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A parfait media publication



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Wish you a Happy and Prosperous Tamil and Sinhala New Year



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The Tamil and Sinhalese New Year colloquially referred to as the Tamil and Sinhala Puthandu or Aluth Avurudu is a highly festive time in Sri Lanka and is one of the most anticipated festivals in Sri Lanka.

The festival is celebrated when the sun moves from Pisces to Aries, marking the end of the harvesting season. It is celebrated with a series of traditions, food, and fun games that take place

during the day and involve the entire community.

The new year rituals start in 13th with a ritual called neutral period Nalla neram or Nonagathe. During this time people keep off from all the work and do nothing but engage in religious activities to get the blessing of their religion to prepare for the new year. The dawning of the new year is celebrated on the 14th of April each year!

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Bank of Canada Holds Key Interest Rate at 5 Percent



Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem

The Bank of Canada is holding its benchmark interest rate at 5 percent for the sixth consecutive time since July, saying it needs to see evidence that “downward momentum” in inflation is sustained before it will cut rates.

Although inflation remains high and “risks remain,” the central bank said it has begun to see the economic conditions necessary to convince it to drop interest rates.

Economic data since the beginning of the year has boosted the bank’s confidence that inflation will continue to slow despite a rising economy, Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem said.

“I realize that what most Canadians want to know is when we will lower our policy interest rate,” Mr. Macklem said in an April 10 statement. “What do we need to see to be convinced it’s time to cut? The short answer is we are seeing what we need to see, but we need to see it for longer to be confident that progress toward price stability will be sustained.”

He described the decline in core inflation as “very recent,” saying the bank needs to be sure this “is not just a temporary dip.”

The central bank expects core inflation to continue to ease gradually, but with gas prices on the rise, the consumer price index (CPI) is likely to remain around 3 percent over the next few months, Mr. Macklem said.

The central bank’s decision to hold its key rate steady comes as no surprise to economists who are widely forecasting a rate cut at the Bank of Canada’s next policy announcement this summer.

Bank of Montreal managing director

Benjamin Reitzes said while the central bank decided to hold interest rates at 5 percent, it was “mildly more dovish,” by pointing out core inflation trends and the softening labour market.

“While June is still on the table, the coming CPI reports will need to be at least as good as what we saw in January and February,” Mr. Reitzes said in note to investors. “With the Fed seemingly on hold for potentially longer after a string of firm CPIs, the BoC will likely be a bit more cautious on the margin with rate cut timing.”

TD director and senior economist James Orlando is predicting a rate cut in July.

“Even though inflation has moved within the BoC’s 1 percent to 3 percent target range over the last few months, markets have become more cautious on the timing of cuts,” Mr. Orlando said in his analysis.

“While spending data have been encouraging, we question how long this will last, especially with the labour market having started to come under pressure in March. Should economic growth weaken further and inflation remain on its current trajectory, we could see the BoC readying markets for the cuts in short order.”

The Bank of Canada, which is continuing its policy of quantitative tightening, has also released its quarterly monetary policy report. The report hints that the chance of a “soft landing,” in which inflation slows without a notable economic downturn, has increased.

Economic growth is expected to be healthier than previously anticipated this year. The central bank is

forecasting the economy to grow by 1.5 percent this year and by roughly 2 percent in 2025 and 2026.

“Strong population growth is increasing consumer demand as well as the supply of workers, and spending by households is forecast to recover through the year,” Mr. Macklem said. “Spending by governments also contributes to growth, and US strength supports Canadian exports. The strengthening economy will gradually absorb excess supply through 2025 and into 2026.”

Global growth has also been revised up to 2.8 percent for this year.

Palm Sunday and the Holy Week

Palm Sunday celebrates the triumphal entry of Lord Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. He rides majestically on a donkey to proclaim publicly that He is the long-awaited, anticipated Messiah of the Jewish people. But in a greater sense, He is the world’s only savior. Palm Sunday is followed by the Holy Week. Jesus was condemned as a traitor, taken to the cross, and hanged to death on Friday but He rose from the grave on the third day—Sunday—called the Easter Sunday. These are important dates in the Christian calendar.

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PUBLISHER'S DESK

Happy Tamil New Year!

By Harrish Thirukumaran

Iniya Tamil Puthandu vaithukal to the readers of the Monsoon Journal!

Tamil Puthandu is considered one of the most popular Tamil festivals that holds a significant place in Tamil people's hearts like myself. This takes the form through expressing Iniya Puthandu vaithukal to fellow celebrants of the occasion. The name, Puthandu, translates to New Year.

Generally, Puthandu is not fixed on a certain date as it is decided by the Tamil calendar, which tracks the moon cycle and the stars and planets. It is recognized as the first day of year on the Tamil calendar and traditionally celebrated as a festival by Tamil people across the world. The festival date is set with the solar cycle of the Hindu calendar, as the first day of the Tamil month Chithirai. It falls on or around April 14. This year, Puthandu falls on Saturday, April 13 according to the Western calendar. Furthermore, celebrants mark this event as a day of joy and spiritual significance, exemplified by the belief that Lord Indra visits Earth on this day. The community aims to mark this occasion to the best of our ability to keep this tradition going.

As we mark the end of 2023, we will be marking the end of Sobakiruthu. For 2024, Puthandu signifies the start of Kurothi in the Tamil calendar. Even though it's not a national holiday in Canada, its timing fits well as we welcome in the spring season. At the same time, Tamil people seek to keep in touch with their roots in a new home through this festival. The first generation of migrants would have had a lot stronger memories attached to Puthandu from their lives in their home countries. It's from our parents and the rest of the first generation that we learned the value of Puthandu, and its influence on our culture and wellbeing.

Last year, I had the opportunity to celebrate Puthandu, or Tamil New Year in Colombo, Sri Lanka. It's recognized as a grand, momentous occasion across the city, with shopkeepers adorning their stores with decorations to commemorate the event alongside other public areas. I was able to participate in the various traditions with both curiosity and eagerness. Cuckoo birds are also frequently among the distinct sounds that are closely associated with Tamil New Year. This includes both Maruthuneer vaithal and Kai vishesham. Food is sacred during this occasion as well where I got to feast on Sakkarai Pongal, or sweet rice, and other traditional Tamil foods.

As for the traditions, Maruthu neer vaithal involves temple priests who boil special herbs in clean water along with milk, saffron, flowers, leaves and other selected ingredients. It is meant to anoint the heads of family members in preparation for a traditional ceremonial bath. Also known as medicinal water, it is anointed at the dawn of New Year. "Maruthu Neer" is made of "Arugu", "Vilvam", "Kondral", "Aal", "Arasu" (bo tree leaves),

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"Mathulai" (pomegranate), "Thamarai" (lotus), "Thulasi", "Kosalam", "Komayam", Milk, King Coconut, Rose water, "Sukku" (dried ginger), Cardamom, and Nutmeg. 'Kai-vishesham' is the first financial transaction at the beginning of the new year. Elders typically gift money to the unmarried young, particularly children as a token of good luck. Other traditions include games like a kolam competition, Uriyadi or pot cracking, the game of 'por-thenkai' or coconut wars between youth is played in villages through Sri Lanka while cart races are also held.

I am excited to welcome in the spring season with a feast of sakkarai pongal as I mark Puthandu and work to continue these traditions to strengthen my connection to my own heritage. The spiritual significance tied to the occasion connects with me as well as I seek to engage with the rest of the year ahead with a sense of hope and optimism here in Canada. Part of this hope extends to others in the Tamil community, or others open to learning about the culture and advancing these traditions. Once again, Iniya Chithirai Puthandu vaithukal!

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

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RICHMOND HILL'S ICONIC MILL POND PARK TO BE REVITALIZED

Council Approves Master Plan for Sustainable Park with New Amenities and Connections



Lake Wilcox Park

Richmond Hill Council has approved the Mill Pond Park Revitalization Master Plan which will create new amenities, trails and improved facilities for residents.

Developed in consultation with the community, the multi-year Master Plan will see a number of enhancements including:

- Restoration of the natural woodland and wetland in the centre of the park, including management of invasive species, protecting it for future generations
- A boardwalk through the natural area which will allow better connectivity across the wetlands
- A new pedestrian bridge across the north



Russell Farm Park

end of Mill Pond to connect the trail from the Mill Street entry area to the Upper Mill Pond area, creating a connected loop within the park

- A “spine trail” that will connect the



Richvale Athletic Field

entire 19 hectare park, from the southeast corner to the northwest corner, with seating areas at points of interest

- A new meadow area at the north end of the park, connecting Mill Pond Park to Stavert Park
- A new park centre building with improved washroom facilities, gallery space, storage space and a potential cafe space to better support the events in the park
- New amenities including pickleball courts, an outdoor ice skating rink and outdoor fitness equipment
- Enhanced tennis courts, playground and gazebo



Richmond Green Sports Centre and Park

- Additional parking near Stavert Park
- The Mill Pond Park Revitalization Master Plan will improve connectivity throughout the park for residents, while balancing its ecological and recreational use. More information about the Mill Pond Park Revitalization Master Plan can be found at RichmondHill.ca/MillPondProject.



Cordave Parkette

“Mill Pond Park is an important part of our city’s heritage. It’s beloved by so many and I look forward to it being modernized with new amenities for current and future generations to enjoy. The Mill Pond Park Revitalization Master Plan is the right mix of protecting the environment with natural area enhancements and invasive species



Saigeon Trail (trail segment located north of Tower Hill Road, west of Rouge River, south of Meander Park)

management, combined with providing amenities and expanding the park by connecting it to Stavert Park in the north to serve the growing community. The community will be able to connect with nature throughout the park.” – Mayor David West

- The redesign and construction of the new park

is expected to take place over the next seven years, dependent on capital funding.

