sri Sathya Sai University will also continue to regard his service to the growth of the field of library science.



When Snow Knocks on Your Door – Keep Your Driveway and Sidewalks Clear

City services | December 22, 2022

Winter may officially be only three months long, but snowfall and cold temperatures can last much longer. Here are some things to keep in mind when clearing snow from your property:

Shovel early and often

Shovel early and often to keep walkways clear and limit heavy snow build up. Shovelling periodically during a storm can make heavy snow or significant accumulation easier to clear. Prevent an icy stoop by shovelling snow off it right after a storm, before the snow has a chance to melt and turn into ice. Remember to clear sidewalks that are connected to pathways close to your residence.

Watch the temperature

Clear snow from your property before temperatures drop significantly to avoid shovelling icy build-up. Be mindful of wet surfaces where snow has melted in milder weather that may re-freeze when temperatures drop overnight.

Take a break

Shovelling can be an exerting task – remember not to overexert yourself. Take breaks, stay hydrated, make sure



to dress appropriately and stay warm.

Avoid an icy driveway

After the snow is removed from your walkway, sidewalk and driveway, be sure to check if de-icing is necessary. Use salt wisely to minimize the impact of salt on the environment by following manufacturer instructions to apply the right amount, under the right conditions.

Park vehicles in your driveway

After clearing snow from your driveway, avoid keeping your vehicle parked on the street so City plows can clear roads safely and more efficiently.

Windrows

A windrow is the pile of snow left at the bottom of a driveway after a plow clears the road. Remember, it's the homeowner's responsibility to clear the windrows and remove the snow from their own driveways. Those who applied

for the City's Windrow Program will have a three-metre space in the windrows cleared by the City, which can take up to 36 hours after the end of a snowstorm.

Check your driveway for cracks

Freezing temperatures can cause pavement to chip as water gets inside and freezes. Fill cracks and/or holes. Also seal hard surfaces to prevent water from getting into them. Resolve any drainage issues on your property to prevent ice from forming.

Be a good neighbour

Help keep your community safe by clearing your sidewalk of snow and ice as soon as possible after a snowfall ends. You can also offer to help your neighbours, especially older adults and people with disabilities, by offering to shovel their walkway, sidewalk and driveway.

Learn more about the City's snow clearing operations at [Mississauga.ca/snow](https://www.mississauga.ca/snow). Keep up-to-date on the City's snow clearing activities by following @MississaugaSnow on Twitter or use the Snow Plow Tracker to track our snow plows and salt trucks online.

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

Keep Winter Fun and Safe: Don't Play With Fire

City services | December 19, 2022

Whether it's an upcoming dinner gathering, vacation or plans to relax with family and friends, a lot is happening this time of year. No matter how busy people can be, fire safety must come first. While fire prevention is important year-round, it's easier to fall into dangerous situations in the winter when people are trying to stay warm.

Help prevent fires from starting this winter season. Here are a few tips on how to stay safe:

Keep the kitchen cool

When it comes to food and flavour, bring on the heat and spice. However, when it comes to your kitchen, ensure all appliances are monitored and turned off after use. In addition to the oven, keep your eyes on small appliances like air fryers – one of this year's most popular kitchen appliances. Remember, an air fryer's external parts can get hot and when left on too long, it can cause overheating.

With anything electrical, it's always a good idea to read the appliance manual, which includes important safety tips, cleaning instructions and potential hazards that may cause a fire.

Handle the heat

Walking into a chilly house or office isn't ideal. You might get tempted to crank up the heat, turn on the kettle or a portable heater. Remember, keep anything that can burn or catch on fire at least three feet away from heat sources such as a fireplace, stove, heater or furnace. It's also important



to keep kids and pets at a safe distance from all sources of heat.

If you have concerns about your heating equipment, contact a qualified professional to work according to local codes and manufacturer's instructions. It's also a good idea to have heating equipment and chimneys inspected and cleaned yearly by a professional.

Using scents? Use common sense

Candles can create a nice ambience or fill the room with scent. However, they shouldn't be placed near window coverings or in high-traffic areas where children and pets are. Use extreme caution when lighting a candle or moving it to a different location. Hold it away from your clothes or anything that may catch on fire along your path. If you leave the room or go to sleep for the night, be sure to blow out the candle.

If you choose to freshen up the home with an aerosol air freshener, only spray it in open areas that do not have a heat source or an open flame nearby. Air fresheners can be highly flammable.