- Mill Pond Park is one of Richmond Hill’s five existing destination parks, welcoming visitors from across the city and beyond. Other existing destination parks are Lake Wilcox Park, Richmond Green Park, David Dunlap Observatory Park and Phyllis Rawlinson Park.



Rouge Crest Park

- Mill Pond Park’s rich history dates back to the mid-1800s when it was a sawmill operation, and later converted to a reservoir to supply drinking water to the local population.

- The iconic park is host to a number of outdoor concerts and events throughout the year including Richmond Hill’s Winter Carnival.

- More information about the City’s green space and recreational amenities can be found in Richmond Hill’s updated Parks Plan.

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GROUNDBREAKING ON THE FUTURE HOME OF THE GILGAN FAMILY QUEENSWAY HEALTH CENTRE MARKS NEXT BIG STEP TOWARDS THE FUTURE OF CARE

Construction starts on the largest health care expansion in South Etobicoke's history

Trillium Health Partners (THP) and the Ontario Government have marked a historic milestone in transforming the future of rehabilitation and complex care in Mississauga and West Toronto. By breaking ground today, construction has officially started on the future home of The Gilgan Family Queensway Health Centre patient care tower, a modern 600,000 square foot building that will open up access to specialized services, expand much needed capacity and improve the overall health of our community.



Groundbreaking on the Future Home of the Gilgan Family Queensway Health Centre

Demand for specialized care in our community is expected to grow significantly over the next two decades, and more specifically in the areas of rehabilitation and complex continuing care as our community ages. For the first time at THP, these services will be offered in one integrated health care setting, built specifically for this purpose, with the emotional and physical needs of these patients in mind. Once complete, the Queensway Health Centre will become The Gilgan Family Queensway Health Centre in recognition of the significant donation made by the Peter Gilgan Foundation in 2022. The Gilgan Family Queensway Health Centre will be designed to remove obstacles and barriers to health as we support changes for the community that address inequities and leaves no one behind.

"The Gilgan Family Queensway Health Centre will be a modern centre for complex care and rehabilitation services, dedicated to providing people-centred care because when we care for a whole patient our entire community becomes stronger," said Karli Farrow, President and CEO at Trillium Health Partners. "With an unwavering focus on sustainability and adaptability, the design of this facility prioritizes our vision for health care excellence, both now and in the future."

By bringing together specialized teams, resources, and services, the new nine-storey patient care tower will strengthen THP's ability to provide high-quality care to patients with more unique and complex needs than ever before. THP is taking a learning health systems approach, which means taking research findings and applying them more efficiently and immediately to enhance population health, health equity, patient experience, and workforce sustainability and affordability. Key features of the new tower will include:

- Accommodation for over 350 beds with 100% private rooms, this is in addition to the 198 beds Queensway Health Centre operates today
- Purpose-built areas for group rehabilitation, activities, and communal dining
- Outdoor spaces designed to support restoration and healing
- Comprehensive dialysis care services for both inpatients and community members
- Modern tools and technology to support both patients and staff, including integrated bedside terminals and digital monitoring systems
- A new 800-space parking structure, which was completed in February 2024

"We are thrilled to break ground on the future home of The Gilgan Family Queensway Health Centre expansion, a critical step in making care more connected and convenient in Etobicoke and neighbouring communities," said Premier Doug Ford. "With our government's support for this project and more than 50 hospital projects across the province, we're building a strong and resilient health care system for all Ontarians."

"Under the leadership of Premier Ford, our government is making historic investments in Ontario's health care sector," said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "The expansion of the future home of The Gilgan Family Queensway Health Centre is just another example of how we are investing in the health care needs of Ontario's growing communities to deliver the highest standard of care. With this new hospital expansion, our government is ensuring the needs of Peel Region and Etobicoke will be met for decades to come."

With this evolution in care, THP will attract a wide range of learners, professionals and volunteers who are seeking to enhance their skills and build careers in a dynamic, cutting-edge health care environment. The new facility will serve as a rich learning space with ample opportunities for



Hon. Doug Ford,
Premier of Ontario

Dr. Abhishek Narayan,
Interim Program Chief & Medical Director, Primary Care, Rehabilitation, Complex Continuing Care, Palliative, and Seniors' Services

Karli Farrow,
President & CEO, Trillium Health Partners

Caroline Riseboro,
President & CEO, Trillium Health Partners Foundation

Chief Claire Sault,
Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

Hon. Sylvia Jones,
Deputy Premier, Ontario Minister of Health

Hon. Kinga Surma,
Minister of Infrastructure

education and training, which will build up our next generation of health care workers, while empowering all workers to challenge what is possible for tomorrow.

"The Gilgan family is excited to support this mission, recognizing the profound impact it will have on the livelihood of this community," said Peter Gilgan. "The Gilgan Family Queensway Health Centre isn't just a new health care building; it's a symbol of how we can revolutionize an important corner of our care system and improve the every-day health of people."

For more information, and to stay up to date on Trillium HealthWorks projects, please visit <https://trilliumhealthworks.ca/>

• No hospital in Ontario will face greater growth: the demand for services is projected to double in the next 20 years



Karli Farrow, President & CEO, Trillium Health Partners (left) and Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario (right)

- No community has grown more: Over the last 20 years, Trillium Health Partner's catchment population has grown equivalent to the size of an entire city
- EllisDon Corporation has been awarded a fixed price contract of \$1.3 billion to build and finance the future home of The Gilgan Family Queensway Health Centre
- Patient tower occupancy and final completion is planned for 2029

• Trillium Health Partners serves a richly diverse community, with over half of people living in the community born outside of Canada, and more than 130 languages spoken here

Trillium Health Partners

Trillium Health Partners is one of the largest community-based hospital systems in Canada. Comprised of Credit Valley Hospital, the Mississauga Hospital and the Queensway Health Centre, Trillium Health Partners serves the growing and diverse populations of Mississauga, West Toronto and surrounding communities. Trillium Health Partners is a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto, is an associate member of the Toronto Academic Health Science Network and a proud member of Mississauga Health (Ontario Health Team).

Trillium Health Partners Foundation

Trillium Health Partners Foundation is dedicated to raising the critical funds needed to address the highest priority needs of Trillium Health Partners, the largest community-based hospital network in Canada. For more information, please visit trilliumgiving.ca.

WORLD NEWS



15th World Tamil Teachers' Conference, Toronto, Canada

Collaboratively Organized By
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15th World Tamil Teachers' Conference

Objectives of the conference

- * To examine new pedagogies and ideas for the teaching and learning of Tamil language
- * To identify pedagogy for teaching learners of Tamil as a second language.
- * To explore new ideas on how to incorporate and leverage information, communication, and technological tools in the teaching of Tamil language.
- * To discover teaching and learning methods for speaking fluency.
- * To understand the importance of learning the Tamil language and finding the ways to do so.
- * To create networking opportunities among the international community of Tamil language teachers.
- * To actively promote the institutions teaching/wanting to teach Tamil language.

Research Papers

Research papers should be relevant to the theme of the conference. Delegates are invited to submit research papers on the following topics.

15th World Tamil Teachers' Conference

Research Paper Titles

- * Using linguistics to learn and teach the Tamil language.
- * Methods of teaching for students learning Tamil as a second language.
- * Using elements based on heritage, culture and the arts for the teaching and learning of Tamil language.
- * Teaching the pronunciation of the Tamil language in a unified manner.
- * Easy techniques to avoid spelling mistakes.
- * Simple methods to read.
- * Creating & teaching Tamil words using the syllabic method and its benefits.
- * The consequences of teaching Tamil with the aid of foreign languages.
- * Tamil language learning and teaching resources based on content relevant to contemporary issues.
- * Leveraging information and communication technology for teaching the Tamil language.
- * Papers that are written on another topic in relevance to the theme of the conference.

Papers

- * Research papers must be based on data derived from academic or class room-based research.
- * The conclusion of the research papers must contain recommendations for improving the teaching and learning of Tamil language.
- * Papers which include empirical evidence based on research conducted on current students, together with video recording are welcome.
- * The papers should be a guide to face the challenges and difficulties encountered when teaching.
- * Papers which include demonstrative aspects may be submitted.

Synopsis of research papers

- * Research paper synopses should be within 100 - 150 words (UNICODE encoding)
- * Important details such as your full name, email and phone number should be indicated.

Full versions of the selected research papers must be submitted by 3rd March 2024 to the organizers.

Total time allotted for each research paper	30 Mins
Introduction of the presenter	5 Mins
Presentation of paper	15 Mins
Q & A session	10 Mins

To register for the World Tamil Teachers Conference, kindly visit our website padimuraitamil.com and complete the online registration form.

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SCAN TO FILL



Baltimore bridge site a tangled, ever-changing mess of debris following collapse



Col Estee Pinchasin says crews are constantly assessing and reassessing the wreckage after each shift

It's been difficult to untangle the twisted metal both above the water and below, after a large boat collided into a bridge in the Patapsco River near Baltimore.

"What we see is a massive, cantilevered, mangled mess of wreckage that is contorted and extremely difficult to identify any kind of structural integrity," Col. Estee Pinchasin with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers told *As It Happens* host Nil Köksal.

The Dali cargo ship collided with the Francis Scott Key Bridge on March 26, killing six people who were working on the bridge at the time, and leaving the boat lodged in the debris.

"Every time we move a piece of the structure, the situation could become even more dangerous. We have to move fast but we cannot be careless," Maryland Governor Wes Moore told press on April 1.

The crash happened after the ship lost power to its engine and navigation equipment. The crew of mostly Indian

nationals issued a mayday, which allowed authorities to close bridge traffic before huge sections of the bridge collapsed into the river.