Decorate and design safely

Decorating with plants and lights? Carefully check all the cords and plugs to ensure they are not frayed or damaged. If using extension cords, make sure they aren't overloaded or placed under rugs, which can damage the cord and cause a fire. If you're using a real tree, ensure it's fresh and keep the base of the trunk watered. Keep your tree away from the fireplace, heater or candles.

Keep your guests safe

With family and friends spending extra time at your home for the holidays, now is a great time to check

your smoke alarms. Replace smoke alarms if they are more than 10 years old. Remember that you need working smoke alarms on every storey of your home and outside all sleeping areas. Make sure guests know about your home escape plan and where your meeting spot is located in case of an emergency.

This upcoming winter season, pay extra attention to your surroundings and act quickly in the case of an emergency. Seniors, vulnerable individuals, children, neighbours and pets depend on all of us to keep one another safe.

Learn more about fire prevention from Mississauga Fire and Emergency Services: <https://www.mississauga.ca/services-and-programs/health-and-safety/fire-and-emergency-services/fire-safety-at-home/>

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

Opting for a Greener Future: Investing in Low-carbon and Resilient Solutions in Mississauga

Environment | December 15, 2022

Climate change is affecting Mississauga. In 2019, the City declared a climate emergency because climate change is taking a toll on people, health, infrastructure, services, and ecosystems. Mississauga's 10-year Climate Change Action Plan was endorsed by Council in 2019. The plan sets out to decrease the City's carbon footprint and prepare for the effects of a changing climate. It includes 89 actions, of which more than 70 percent have been completed or are currently underway.

Coming out of COP15 in Montreal, the City of Mississauga has joined more than 40 other municipalities around the globe in pledging their commitment to protecting biodiversity. The City is taking a comprehensive, holistic approach to protecting biodiversity and to supporting the health of our natural systems as is outlined in our Parks and Forestry Master Plan, Climate Change Action Plan, and Official Plan – which aligns with the 15 tangible actions outlined in the Montreal Pledge.

"The impacts of climate change can be felt in Mississauga, and we've already seen warmer temperatures, extreme storm events, and increased flooding right in our own backyard. There's an urgency for continued action to address these impacts and prevent them from growing worse," said Mayor Bonnie Crombie. "At City Hall, we're taking action, including signing onto the Montreal Pledge to protect our biodiversity and strengthen resilience to future climate shifts to protect our health and economy. We will continue to work with businesses, other levels of government and our residents to help safeguard our future and achieve our vision of a low-carbon and resilient community."

As of December 2022, the City has:

- Installed 59 electric vehicle (EV) chargers for the City's fleet and 22 public EV chargers
- Added 38 kilometres of cycling infrastructure
- Installed 15 low-impact developments (LIDs) throughout the City's road right-of-ways
- Acquired 38 acres of parkland
- Developed a Zero-Emissions Vehicle Strategy in partnership with the Region of Peel, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon, and the Conservation Authorities to help accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles throughout Peel region
- Added more than 60 low and zero-emissions vehicles to the City's fleet and replaced more than 40 diesel buses with second-generation hybrids
- Launched the City's first-ever Urban Agriculture Strategy to help grow more food locally and increase access to healthy foods
- Moved forward with a feasibility study on district energy in the City's downtown
- Launched the We Are Resilient out-



reach and exhibition program to help raise awareness about climate change in Mississauga

- Begun designing a home energy retrofits program for single-family homes to support improved energy efficiency and decrease greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Studied the feasibility of a shared micro-mobility system in Mississauga
- Joined Partners in Project Green's Circular Economy Leaders Consortium
- Partnered with Project Neutral to provide residents with a tool to calculate their carbon footprint
- More than 460,000 trees have been planted since launching the One Million Trees program

- A comprehensive inventory has been collected for each of the City's 36 priority woodland locations which provides valuable baseline information required for future management decisions that will support City woodland objectives

- Continue to monitor and control invasive species as part of the City's Invasive Species Management Plan and Implementation Strategy

"Mississauga is vulnerable to climate change, and time is not on our side. We have witnessed more extreme and frequent climate-related events in the last several years. If we don't take action now, things will only worsen," said Jodi Robillos, Commissioner, Community Services. "We're investing in low-carbon technology, infrastructure and assets like low and zero emissions vehicles and buses. We're exploring the latest technologies and innovations and hope to move forward with district energy in key neighbourhoods and introduce shared micro-mobility systems. We're making informed decisions and evolving our plans around transportation, buildings, construction and infrastructure to decarbonize our built environment and run as efficiently as possible."