Now crews are working to get the critical port cleared — but Pinchasin says it's been difficult. Above the surface, there's a clear picture of what they have to deal with. But the same can't be said for below.

"You can't identify locations to cut, much less rig and then lift," she said.

Ever changing

Three salvage crews are working to clear the debris. It includes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Coast Guard, and contracted teams.

There are about 50 salvage divers and 12 cranes on site to help cut out sections of the bridge and remove them from the key waterway.

Pinchasin says the work is difficult and ever-changing. One shift of debris may cause other pieces to move, forcing crews to reassess the next move.

And then there's the built-up energy. "If you're holding a spring in tension from both sides, and then you're going to cut it, parts of the spring are going to snap back. And that's what you have in portions of the wreckage," said Pinchasin.

Divers must go down into the water to assess what might happen if they cut or lift different pieces of wreckage.

Pinchasin says at best, their visibility is less than one metre in front of them because the water is so murky.

Timeline

Clearing the debris is important because the channel gives access to one of the main ports on the East Coast of the United States.

Pinchasin hopes to have a limited access channel open that will be 11.5 metres deep and 85 metres wide. She says that will be a one-way access which will give some relief to the port.

She says they hope to have that open by the end of April. Then the goal is to restore normal capacity to Baltimore's port by May 31.

"It's hard for me to envision, even now, very uncomfortable for me to think that big, large shipping vessels are going to go through while we're conducting salvage operations," said Pinchasin.

"But when you talk to the [salvagers] there, they explain that this is what they do every day during salvage operations."

Difficult time

Port Chaplain Rev. Joshua Messick told *As It Happens* guest host Stephanie Skenderis on April 1 that the wreckage has changed the landscape of Baltimore.

"It has really scarred the city," he said.

Along with removing the debris, the team is trying to recover the bodies of the dead workers. So far, three bodies have been recovered. Eight people were working on the bridge at the time. Two were immediately rescued and survived. Three more are still missing.

Pinchasin says if they find an area that may be where the bodies may be, they halt the operation and focus on investigating the area in the hopes of recovering them.

"This is our channel. It's our port, our city ... You won't fail because you can't fail the people you're serving," said Pinchasin.

Courtesy: Philip Drost from CBC

Animal - Film Review



By Harrish Thirukumaran

Animal is a film that piqued my interest because I learned of it through its highly controversial reviews and commentary. It is a Hindi action gangster drama film, released in theaters worldwide on December 1, 2023. It stars Ranbir Kapoor as Rannvijay Singh Balbir and Anil Kapoor as Balbir Singh, the two pivotal characters. It is directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga. Production was completed by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Murad Khetani, and Pranay Reddy Vanga.

At the centre of this portrayal is the story of Rannvijay seeking to avenge his father, Balbir Singh, a mighty industrialist, after a failed assassination attempt. It also serves as an exploration of the father and son relationship from start to finish. It comes full circle albeit in a real, convoluted way towards the film's ending, to speak about child neglect and its consequences. Vanga sought to showcase this quest as being a parallel to the dynamics of the animal kingdom. He succeeds in that in his writing of the character and the visuals of the film. However, Animal is a messy film because the extreme levels of violence are not justified enough by the story itself. More clarity was needed here to fully develop this story within a plot driven purely by Vijay's violent behaviour that stems from his fatherless childhood.

Its action sequences are brutally violent, which get quite ridiculous, if not comical, during different scenes in the

film. It presents larger themes within Indian society today that includes toxic masculinity. Also, in a subtle way, it comments on Indian nationalism where Rannvijay is supplied with a gun turret made exclusively in India.

Geetanjali, played by Rashmika Mandanna, seems to have no specific motivations in relation to Rannvijay. Her decision to marry him is not well explained in the film, though it may stem from sharing a childhood with Vijay. For instance, Vijay inappropriately comments on Geetanjali's body and her child bearing ability. This spoke to how in Indian society things like caste, education and family matter greatly in marriage proposals. Yet this scene described love and romance as more of a natural mating process found in the animal kingdom as opposed to modern marriage proposals. It is more rational where it looks at the male being a hunter gatherer, while the female can bear and care for the children. This was a point of view expressed by Vijay towards Geetanjali yet it did not seem as if she were fully convinced.

Despite its obvious flaws, the camerawork is excellent in evoking the animalistic nature of Vijay. There is a well shot scene depicting Vijay killing an enemy in a chokehold. It spins slowly through a bird's eye view as we, the audience, witness this action. It serves as a human equivalent to the predator stalking and eliminating its prey. Vijay is like a tiger killing a deer, where this accomplishment leaves him in exhaustion from such a challenging activity.

Earlier in the film, the family gathers for a portrait. The way Rannvijay is positioned next to his father is like that of an attack dog guarding its owner. This protection extends not only to his father physically, but also to his business

interests. In later scenes where he expresses his anger, Vijay's overall look is similar to that of a lion in the wild.

At the same time, the film soundtrack displays Vijay's deranged and obsessive behaviour rooted in his father, particularly 'Papa Meri Jaan'. There is a creepiness in it of a son in search of love from his father. Consequently, this results in an unhealthy love and obsession for his father because of his lack of presence in Vijay's life that starts in his childhood.

A theme of accountability surfaces throughout the questionable, violent events that take place in the film involving Vijay. Although different in their natures, both Balbir Singh, Vijay's father, and Rannvijay are similar in that they lack self-accountability. They are only different in their approaches to strengthen and protect the company. It's a twisted version of a father meeting a twisted version of a son and the way they express or define their love. Vijay justifying killing Varun to his sister, Reet, played by Saloni Batra, feels like an interesting homage to the scene from The Godfather where Michael consoles an angry Connie for killing her husband for activities against the family.

Adultery, although a relatively recent cultural wrongdoing, is showcased from the female point-of-view as being demonstrably worse than something like murder. The latter has been commonly understood as a wrongdoing since the start of human history. We see this as Geetanjali is furious at Vijay for cheating on her with another woman to advance his father's interests, but brushed aside the murders he commits throughout the film. It is also important to note this bias from Geetanjali is highlighted by Rannvijay himself.

In a sense, Animal is a messy, confusing film that showcases toxic masculinity and sexism as well as indulges unnecessarily in violence to present this point. It only scratches the surface around its story of child neglect and could have done more in its writing and pacing for this story with its long runtime. Regardless, it's use of the camera to evoke Rannvijay as belonging within an animal kingdom is effective and clever.

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WHY JANINE JOINS SHN ZOO DAY



During the pandemic, Janine Johnson went into Scarborough Health Network’s (SHN) General Hospital for surgery without anyone by her side. At the time no visitors were allowed.

“Nobody could come in with me -- not my husband, not my kids. It was scary. But you know what? I never felt alone and that was really nice. The staff made me feel comfortable and I knew they’d take care of me,” she said.

Her care team at SHN went out of their way to ensure Janine would get home safe.

“They called my husband, told him what the situation was, what door to come to, when to come and pick me up, and then they wheeled me back down – and I always had someone with me,” she said. This was one of several positive experiences at SHN that lead Janine to participate in the first ever SHN ZOO DAY in 2023 to support Scarborough hospitals. “It’s a nice outing for the family,

it was well-organized and supports a great cause,” she said. Everyone should donate to local healthcare because we’re all going to need care one day.”

Janine plans to attend this year’s event on June 9 with her husband. They will be joined by thousands of community members coming together to experience exciting stops and animal encounters, all wrapping up with the Love, Scarborough Festival, featuring diverse food and entertainment.

Proudly presented by Scotiabank, the event celebrates community spirit and the critical role of healthcare in Scarborough. For Janine, ZOO DAY is not just about having fun but also about giving back to the healthcare system that has been pivotal for her family.

“Both my children were born at SHN’s General Hospital, and my son had thumb surgery there,” she says.

Janine’s lived in Scarborough for over 30

years and deeply appreciates the care she’s received at SHN.

“I’m lucky, I live just seven minutes away from the General. I realize how valuable it is to have amazing healthcare so close to my home.”


SHN ZOO DAY represents an opportunity to contribute to the ongoing excellence in local healthcare services that have profoundly impacted families like Johnsons. Scarborough represents 25% of Toronto’s population, and SHN serves a growing catchment of more than 850,000 people. Its’ hospitals have some of the oldest facilities in Ontario, and like all Ontario hospitals, rely on donations to fund crucial medical equipment and upgrades to improve the patient experience.

For more information about the event and how to participate,

please visit SHNZOODAY.ca.




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CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF A SRILANKAN AVIATION LEGEND

Captain George Ferdinand

By: Kane Siva

I have been pondering for some time, how to honor a person who sowed the seeds of Aviation in my mind. I would say it was God's providence that I met this gentleman out of all the places, on an interview panel. In 1972 when Air Ceylon recruited Flight Operations, Officers, I was one of the applicants for this job interview and was interviewed by Capt. P.B. Mawalagedra and G.E.L.Ferdinand, (Both were in their uniforms) and the Personnel Manager. The interview was done by the two captains, and especially by Capt. Ferdinand who was to be my immediate boss. Besides the basic qualifications, the prerequisite for this job was to have a Private Pilot's License. I didn't have a Pilot's License. Capt. Ferdi was instrumental in recruiting me to this position with Captain Mawa based purely on merits, the command of the language, and communication skills. This association with Capt. Ferdi continued till he passed away, at least by postal mail, when I was working at Abu Dhabi Airport.