Robillos added, "Every year, we review and analyze the City's progress on climate change action. Based on the data, we're looking to accelerate the goals outlined in the Climate Change Action Plan to be more ambitious."

Not sure where to start on climate action? Learn more about the City's Climate Change Action Plan and its progress by visiting: mississauga.ca/projects-and-strategies/city-projects/climate-change-action-plan

Via mississauga.ca

City of Brampton's Backyard Ice Rink Contest returns for second year



Wednesday, Dec 21 2022

BRAMPTON, ON (December 21, 2022) – This winter, stay active at home and outdoors! The City of Brampton is excited to host the Brampton Backyard Ice Rink Contest for the second year, generously sponsored by Bruce Power, National Homes, and Tim Hortons.

Residents are encouraged to submit photos of their backyard or community ice rink for a chance to win prizes, including a visit from hockey legends Cassie Campbell and Darcy Tucker.

This year, three individual rinks will

be chosen, along with one community rink winner. The contest launches on January 1, 2023, and the deadline for submissions is January 31, 2023.

For full details, including tips on how to build a backyard ice rink, visit www.brampton.ca/BRC.

Outdoor skating rinks

Can't make your own ice rink? Lace up your skates for some free winter fun at one of Brampton's outdoor skating rinks! For hours of operation and updates, visit www.brampton.ca/outdoorskating.

Via brampton.ca

Bundle up and join the City for Winter Wonderland adventures!

Friday, Dec 02 2022

BRAMPTON, ON (December 2, 2022) – Bundle up for winter adventures! The City of Brampton has family-friendly activities for residents to enjoy all winter long, presented by Spirit of Math and generously sponsored by No Frills.

Outdoor skating rinks

The City of Brampton is opening Gore Meadows Covered Outdoor Skating Rink as of December 3 at 10 am, weather permitting, for free and paid public skates. Registration for paid public skates at this location is recommended. Free public skate times are by drop-in and no registration is required. View the Gore Meadows Covered Outdoor Skating Rink program schedule at <http://www.brampton.ca/outdoorskating>.

Gage Park Outdoor Skating Recreational Trail, Mount Pleasant Outdoor Skating Rink and Chinguacousy Park Skate Recreational Trail are scheduled to open beginning the weekend of December 17, weather permitting. Reservations are not required and outdoor skating at these locations is free.

The City will open additional outdoor skating rinks using artificial ice at Flower City Community Campus, Morris Kerbel Park (located behind Jim Archdekin Recreation Centre), Earncliffe Park, and Sesquicentennial Park later in the season as weather conditions permit.

Rinks may temporarily close due to weather or maintenance requirements. Please check rink hours and status up-

dates at www.brampton.ca/outdoorskating prior to your visit.

Those using the skating rinks and recreational trails are encouraged to wear a Canadian Standard Association (CSA) certified hockey helmet. Please ensure your skates are sharpened. Double-bladed skates are not permitted.

Visit www.brampton.ca/winterwonderland to plan your visit and see if a rink is open or closed.

Skiing, snowboarding and tubing at Mount Chinguacousy

Mount Chinguacousy is our city's destination for Skiing, Snowboarding and Tubing located at Chinguacousy Park. Mount Chinguacousy is scheduled to reopen for the season on December 27, weather and snow conditions permitting.

For all information, including hours of operation, open or closed status, and registration details, visit www.brampton.ca/MountChinguacousy.

Winter Program Registration

Registration for Brampton Recreation's winter sessional programs begins December 12 at 6 am for residents of Brampton. Programs are available to view online at www.brampton.ca/registerforprograms beginning December 5. Winter registered programs begin the week of January 9, 2023.

Additional Winter Amenities

Explore www.brampton.ca/winterwonderland for a complete listing of outdoor winter fun opportunities and ongoing amenity status updates!

Via brampton.ca



MADURAI SRI MEENAKSHI TEMPLE

Compiled by : KIDAMBI RAJ

INTRODUCTION

The iconic Meenakshi Temple is located, in the ancient city of Madurai in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Located in the heart of the 2,500 years old city. Meenakshi Temple was originally built by Kulasekara Pandya in the 6th century BC, but the credit for the present look of the temple goes to the Nayakas, who ruled Madurai from 16th to 18th century. The reign of the Nayaks marks the golden period of Madurai when art, architecture and learning flourished expansively. The riot of colors, however, is a more recent addition. Meenakshi Temple is dedicated to goddess Meenakshi, an avatar of the Hindu goddess Parvati, the consort of Lord Shiva. It has long been the focus of both Indian and international tourist attraction, as well as one of the most important places of Hindu pilgrimage. For the people of Madurai, the temple is the very center of their cultural and religious life. The west tower (gopuram) of the temple is the model based on which the Tamil Nadu State Emblem is designed.

HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE

Madurai Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple was built by Pandayan Emperor Sadayavarman Kulasekaran I (1190 - 1205 CE). He built the main Portions of the three storied Gopuram at the entrance of Sundareswarar Shrine and the central portion of the Goddess Meenakshi Shrine are some of the earliest surviving parts of the temple. There are also shrines each for Natarajar and Surya near the main temple, Ayyanar in the east, Vinayagar in the south, Kariamalperumal in the west and Kali in the north. He also built a Mahaman-dapam. Kulasekara Pandya was also a poet and he composed a poem on Meenakshi named Ambikai Malai. Maravarman Sundara Pandyan I built a gopura in 1231, then called Avanivendaraman, who later rebuilt, expanded and named it as Sundara Pandya Thirugopuram. Chitra gopuram (W), also known as Muttalakkum Vayil, and it was built by Maravarman Sundara Pandyan II (1238-1251). This gopuram is named after the frescoes and reliefs that depict secular and religious themes of Hindu culture. Maravarman Sundara Pandyan II also added a pillared corridor to the Sundareswara shrine and the Sundara Pandyan Mandapam. It was rebuilt after the 14th-century damage, and its granite structure was renovated by Kumara Krishnappan around 1595. The restored complex now houses 14 *gopurams* (gateway towers), ranging from 45–50 m in height, with the southern gopuram being the tallest at 51.9 metres (170 ft). The complex has numerous sculpted pillared halls such as Aayiramkaal (1000-pillared hall), Kilikoon-du-mandapam, Golu-mandapam and Pudu-mandapam. Its shrines are dedicated to Hindu deities and Shaivism scholars, with the *vimanas* above the *garbhagrihas* (sanctuaries) of Meenakshi and Sundareswara gilded with gold.

The temple was rebuilt by the Hindu Nayaka dynasty ruler Vishwanatha Nayak in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Nayaka rulers followed the Hindu texts on architecture called the *Shilpa Shastras* in redesigning the temple city plan and the Meenakshi temple. The city was laid out in the shape of concentric squares and ring roads around them, with radiating streets culminating in the Meenakshi-Sundareswara temple. These streets use traditional Tamil Hindu month names, such as Aadi, Chitrai, Avani-moola, Masi and others. In each of these months, the Hindus started their tradition of taking the temple bronze idols festively through the street of the same name. The temple and the city were once again east facing to greet the rising Surya (sun god). The temple



city grew again around the new temple, with human settlements structured as per their castes, with the royalty, Kshatriyas and Vaishya merchants lived on the southeast side of the temple, the Brahmins in a special quarter close to the temple, while others in other areas and fringes of the city. The work completed by Vishwanatha Nayaka in 1560 was substantially expanded to the current structure during the reign of Tirumala Nayaka (1623–55). Tirumala Nayaka, a Hindu king, took considerable interest in erecting many complexes inside the temple. His major contributions are the *Vas-antha Mandapam* for celebrating *Vasanthotsavam* (spring festival) and *Kilikoondumandapam* (corridor of parrots). The corridors of the temple tank and *Meenatchi Nayakar Mandapam* were built by Rani Mangammal. The initiative for some changes to the structure was under the supervision of Ariyanatha Mudaliar, the prime minister of the Nayaka Dynasty.

The temple has its traditional version of history that it calls *Shiva-lilas* (sports of Shiva), and sixty-four of these episodes are painted as murals around the temple walls. These depict the many destructions of Madurai and the temple, then its rise from the ashes and ruins of the destruction every time.

LEGEND ABOUT THE TEMPLE



It is believed that the **Madurai Meenakshi Temple was established by Indra**, the King of Devas. Lord Indra was on a spiritual journey for his wrong doings and on his way to Madurai he was attracted by the Swayambu Lingam and established this temple. In response to his prayers, Lord Shiva, appeared on a Golden Lotus in the nearby pond. The importance of this temple in Tamil Literature goes beyond 2000

years. Thirugnanasambandar, a famous Saiva philosopher, mentioned this temple in the early 7th century and described the deity Sundareswaraas *Aalavai Iraivan*.