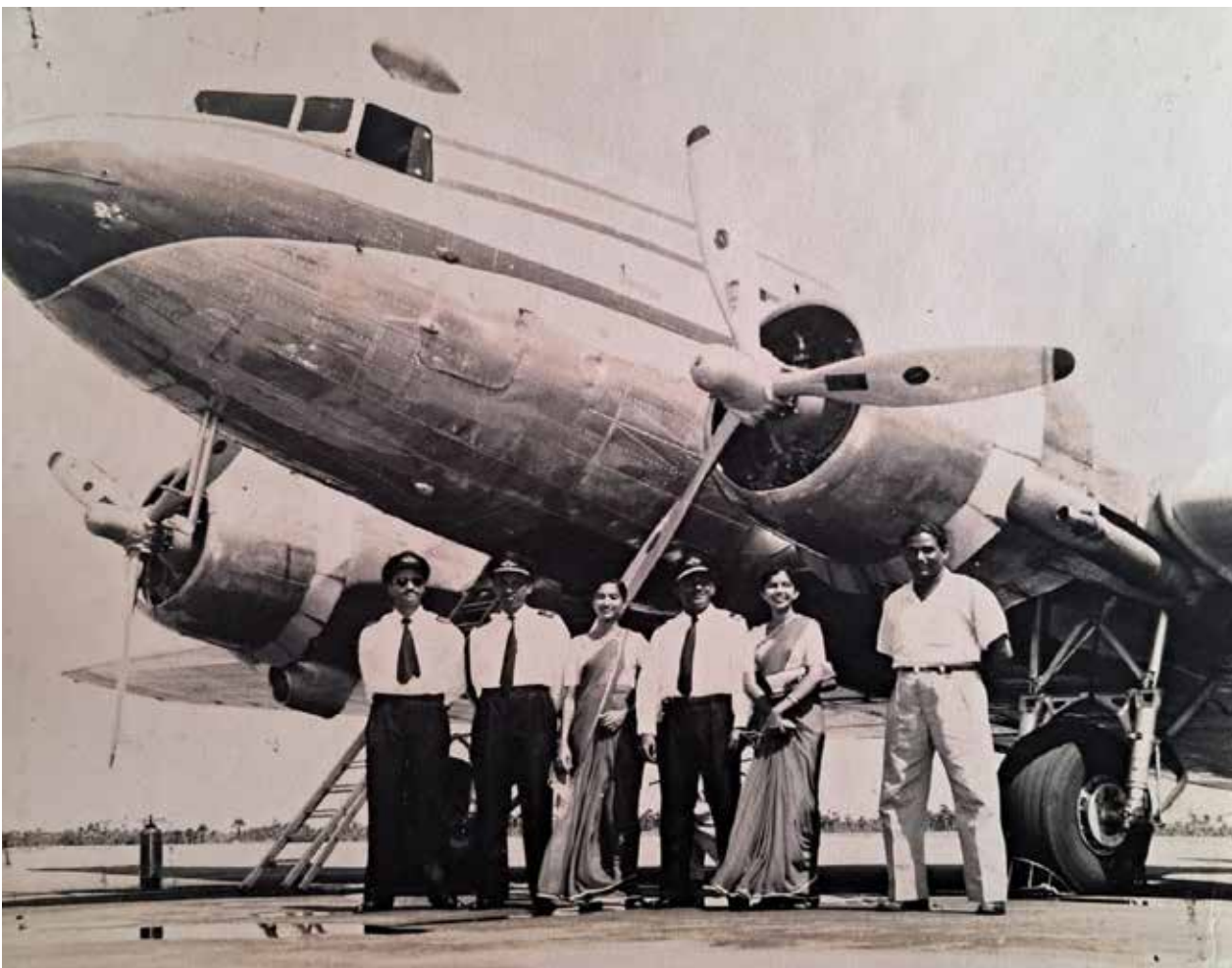
I would say at the outset it gives me great pleasure and also a heavy heart to pen these few words of this lovable human

being, who always flew other's Hearts and Lives to greater heights, than he flew his beloved aircrafts without any incidents. Shakespeare's theme, "Some are Born great, Some achieve greatness", Capt. Ferdi fit this mould without any doubt. Born to a family of privilege, his father (informed by a friend) was a Government Agent of Sri Lanka. Ferdinand studied at Royal College. When World War two progressed, he volunteered as an Air cadet, joined the RAF at 17 years, and was sent to England for training. After his basic training in England, was stationed here, at the RAF base in Canada. When the war ended thankfully for the world, Ferdinand returned to Sri Lanka and joined the first National Airline that was being formed, Air Ceylon, as a Trainee Pilot in 1947, with his RAF experience for a salary of Rs10/per hour, as indicated in some other publications. I am sure, that Capt. Ferdi enjoyed his time in the air more than the hourly pay, since he strongly felt his passion for flying was much greater than the remuneration. He was more keen on advancing his career and decided to leave an indelible mark in his flying.

I believe somewhere during this period, Ferdinand met a really charming, smart,



and beautiful air hostess, Therese Victoria and their romance blossomed in matrimony. Both were blessed with two sons a few years later. Soon Ferdi was flying as a copilot, with Capt. Peter Fernando on DC-3 and his salary too was increased. On 10th of December 1947, Capt. Peter Fernando and Ferdi. operated the Inaugural flight to Madras from Ratmalana. Ferdi and Capt. Mawalagedra flew on the DC3 almost every day. He acquired enough hours and experience and was checked out as a DC3 Captain along with Captain Mawalagedra. They trained other pilots to fly the DC 3 aircraft. DC 3 operated flights to Madras, Trichy, Jaffna, and Trincomalee. Both these captains operated most of these flights and Capt Ferdi acquired around 10,000 hours of flying on DC3. In 1964 when Air Ceylon purchased Hawker Siddleys, Turbo propeller aircraft, AVRO, Capt. Ferdi and Mawa went to England for training and brought the AVRO HS 748 to Colombo. Avro operated flights to Trichy, Madras, and to Male. DC3 was mainly used for domestic flights. In 1971 when Air Ceylon purchased Jet engine aircraft, Hawker Siddleys Trident - HS- 121, Capt. Ferdi with Capt. Mawa. was selected for Capts. training, and other Captains L.B.de Silva, Aussie Jayawardena, Anil Ramukwella, and Nadarajah too. Trident operated flights to Bombay, Singapore, and Malaysia. Capt. Ferdinand became a Chief, and Test pilot for the Trident,





and was appointed as the Manger Flight Operations. When I joined in 1972, Capt. Mawalegedra was the Assistant General Manager Operations, and was fortunate to have worked with them for 7 years. I believe in 1977, Capt. Ferdi took a break from Air Ceylon for a short time. In 1977, when Air Ceylon started independent operation of flights to European Sectors after the pool partnership with UTA French Airline, Ferdi was checked out as a Capt. on the DC 8, and flew till Air Ceylon ceased operations in 1979. In 1978 when there was some political unrest in the country, the Tamils were fleeing the capital out of fear, and we operated special flights to Jaffna on the DC-8. DC-8 never operated any flights to Jaffna. Capt. Ferdi alone operated all these flights with first officer R. Baladharan and Flight Engineer Vivekanandhan, and myself went on all these flights, as Flight Operations Staff for about a week. It was a difficult operation since not a Jet engine passenger aircraft operated any flights to Palaly Airport, Jaffna. The logistics and support were also an issue, as there were no aircraft steps available to reach the DC-8 aircraft door to disembark passengers. This was solved eventually by bringing the high pedestal steps that were used at the Nallur Temple for Chariot Festival. The Strength, LCN, and the Length of the Runway was also a factor considered, and Capt. Ferdinand assured then General Manager, James Lanerolle, that he could handle the operations safely. I was part of this planning with Baladharan, Udawella, and believe ex-colleague and friend, Capt. GAF was there too.

In 1979 when Air Ceylon was made to cease operations and Air Lanka was created by President Jayawardena, Capt. Ferdi joined Air Lanka and flew the Boeing 707, and Lockheed Tristars L1011 as Capt.

He did his last flight, was told (As I was working at Abu Dhabi Airport) at the age of 62, decided "to hang up his uniform" and moved to London to be with his sons.

"Once A Flier Is Always One", he felt his calling and returned to Air Lanka in 1988 and served as the Flight Operations Manager. At the end of 1989, he finally decided to lead a private life from an active, and well-deserved flying career spanning more than forty years, flying Tiger Moth, DC-3, Nord 262, Avro HS- 748, Trident HS-121, DC-8, Boeing 707, and Tristar L 1011, said Adios, and migrated to Melbourne to be with his sons. He still continued his passion in Aviation by listening, may be on a mobile Radio Scanner, the communications between the Pilots and the Air traffic control since he lived closer to the Moorabbin Airport, Melbourne, relaxing in his home garden.

He passed away on the 4th of April, 1996, while listening to the Tower frequencies, all of a sudden. He did not have any ailment or any unfavorable health conditions. His beloved Therese found him unresponsive in the chair in the garden and called the EMS, and was pronounced, Capt. had his last breath. His passing away all of a sudden came as a rude shock to many and was really personal for me. I still strongly feel in my heart that he opened the doors to the "Blue Skies" and gave me an opportunity to learn and pursue my passion in aviation even to this moment.

I never saw him getting mad at anyone during the seven years I worked with him, treated everyone with respect, and was always there to give a helping hand to the people down the line. He could have kept to himself thinking that he was a Captain, but Capt. Ferdi never had an Air about him, a real Human Being, who never lost his head. He was a gentleman, par excellence. I can quote many incidents of my association, and

the flights I did with him. Like to mention a few words of Therese, who lives with her sons in Melbourne, was there with Ferdi, every step of the way and I was fortunate enough to have known her like a family. Capt. Ferdi and Therese were exemplary hosts and fondly remember the moments I had at his home in Classen place. I Treasure his official letters to me signed by him as mementos, Xmas cards every year when I was in Abu Dhabi till his last days. Capt. Ferdinand flew to his heavenly abode on the 4th of April 1996, but the lives he touched, memories, his mesmerizing eyes, and laughter will always remain in many hearts, and for sure in my heart always. Capt. Ferdi always believed "The Vocation you pursue doesn't make you great, but the Inherent Qualities you carry, Will.