FEATURES OF THE TEMPLE COMPLEX

The temple complex covers around 45 acres and is surrounded by 12 gateway towers called *gopurams*, the tallest of which is the famous southern tower that rises to 52 meters. Each *gopuram* is a multi-storied structure in the shape of a steep pyramid, covered with thousands of stone figures of animals, gods, goddesses and demons painted in all colors of the rainbow. There are several shrines inside the complex dedicated to goddess Meenakshi, her consort Lord Shiva (also called Sundareswarar) and their son, the elephant god Ganesha. Both the Meenakshi and Sundareswarar shrines have gold plated towers whose tops can be seen from a great distance. There is also a sacred water tank, several halls and innumerable Mandapas. Scattered throughout the complex are staggering number of sculptures and statues of gods, warriors on horses, battle scenes, and even characters from the mighty Indian epic Mahabharata. There are an estimated 33,000 sculptures all over the temple.

The Meenakshi temple also includes altars for Goddess Lakshmi, flute playing Krishna, Rukmini, Brahma, Saraswati, other Vedic and Puranic deities, as well as artwork showing narratives from major Hindu texts.

Meenakshi is a term meaning *fish-eyed*, derived from the words *mina* (fish) and *akshi* (eyes). She was earlier known by the Tamil name *Thadadakai* (fish-eyed one), which was called later as Meenakshi. According to another theory, the name of the goddess literally means *rule of the fish*, derived from the Tamil words *meen* (fish) and *aatchi* (rule). She is also known by the Tamil name *Angayarkanni* or *Ankayarkannammai* (literally, *the mother with the beautiful fish eyes*).

The goddess Meenakshi is the principal deity of the temple, unlike most Shiva temples in South India where Shiva is the principal deity. According to a legend found in the Tamil text *Tiruvilaiyatalpuranam*, king Mala-



SPECIAL FEATURE



yadwaja Pandya and his wife Kanchanamalai performed a Yajna seeking a son for succession. Instead, a daughter was born out of the fire who was already 3 years old and had three breasts. Shiva intervened and said that the parents should treat her like a son, and when she meets her husband, she will lose the third breast. They followed the advice. The girl grew up, the king crowned her as the successor and when she met Shiva, his words came true, she took her true relationships form of Meenakshi.

The marriage of Meenakshi and Shiva was the biggest event, with all gods, goddesses and living beings gathered. Vishnu is believed to be the brother of Meenakshi and gives her away to Shiva at the wedding.

The town of Madurai is ancient and one mentioned in Sangam era texts. These are dated to be from the 1st to 4th century CE. Some early Tamil texts call Madurai as *Koodal*, and these



portray it as a capital and a temple town where every street radiated from the temple. Goddess Meenakshi is described as the divine ruler, who along with Shiva were the primary deities that the southern Tamil kingdoms such as the Pandya dynasty revered. The early texts imply that a temple existed in Madurai by the mid-6th century. In medieval literature and inscriptions, it is sometimes referred to as *Kadambavanam* (forest of Kadamba) or *Velliambalam* (silver hall, where Shiva danced). It was described to be the sangam of scholars, or a place where scholars meet. It is mentioned in the Tamil text *Tiruvilayadalpuranam* and the Sanskrit text *Halasya Mahatmya*. It is one of the 275 *Paadal Petra Sthalams*. Nearly 15000 people visit this temple a day and its yearly revenue is about 6 crores.

The temple has about 33000 sculptures. It holds a place in the top 30 list of the Seven New Wonders of the World. This temple is one of the most important attractions of the Madurai city. Madurai is called as the City of festivals and the most important festival is the *Meenakshi Thirukkalyanam*, a 10-day festival is usually celebrated between the months of April and May and the festival attracts over 10 lakh visitors. According to Hindu mythology, Madurai is considered as one of the holiest places as it is believed that the Lord Shiva married the Goddess Parvati here. Other such places include Kanchipuram Kamakshi Temple, the Thiruvanaikaval Akilandeshwari Temple, and the Visalakshi Temple in Varanasi. The main deities of the temple are Goddess Meenakshi and Lord Sundareswarar. In the center of the temple hall is the shrine of Lord Shiva. There is a huge altar for the God Nataraja and is also known as Velliambalam. Near-

by is a shrine dedicated to Lord Ganesha also known as Mukuruni Ganesha and the idol was found in the temple lake during the excavation. To the left of Lord Shiva is the shrine of the Goddess Meenakshi. The temple also has a consecrated pond named *Porthamarai Kulam*. The term Potramarai Kulam is a literal translation of *pond with golden lotus*. The structure of a golden lotus is placed at the center of the pond. It is said that Lord Shiva blessed this pond and declared that no marine life would grow in it. In the Tamil folklore, the pond is believed to be an evaluator for reviewing the worth of any new literature.

The temple has four main towering gateways (gopurams) that look identical to each other. Apart from the four gopurams, the temple also houses many other gopurams that serve as gateways to a number of shrines. The



temple has a total of 14 towering gateways. Each one of them is a multi-storey structure and displays thousands of mythological stories and several other sculptures. The major gopurams of the temple are listed below:

Kadaka Gopuram, a towering gateway that leads to the main shrine that houses Goddess Meenakshi. This gateway was built by Tumpichi Nayakkar during mid-16th century. This gopuram has five storeys.

Sundareswarar Shrine Gopuram, is the oldest gopuram of the temple and was built by Kulasekara Pandya. This gopuram serves as a gateway to the Sundareswarar (Lord Shiva) shrine.

Chitra Gopuram was built by Maravarman Sundara Pandyan II, and the gopuram depicts the religious and secular essence of Hinduism.

Nadukkattu Gopuram, also called as the Idai-kattu Gopuram, is a gateway that leads to the Ganesha shrine. The gateway is placed right in between the two main shrines.

Mottai Gopuram, has fewer stucco images compared to the other gateways. Interestingly, Mottai gopuram had no roof for nearly three centuries.

Nayaka Gopuram, was built by Visvappa Nayakkar around 1530. This gopuram is astonishingly similar to another gateway called Palahai Gopuram.

The temple also has numerous pillared halls called *Mandapams*. These halls were built by various kings and emperors and they serve as resting places for pilgrims and devotees. Some of the most important 'mandapams' are given below:

Ayiramkaal Mandapam, literally translates to hall with thousand pillars. The hall, which was built by Ariyanatha Mudaliar, is a true spectacle as it is supported by 985 pillars. Every pillar is sculpted magnificently and has images of Yali, a mythological creature.

Kilikoonda Mandapam, was originally built to house hundreds of parrots. The parrots that were kept there in cages were trained to

say *Meenakshi*. The hall, which is next to the Meenakshi shrine, has sculptures of characters from Mahabharata.

Ashta Shakthi Mandapam, houses the sculptures of eight goddesses. Built by two queens, the hall is placed in between the main gopuram and the gateway that leads to the Meenakshi shrine.

Nayaka Mandapam, was built by Chinnappa Nayakkar. The hall is supported by 100 pillars and houses the statue of Lord Nataraja.

WORSHIP IN MADURAI MEENAKSHI TEMPLE

According to the tradition, the Goddess Meenakshi has to be worshipped first and then Lord Sundareswarar. To worship the Goddess, the Devotees have to go through the East Tower via Ashtashakti Mandapam, Meenakshi Nayak Mandapam and Mudali Mandapam, take bath in the Golden Lotus Pool and wear clean clothes. Then worship Ganesha and Nandi at the main entrance of the Swami Temple and then Nataraja. On the first walkway of the Meenakshi Temple, the deities Vandiyammai, Sivalingam, Sun, Kalaimagal, Saints, Somaskandar, various lingams, Pitsadanar, Kasiviswanathar, Ellam Valla Siddhar, Durga Amman, Kadamba Maram, Kanakasabai Natarajar, Chandikeswarar, Atsaralingam, Mahalakshmi Nadar, Mahalakshmi are to be worshipped. To the north of the main entrance is the temple of Lord Arulmigu Palani Murugan. Devotees pay homage to the deities Agni Veeraputra, Agora Veeraputra, Thandava Murthy and Bhadrakali through the Hundred Pillars Hall next to the Sadayappar and Nandi Mandapas. After going to Thirug-nanasambandar Mandapam and worshipping the



" Lord Vishnu giving the hands of Goddess Meenakshi to Lord Siva in marriage "

four deities there, they should sit for a while. After worshipping the idols of Hanumar, Krishna and other deities, one can go through the Amman Sannidhi. Renowned for its astonishing architecture, Meenakshi Temple was nominated as one of the wonders of the world, but could not make it into the list of *Seven Wonders of the World*. However, the temple definitely is,



one of the *Wonders of India*. It is also one of the main attractions of South India with thousands of devotees thronging it every day. During the *Tirukalyanam Festival*, which takes place over a period of 10 days, the temple attracts more than a million devotees. Despite many people visiting it every day, the temple is well-maintained and was named the *Best Swachh Iconic Place* (cleanest iconic place) in India.