I want to say a big Thank You to both my ex-colleagues, good friends, and Ferdi's God son, Capt. Duleep Vethavanam, and Capt. G.A. Fernando for providing the information I needed on his flying career.

Capt. Ferdi, with great humility, I say that you were the Sweetest Prince, I met in my life, and you left an indelible impression in our lives.

Quoting Lenoardo Da Vinci, "When Once You Have Tasted Flight, You Will Forever Walk The Earth With Your Eyes Turned Skyward, For There You Have Been & There You Will Always Long To Return".

*So Long, Capt. Ferdinand,
A Job Well Done.
To Sir! With Love.*

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



SPECIAL FEATURE

Words of Peace

The Seeds of Good



Every human being has something good to contribute.

We each have the potential to do good or cause harm. So, we must plant the right seeds. You can grow something truly beautiful when you nurture the good in you.

Every human being has something to offer; every human being has something to contribute which is good. We have in us bad, and we have in us good.

A field, if not taken care of, will grow something! It won't be edible—it'll be weeds—but it will grow something. Plant the seeds of good; nurture the good, and you could grow beautiful fruits, beautiful flowers, beautiful vegetables.

Every single human being carries this potential in them. We don't recognize our potential—all we look at is "good: bad, good: bad." Is today according to my wishes? Then, "Thank you, Lord." If it is not according to my wishes? "What have I done wrong? Why do you punish me?"

And this is what the whole world does. The whole world does this. Look at this...look at this world today. There are people who hate each other! Why? Why? Why? I ask, "Why?"

What are you made out of? Seven-point-five billion people on the face of this earth are fundamentally made out of very simple things: calcium, carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, phosphorus, and nitrogen. Ninety-nine percent of a human being is made out of these six things.

All of us...all of us have the same fundamental needs. We need oxygen to breathe; we need water; we need food, and we need warmth. We need oxygen; without oxygen we will die very quickly. Without water, a few days, maybe two days, three days.... Without warmth, a few hours.... Without food, maybe, maybe a week, two weeks.... Everywhere, it's exactly the same!

But what divides us? When we are all the same, nature does not see the difference. Male? Man, made out of the same thing. Woman, made out of the same thing. Then why the differences? I know where the differences are! Right here, in our ideas! Not in our hearts—in our ideas. And this is where the problems are.

Thrive, Not Survive

"You are born. And you yearn to feel fulfilled. You should face this, because there is something you can do about that."

Focusing on what truly matters in life is much easier said than done. But there's joy and fulfillment in trying.

Prem Rawat:

The objective here is to thrive – not to survive, but to thrive – to enjoy every single day. It truly is a gift. And how precious it is? Krishna says that "Whatever you think about the most in your life, you're bound to remember that in your last moment."

So, before I add any more to that, what is it you think about the most? Is it gratitude? Because if it is, then that's what you're going to remember. Or is it solutions to your problems? Because you can't think about the solutions without thinking about the problem, right? So, you think about the problems and there they're going to be.

And most of your problems exist because you're alive. If you're not alive, you don't have those problems. Somehow, that which you set out to do that you wanted to do, you were not succeeding in it. That's the problem, and that has always been.

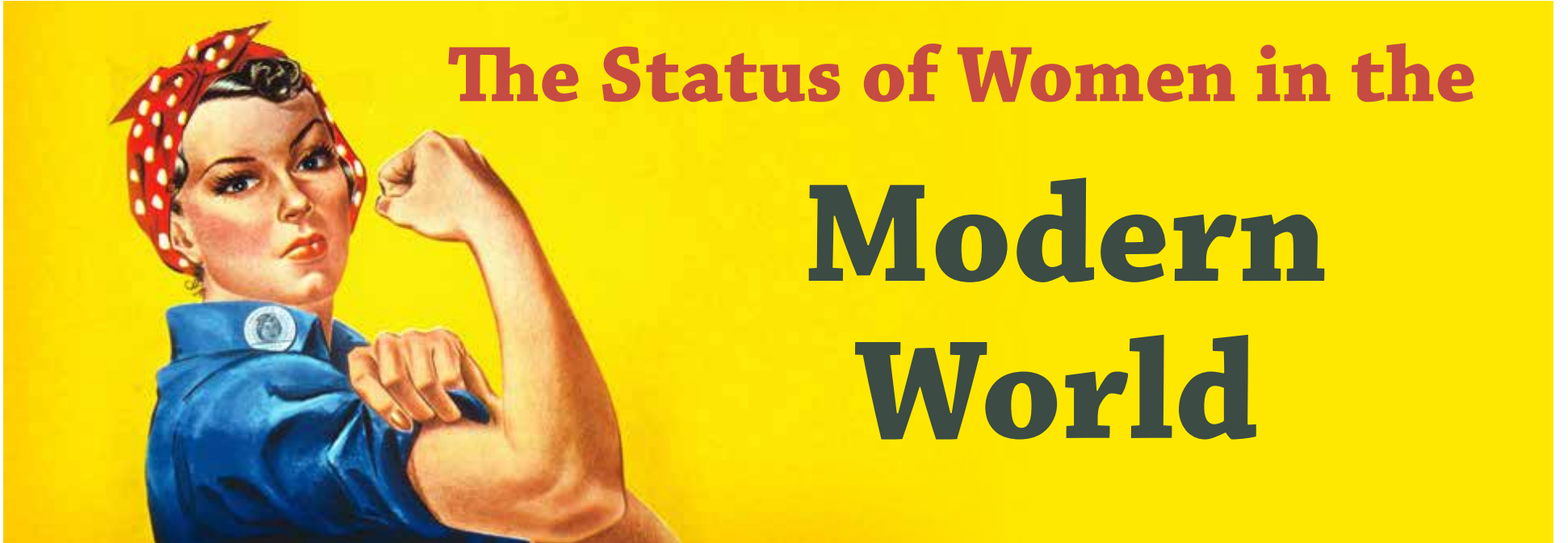
You are still born. And you yearn to feel fulfilled. And you should face this – because there is something you can do about that. It's not like that is an impossible dream. You can do something about that.

And all of these things that we've been talking about this morning, yesterday, these are all – they seem to be very clear indications that there is no clarity as to the aim of why you are here. This will affect you this way; this will affect you this way; this will have a this; this will have ... Why are you here?

What is the purpose? What is the aim? What is possible? Why did you come to Knowledge in the first place? What attracted you to this? What was said that you went "Yeah"?

Let that which is beneficial to you sink in. What is not, throw it away. Now, mind you, it's easier to say that than to do that. Okay? It's much, much easier to say that than do that. But try. Just try! Little by little by little, you'll get good at it. That's all it takes: conscious effort. Conscious effort.

- Prem Rawat www.premrawat.com www.timelesstoday.com



By: J A Rajah

A. The Status of Women in Yesteryears :

Women have faced numerous challenges and obstacles throughout history, particularly in African and Eastern countries. They were often treated as second-class citizens, deprived of basic rights and opportunities, including education. In many households, girls were not allowed to attend school or pursue higher education, while boys were given every advantage to succeed in life. Women were expected to be homemakers and support their husbands, often performing strenuous physical labor, such as carrying water from distant sources and helping with farming. In some African cultures, men were even permitted to have multiple wives, while women were left to bear the brunt of the work, including bearing children and raising them alone. Despite these challenges, women have continued to persevere and break down barriers. Today, we see women leading nations, running successful businesses, and making significant contributions to various fields. It is our responsibility to support and encourage women to chase their dreams and reach their full potential, and to work towards creating a world where gender equality is not just a dream, but a reality. The status of women is on a constant rise in today's world. Women have been demolishing barriers and breaking stereotypes that have been in place for centuries. Today, women are leading nations, running successful businesses, and making significant contributions to various fields. With each passing day, more and more women are achieving great heights and leaving their mark. The increasing status of women today is a testament to their strength, perseverance, and determination. It's our responsibility to support and encourage women to chase their dreams and reach their full potential. We must unite to create a world where gender equality is not just a dream but a reality.

B. The Menial Treatment of Women in the Developing Nations :

Women in those days were treated more or like slaves in African and Eastern countries. They were deprived of education, especially higher education. Girls were rarely sent out of their homes for any functions. Boys were given all the opportunities. Even in ordinary homes when it came to clash of interests, boys were given every opportunity to educate themselves and occupy good positions in society. Girls were considered homemakers and only as help-mates for their husbands. In Africa, a man was allowed to have more than one wife. They moved from hut to hut having intercourse with their wives in turn. Women did all the hard work bearing the children, looking after them, helping their husbands in the fields, carrying water from distant sources, and several other menial jobs. They believe that it leads to the cleanliness and fidelity of women. Even now cruelty against women continues in Gaza, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, and Ghana. The genitals of women are mutilated. Violence against women and girls remains a prevailing issue globally and is particularly pronounced in Africa. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns led to a surge in reported cases of partner violence in the continent.