Please check the link given below and enjoy the tour of this magnificent architecture and sculptures at this temple without even getting out of your chair.

360° சுழற்சி. (கூரை, தரை உட்பட)

<https://view360.in/virtualtour/madurai/>

Wonders of Winter to light up Waterloo Park

Waterloo's wonders of winter festival is ready to welcome visitors for another spectacular season. Waterloo Park will be lit with over 100,000 lights from November 25th until New Year's Day!

The annual event usually brings larger crowds but organizers say they

had to reimagine it a bit this year due to the pandemic. "We've thought really carefully about how to design and how to layout the displays so that it would move people through the park and wouldn't encourage many people to stop and gather," said volunteer Yoga Arumugam. "There are a couple of

displays we couldn't put up this year because they encourage people to stop and then collect in a crowd."

This year for the first time Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region along with its partners lit an Indian oil lamp to commemorate Deepavali, festival of lights theme in the

park. They will sponsor it for a period of 5 years. Volunteer co-ordinator Yoga Arumugam was the lead hand.

Stroll the park viewing the beautiful light displays and listening to holiday music. This volunteer-run festival is free to enjoy.



Presented by

Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region

Gujarati Cultural Association of the Golden Triangle

Grand River Malayalee Association

Golden Triangle Marathi Mandal

India Canada Association

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TAMIL CULTURAL ASSOCIATION WATERLOO REGION

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தைப்பொங்கல் விழா 2023

Tamil Heritage Month & Thai Pongal festival



Saturday, January 14. 5:30pm

Woodland Christian High School, 1058 Spitzig Road, Breslau, ON (Kitchener)

Sweet Pongal food served on banana leaf, Music, Dance.

E-Tickets: Member: \$20, Non-Member: \$25, Child: \$15 (5-15 years), Under 05: FREE
Member Family: \$60 (2 adults & 2 kids under 12 years, Membership current)



COMMUNITY WATCH

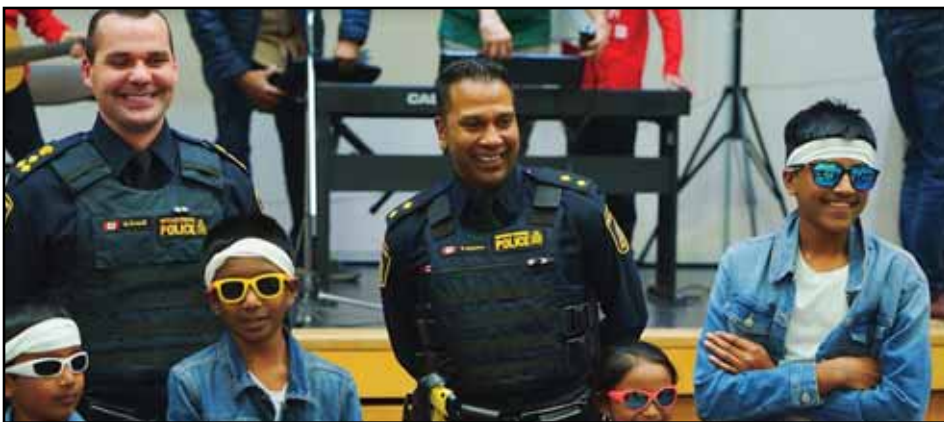


Waterloo Tamil Christmas celebration, A very busy night for Santa

Kitchener, ON: Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region celebrated its annual Christmas celebration on the 17th of December at St. Mary's High School in Kitchener. An estimate of 600 guests attended the event. Waterloo Regional Police Chief Mike Crowell was the guest of honour along with Shamal Isaacksz and Geraldine L. Stafford. City of Kitchener councillor Ayo Owodunni brought greetings from the Mayor and council of Kitchener.

Addressing the gathering, the President Mr. Dennis Loyola emphasized the role of the association as a catalyst that unites the cultural, social and religious diversity among the Tamil community in the Waterloo region and City of Guelph. This event has drawn a large crowd. The event is first after a gap of two years since the covid pandemic. He also invited everyone for Thai Pongal celebrations on the 14th of January at Woodland Christian High school, Kitchener.

Chief Mike Crowell thanked the community for being pro active in the region and TCA service for the past 34 years is commendable. The event included Music, games and speech. Sports award ceremony including Cricket, Soccer and Netball awards were presented. Senthil Raja of Raja Chettinar restaurant gifted \$250 voucher for each team. The event ended up with dinner and arrival of Santa Claus. 150 gifts arranged by the association for local community children were presented.



Forever in His Arms



God is our refuge and Strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

Dr. Sumathy Thayalan
General Practitioner at NHS, London UK
Aug 5, 1962 - Dec 28, 2022

Beloved wife of Dr. Samuel Thayalan, Loving and devoted mother of Rachael and Romesh. Caring daughter of late Mr & Mrs M.C Francis and daughter in law of late Mr & Mrs Aingarapillai. Cherished sister of Dr. Sugendrini Francis, Professor Samuel Asokanthan and Mrs Malathi Jeeva (Francis). Treasured and loyal friend to many, provider of light to every room she graced. Past pupil of Jaffna Chundikuli Girls' College and Jaffna University Faculty of Medicine. We will miss you Sumathy. Mum, Sumathy acca, Mama T. Sumi, Dr. Thayalan!!

Funeral Details to follow

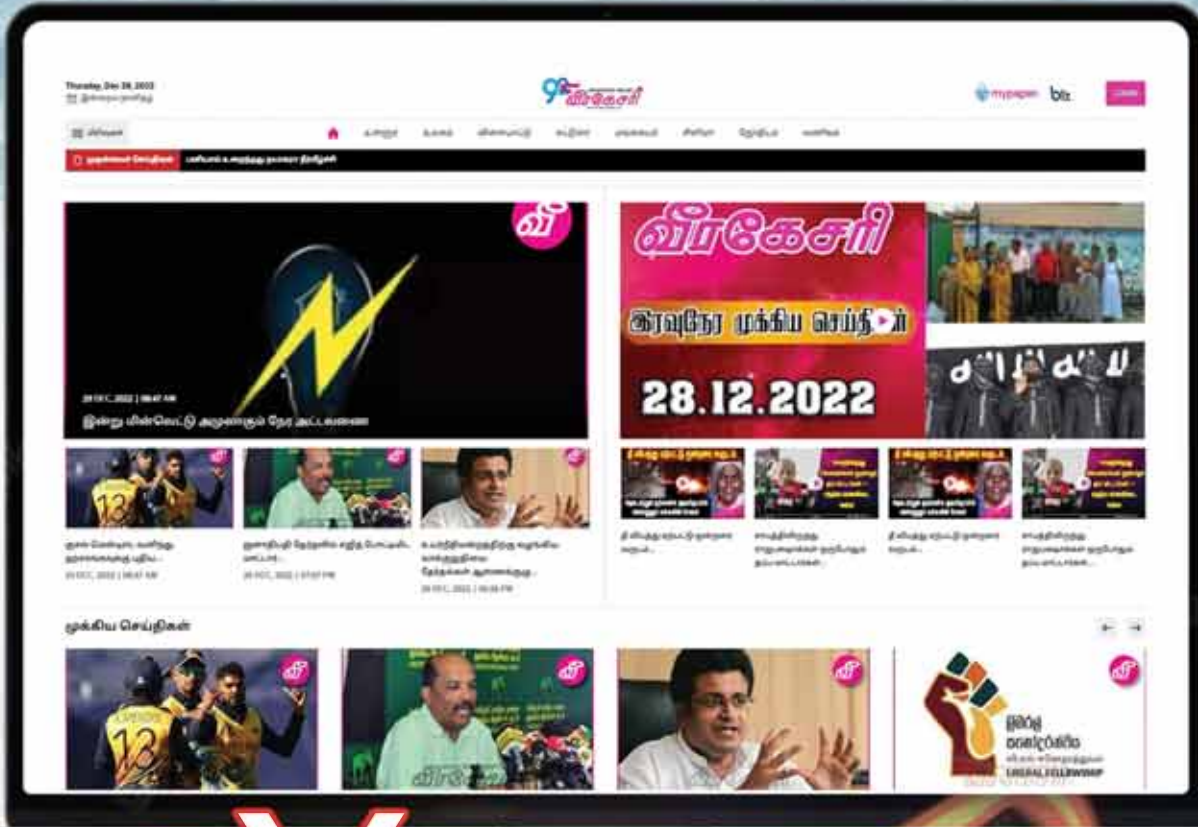


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6 மாதங்களுக்கு

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**Best wishes for a
happy and peaceful
New Year and
Happy Thai Pongal.**



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