C. The Progress in the State of Women in the Contemporary World :

March 8th is the International Day of the Women. Today women are treated equally in almost all the nations of the world. They are given equal access to education. In Tamil Nadu, India, Subramanya Bharathy flung broadcast the idea of equality through his persuasive poems in a very spectacular way. His ideas expressed in his poem 'Puthumaip Penn' had all the ingredients essential for a social reformation that placed women in equal positions. "Paddangal aalvathum, saddangal cheyvathum parinil penkal nadatha vanthuom,

eddum arivinil anukinge penn illaipillai aan enru kummiyaddi"- which means that women will be able to graduate, make legislation; women will not be subservient to men in any way. The current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu gives every opportunity for Tamil women to improve their status and financial assistance- Rs1000/- for each woman - to help them overcome their initial problems. Mr. Stalin said, "In 33 months, I have distributed assistance to people to the tune of Rs.6,569.76 crore in various districts. He said every month, 1,15,16,27 women were receiving Rs. 1000/- under the Kalaingnar Help Plan". He has vouched to put Bharathi's dreams to reality. Ideas grow well when watered by the words of inspiring poets. Now women are doing almost all the jobs that men can do. They are in the army, navy, and police. They have become space travelers and mountain climbers. Sex is no barrier to success in life. When a man is educated only he advances in life; when a woman is educated the whole family -the children in a great way. Only an educated mother can give all the 'push' necessary for the children to progress well in life.,

D. Women's Status in the Modern World :

Women's status in the world has improved significantly. We now live in a world where women, girls, and gender-diverse people live free from inequality, poverty, and violence. Women have now become leaders of countries- as prime ministers, chief ministers, vice-chancellors, and leading academics. The world is a better place because of their positive leadership. Jacinda Arden prime minister of New Zealand, Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, Sarah Gillons, Professor of Vaccinology at the University of Oxford, Margaret Thatcher of U.K, Kamala Harris of the U.S., and Indra Gandhi of India are some of the outstanding women who have shown the world that women are capable of exemplary leadership qualities.

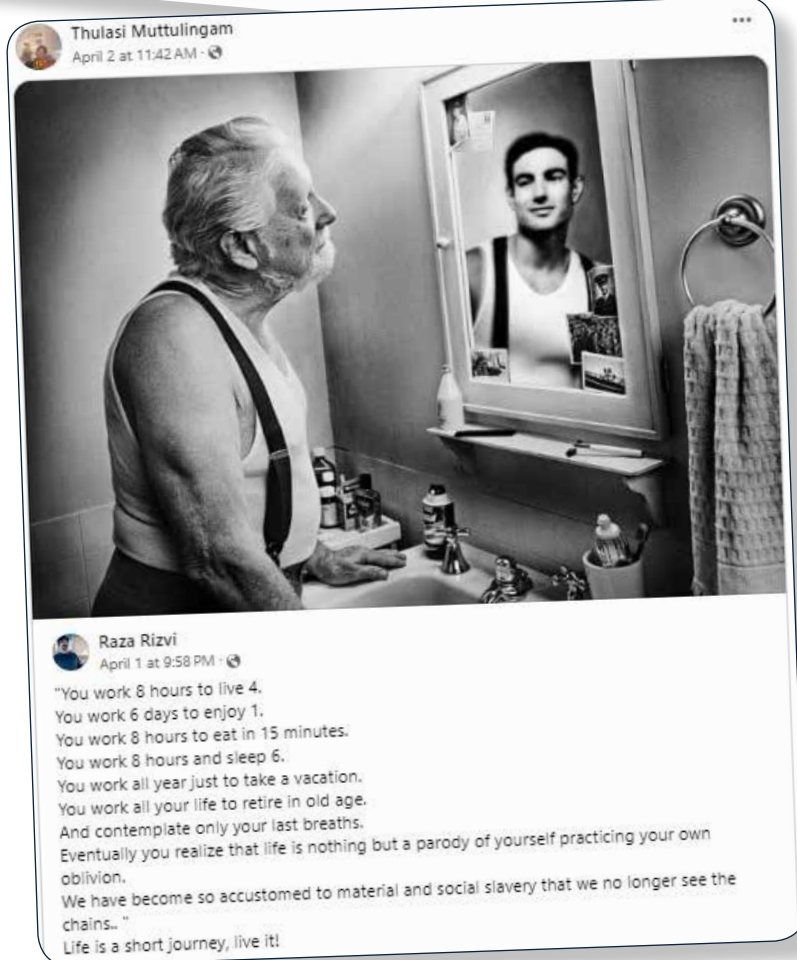
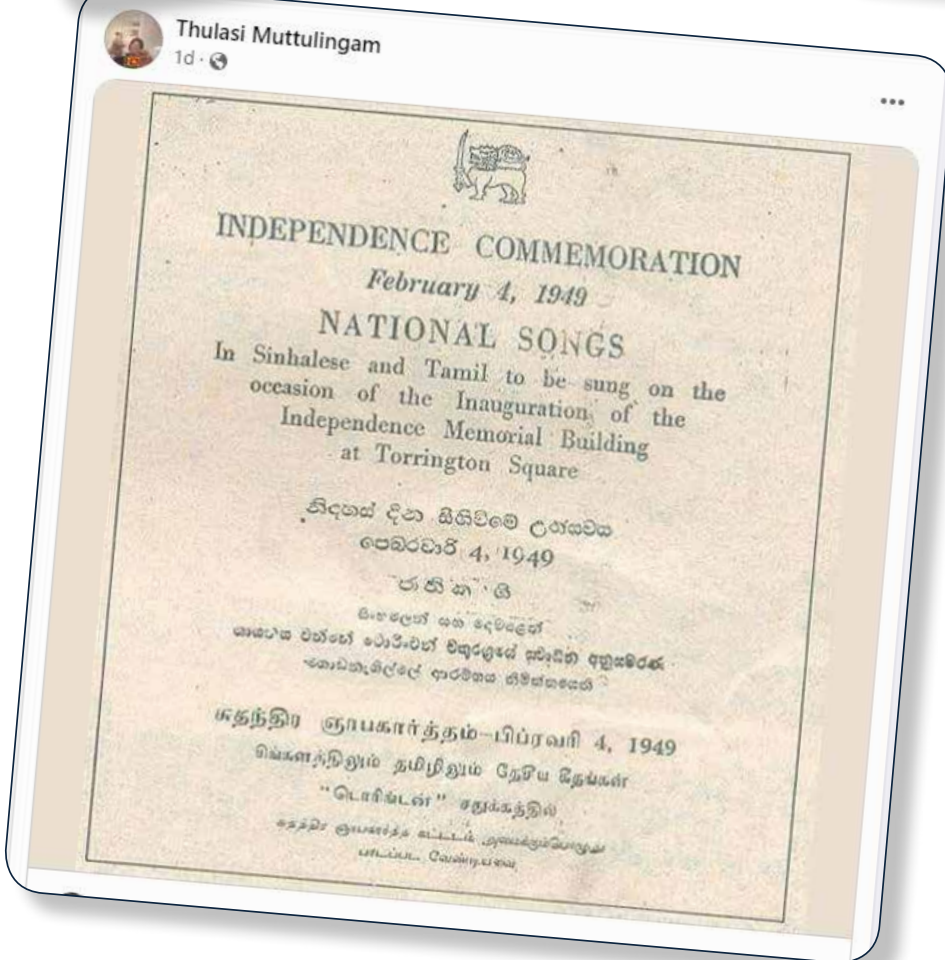
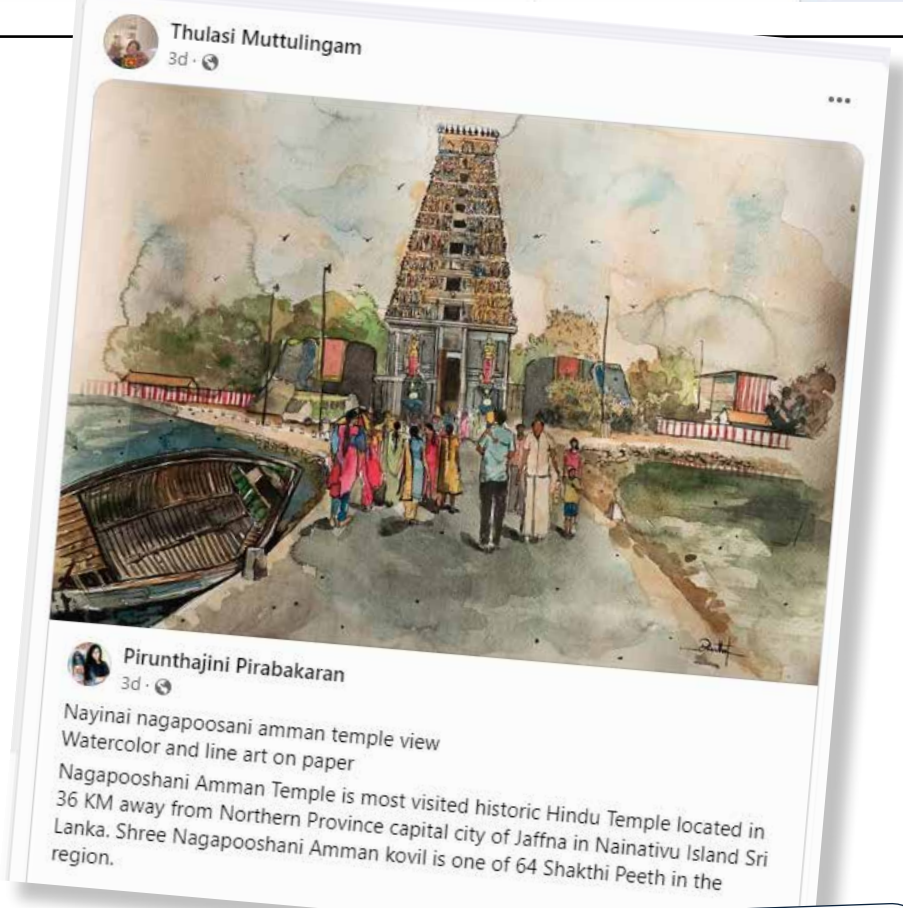


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SPECIAL FEATURE

Thirukkural the book of universal ethics

By: Kumar Punithavel

Greetings to everyone. You may wonder why this subject has been chosen for discussion. Today the Tamils have migrated around the world due to the violence and persecution in their home lands. Their descendants are growing up without being aware of the past glory of their own race. It is the great Tamil poet Kaniyan Poonkudranar - who lived in the Sangam era, which starts about six centuries before the common era and goes on two hundred centuries into the common era - proclaims, in a poem, 'The world is my hamlet and humanity my kin'. What a noble thought to live by!

Tamil is accepted as one of the oldest living languages of the world, if not the oldest, with around eighty million people speaking Tamil. A great poet and freedom fighter of India Bharathi says in one of his poems, 'Tamil Nadu gained fame sky high, by giving St. Thiruvalluvar to the world'. But unfortunately, the diaspora Tamil children have not benefited from the famed Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar's contribution of wisdom to the world.

The famous Russian philosopher/writer Leo Tolstoy was profoundly influenced by reading the English translation of this monumental book. He was impelled to write letters in its praise to his pen friend Mahatma Gandhi, who is hailed as father of modern India, taking the path of peaceful resistance. In his letters he quoted extensively from chapter 32 titled Non-Violence. To quote a couplet from this chapter (#314):

Doing good-turns, put them to shame
Thus chide the evil who do harm. OR
Reprove by good turns them who do harm
Thus putting them to shame.
இன்னா செய்தாரை ஒறுத்தல் அவர்நாண
நன்னயஞ் செய்து விடல்

The first complete translation in English was done in the 1880's by Rev G. U. Pope, a Canadian born scholar who went to do evangelical work in south India. He later retired from Oxford University as Professor in Tamil. In the introduction he states, 'Their English friends, in teaching them all that west has to impart, will find little to unteach in the moral lessons of the Kural'.

Let us have an in-depth look into this book. Around two thousand years ago lived St. Thiruvalluvar, who is believed to be a weaver by trade. He lived an average householder's life. His wife Vasugi was said to be a very caring and loving wife. St. Thiruvalluvar has composed 1330 couplets, on 133 subjects. But in his whole life he composed only one quatrain. That too he is said to have composed on Vasuki's death. Returning home after performing all the last rites, he poured out his intense grief in that quatrain:

'Sweet as my daily food, Oh, full of love! Oh wife!
Dutiful ever to my word. Soothing my feet.
The last to sleep, the first to rise, Oh gentle one!
By night, henceforth, what slumber to mine eyes?

In Tamil language there are three holy literary works that have been universalised. They are Thirukkural on life, Thiruvagasam on heart, and Thirumanthiram on soul. Of these, Thirukkural has won the greatest appreciation of the world, as signified by the following observations of eminent intellectuals enthralled by the Kural:

Mahatma Gandhi:

The maxims of Valluvar have touched my soul.

Dr. Albert Schweizer:

With sure strokes, the Kural draws the ideal of simple ethical



humanity.

Sir A. Grant (author of The Ethics of Aristotle): Humanity, charity and forgiveness of injuries, being Christian qualities, are not described by Aristotle. Now these three are everywhere forcibly inculcated by the Tamil moralist.

Dr. Karl Graul, (German Lutheran missionary 1814-1864. German and Latin Translator of Kural) No translation can convey any idea of its charming effect. It is truly an apple of gold in a network of silver

Rev. Emmons E. White (Christian Missionary in South India): Thirukkural is a synthesis of the best moral teachings of the world.

The Book:

Thirukkural consists of of 1330 couplets rendered in 133 chapters, with each chapter composed of ten couplets. Further the book is grouped in three section, namely Virtue, Wealth and Pleasure. It is a point of interest that he never used the word 'Tamil' anywhere in the book. However, he starts the first couplet with the first letter of Tamil language

'Ah' (அ) and ends the last couplet with the last letter of Tamil language 'in'(ன்). Tamils during his time had one major goal as the ultimate aspiration of life which is to attain beatitude. But not St. Thiruvalluvar. For him if you live a righteous life then you will be placed among the Gods in heaven. Afterall isn't that the goal of all religions? As he states in couplet #50 in the chapter titled 'Domestic life':

(He is a man of divine worth
Who lives in ideal home on earth). OR
He who lives a righteous life in this world
Will be placed among the heaven-dwelling gods.
வையத்துள் வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்பவன் வான்உறையும்
தெய்வத்துள் வைக்கப் படும்

Praise of God: The first chapter of the book is for invoking blessings from God. St. Thiruvalluvar is a manifest theist, who subscribes to the concept of renunciation. However, he visualizes a universal God, nameless and without sectarian divisions. In the very first couplet, noting that interestingly the first letter in all languages is the sound 'Ah', he states that just as the alpha sound stand first in all languages, primordial God takes precedence in all the world:

A, as its first of letters, every tongue maintains;
The Primal Deity is first through all the world's domains
அகர முதல எழுத்தெல்லாம் ஆதி
பகவன் முதற்றே உலகு

It is note-worthy that in all theosophic references he is scrupulously generic throughout, not mentioning by name any particular deity or religion, nor does he specify any language. In the first chapter titled 'In Praise of God' he mentions the feet of God in couplets #'s 2,4,7,8,9 and 10, but never his form or name. Interestingly in the book mentioned earlier Thiruvagasam, St. Manickavasagar mentions God thus: 'To Him, who hath nor name, nor form, A thousand sacred names sing we and beat Telloanam'. (What does this word mean? I cannot find it in any dictionary I have) It must be pointed out, however, that he does mention the names of various characters in Indian mythology to explain his view. He believes God is free from desire, nor has aversion towards a person in any way, but judges according to their deeds.

Domestic life: He extols the house holders' life in couplet # 45, by saying that if love and virtue in the household reign, this is of

SPECIAL FEATURE



life the perfect grace and gain. In couplet #43 he says the foremost responsibility of a family life is to serve duly the following five: God, guests, kindred, ancestors and oneself. He clearly points out the rest of the world stands on the pillar of the householder

Having children: In domestic life, St. Thiruvalluvar clearly gives importance to having children. In the first couplet (#61) of this chapter, he says as follows:

The world no higher bliss bestows
Than children virtuous and wise.

பெறுமவற்றுள் யாமறிவ தில்லை அறிவறிந்த
மக்கட்பே றல்ல பிற

It is not a massive mansion and other wealth, but an intelligent child is the greatest boon a person can get, says our sage poet. In one couplet he says, far sweeter than divine nectar is simple boiled rice stirred by the small hands of one's own child. He goes to the extent of saying that those who bear children of blameless character will be untouched by evil for seven births. Though there is no record to say whether St. Thiruvalluvar had any child, he extensively praises having children. In couplet # 67 he observes the duty of a father to the child as follows;

A father's duty to his son is
To seat him in front of the wise.

தந்தை மகற்காற்றும் நன்றி அவையத்து
முந்தி இருப்பச் செயல்

He spells out the duty of the child to the father in the last couplet (#70) of this chapter;

To sire, what best requital can by grateful child be done?
To make men say, 'What merit gained the father such a son?'

மகன் தந்தைக் காற்றும் உதவி இவன்தந்தை
என்றோற்றான் கொல்லெனும் சொல்

Chastity: A society is built on the foundation of families. Unless these families are stable the society is bound to scatter like potatoes from a torn bag. In keeping to the tradition of his era around two thousand years ago he glorifies women in the chapter# 4 titled 'Life's Support of Partner', he praises the significance of the wife in a family.

In couplet # 54 he states:

If woman might of chastity retain,
What choicer treasure doth the world contain?

பெண்ணின் பெருந்தக்க யாவுள கற்பென்னும்
திண்மைஉண் டாகப் பெறின்

For a man the greatest treasure he could have is a chaste woman as wife. One may raise an observation as what about men? Certainly, I will come to this. In this chapter the Saint is mainly discussing the support of a man. Let me quote one more couplet from this chapter. In couplet 53 he states:

There is no lack within the house, where wife in worth excels,
There is no luck within the house, where wife dishonoured dwells.

இல்லதென் இல்லவள் மாண்பானால் உள்ளதென்
இல்லவள் மாணாக் கடை

In this chapter the saint poet attributes several good qualities to a wife, which clearly appears male-oriented. However, in chapters 15, 91 and 92 he gives guidelines for the men. One can note never he valued men as the choicest treasure in them. (Meaning not clear) Let's view them one by one. Chapter 15, is titled 'Not Coveting Another's Wife'. As a sample consider one of the couplets in this chapter, #146. Here the saint warns not only a married man but married or single if a person covets another's wife he will have four taints on him:

Hatred, sin, fear, and shame - these four
Shall stain adulterers evermore.

பகைபாவம் அச்சம் பழியென நான்கும்
இகவாவாம் இல்லிறப்பான் கண்

There are ten couplets warning men of such wrong actions. Again, in chapter # 92 titled 'Wanton Women' he is warning men going

after not only others' partners but also prostitute. It clearly shows St. Thiruvalluvar stressed sexual continence for both men and women. One may wonder why he states there is no choicer treasure than a chaste woman, how about the same for a chaste man? This he deals with in the chapter #98 on 'Greatness'. In couplet # 974, he says;

Greatness, like woman's chastity,
Is guarded by self veracity.

ஒருமை மகளிரே போலப் பெருமையும்
தன்னைத்தான் கொண்டொழுகின் உண்டு

He expects the man to be true to the vow he takes in a marriage not only because he should be true to the partner but to be true to himself that he refrains from cheating on his partner.

Love / kindness: Here too St. Thiruvalluvar differs with others, and says (in couplet #76) that love is essential to both the virtuous and the valorous who combat evil:

The unwise associate love only with virtuous behaviour
But it goes also with valor

அறத்திற்கே அன்புசார் பென்ப அறியார்
மறத்திற்கும் அ.தே துணை

Summing up the importance of love, in the last couplet (#80) of this chapter he states it is only with love enshrined in the heart that one truly lives:

The mainstay of life is love alone;
Without it beings are but bones encased in skin.

அன்பின் வழிய துயிர்நிலை அ.திலார்க்கு
என்புதோல் போர்த்த உடம்பு

Hospitality: Interestingly it is Thiruvalluvar who comes out with a unique reason for maintaining a home. In the first couplet of this chapter, he says the whole purpose of earning wealth and maintaining a home is to provide hospitality to guests. In the next couplet he further declares that it is a heinous crime to hoard one's meal when a guest is present even if it happens to be the nectar of immortality. He goes on to say (in couplet #86) that being eager to welcome guests one after another is a sacred deed:

Who tends a guest and looks for the next
Is a welcome guest in heaven's feast.

செல்விருந் தோம்பி வருவிருந்து பார்த்திருப்பான்
நல்விருந்து வானத் தவர்க்கு

Thiruvalluvar has dealt with various aspects of life, so much so whenever one is in doubt in life's questions there will always be the answer for it in his Thirukkural. He is the universal preceptor and always gave reasons for his teachings.

Alcoholism: St. Thiruvalluvar was a strong advocate of abstention from alcohol. Nothing was mentioned about smoking, probably because smoking had not become a common habit. Each couplet on the chapter 93 on this subject is a gem. In couplet 922 he says;

Drink not liquor, if it is desired, let it be drunk by those
Who care not for esteem of the eminent.

cz;zw;f fs;is czpYz;f rhd;Nwhuhd;
vz;zg; glNtz;lh jhu;

Even the all forgiving mother will find it unbearable to see her own son a drunkard, how despicable then will it be in the eyes of the wise people? Thus he states in couplet #923:

The drunkard's enjoyment pains even mother's face
How vile must it look for the wise?

ஈன்றாள் முகத்தேயும் இன்னாதால் என்மற்றுச்
சான்றோர் முகத்துக் களி

Gambling: Another activity that causes misery to many while making gains for a few is gambling. Each of these chapters with ten couplets deals extensively (with what? Meaning not clear) but I pick one or two as sample. After all when we want to check whether the pot of rice is cooked, we only check a grain of rice and start eating



SPECIAL FEATURE

the pot of rice. The first couplet itself expounds the situation. Let's see couplet #931;

Avoid gambling, although you may win
Swallowing bait-hook what does fish gain?
வேண்டற்க வென்றிடனும் சூதினை வென்றதாஉம்
தூண்டிற் பொன் மீன்விழுங்கி அற்று

I am sure you would have heard about the beginner's luck, which usually hooks you into addiction. But would you ever think to relate this to fishing? The great moguls of gambling companies would not be in business if the person who indulges in gambling wins. Whatever one wins is only the bait, our saint says. Gambling is done to gain wealth.

So next let's see what St. Thiruvalluvar has to say about wealth.

Wealth: The saint observes that even a worthless person would be considered worthy if he has wealth. In the first couplet (#751) on the subject of acquiring wealth he says;

Nothing exists save wealth that can
Change man of nought to worthy man.
பொருளால் லவரைப் பொருளாகச் செய்யும்
பொருளால் தில்லை பொருள்

However, one should try and gain wealth, he goes on to say, but wealth should be acquired by mindful means, in a manner that harms no one. Such wealth will bring both piety and pleasure, he says in couplet # 754. He goes on to say in the next couplet # 755, wealth acquired without compassion and love is to be cast off, not embraced. In couplet # 332, under the subject of instability he says that amassing great wealth is gradual, like gathering of a theater crowd. Its dispersal is sudden, like that same crowd departing. Wealth is great to acquire by fair means, but one has to be prepared for its sudden disappearance too.

Learning: St Thiruvalluvar places great focus on education. In the first couplet on the subject of learning, St. Thiruvalluvar instructs how one's learning should be. The couplet (#391) goes as follows;

Learn flawlessly whatever you learn,
Having learned, by it scrupulously live.
கற்க கசடறக் கற்பவை கற்றபின்
நிற்க அதற்குத் தக

In this couplet he emphasizes that it is the duty of a learner not only to learn, but thereafter to keep his conduct worthy of that learning. In the same chapter he says the learning a man secures in one birth will secure his well-being in seven births. Further, he observes in couplet 393 In learning he observed in couplet #393 that the learned have eyes that see, and the unlearned have two open sores in their face. And in the last couplet of the chapter, he says a man's learning is an imperishable and precious wealth and no other possession is as golden. Wherever one goes the person's learning will go with that person.

Ignorance: In the very next chapter St. Thiruvalluvar discusses the neglect of learning. He starts the chapter with the statement that speaking to a learned gathering without ample knowledge is like playing a dice game without the board. But more interestingly he says in couplet #403

Even unread men are good and wise
If before the wise they hold their tongue.
கல்லா தவரும் நனிநல்லர் கற்றார்முன்
சொல்லா திருக்கப் பெறின்

In couplet #410, he goes on to state as men are to wild beasts, so are the masters of brilliant texts to other men:

Like beasts before men, grace who gain,
Before scholars of shining lore.
விலங்கொடு மக்க ளனையர் இலங்குநூல்
கற்றாரோ டேனை யவர்

As beasts by the side of men, so are other men by the side of scholars who are learned in celebrated works.

In short, in this chapter St. Thiruvalluvar advises dispel your

ignorance and learn you must.

Veracity and Truthfulness: The definition given for truthfulness by St. Thiruvalluvar is very interesting. In the first couplet on this subject, he raises a question and answers it. What is truthfulness, he asks and goes on to say it is speaking words which are totally free from harmful effects. This he follows saying, even falsehood is of the nature of truth, if it renders faultless results. In other words, even falsehood has the nature of truth, if it is beneficial without being faulty. In the very next couplet (#293), he suggests not to speak as truth what he knows is false, for his conscience will burn him when he has lied in couplet # 293. Here is that couplet;

Let not a man knowingly lie
His conscience will scorch him consequently
தன்நெஞ் சறிவது பொய்யற்க பொய்த்தபின்
தன்நெஞ்சே தன்னைச் சுடும்

Such was St. Thiruvalluvar's stand on lying, now let us see his stand on pleasure.

Pleasure: In the third part of his book which starts from chapters # 109 to 133 of which first half is about pre marriage pleasures in relationship which is called Kalaviyal which goes on up to chapter #115, and the second on as Katpiyal which of course deals post marriage. The title of six chapters on pre marriage are 1. Stress by suitable companion, 2. Identify the signs. 3. Rejoicing in the embrace. 4. Praise of the lass's beauty. 5. Greatness of love (in two section his and hers). 6. Announcement of rumors (his and hers). The rest are all about various pleasures of married life.

The first couplet describes the stress caused by the one he loves. He is confused whether she is a celestial, or a choice peahen, or a human being? His mind is perplexed he says. Let's see that couplet.

Is it an angel? A fair peacock
Or jewelled belle? To my mind a shock? OR
Goddess? or peafowl rare? She whose ears rich jewels wear,
Is she a maid of human kind? All wildered is my mind.
அணங்குகொல் ஆய்மயில் கொல்லோ கனங்குழை
மாதர்கொல் மாலுமென் நெஞ்சு

In the very next chapter, he begins she has double witchery in the glances of her liquid eyes. One glance is a glance that brings him pain; the other heals him the pain. He goes on to say there in this wild world the lass he loves brings with the wide bracelet simultaneous enjoyment for the senses five - sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. In another couplet he states that there is no wine that can bring pleasure not only by sight and also to the thought, which this damsel gives. As for the feelings of the lass, the poet writes that she has stopped eating for the fear that the lover who is in her heart may get burnt. One may wonder at the imagination of the saint poet. Here is that couplet# 1128;

My lover abides in my heart
I fear hot food lest he feels hot. OR
Within my heart my lover dwells; from food I turn
That smacks of heat, lest he should feel it burn.
நெஞ்சத்தார் காத லவராக வெய்துண்டல்
அஞ்சுகும் வேபாக் கறிந்து

From chapters #115 to the end he gracefully expresses the carnal pleasures of married life. As a sample I will take the last couplet from the last chapter titled 'The pleasure of temporary variance'. Even among two who are deeply in love, there are times of feigned quarrels. It is very much akin to eating something spicy while eating something very sweet. The poet goes on to say that the one who gives up and surrenders in the quarrel is the winner in the battle, for when they embrace after the quarrel, that person would enjoy the pleasure the best.

I am yet to come across a religious book that offers guidance in enjoying carnal pleasure, though it is inborn in all living human and animals. It is foolish to classify that as a sin, provided it is enjoyed within the accepted norms of life. In conclusion let us remind ourselves of the couplet we observed at the very beginning of this discourse, couplet #50;

He is a man of divine worth
Who lives in ideal home on earth.



UNSCRUPULOUSNESS



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By: J A Rajah

Unscrupulous characters are exactly like human beings; such resemblance, one does not encounter anywhere else.

**“Makkale polvar ayavar avaranne,
Oppar yaang andathu il”**

மக்களே போல்வர் கயவர் அவரன்ன
ஒப்பாரி யாங்கண்ட தில்

Blessed are the unscrupulous, because they do not suffer the pangs of conscience, which price those who have principles. The unprincipled are like the Gods because they can act as they please. Ignoble men, when they encounter lower breed, will try to surpass them, with greater arrogance among the same line. Fear is the major motive, the force of the base, but desire too, can activate them to a small extent.



Valluvar's Views

**“Array parai polvar ayavartham edda,
Marai piraru uiythu uraikkalan”**

அறைபறை அன்னர் கயவர்தாம் கேட்ட
மறைபிறர்க்கு உய்த்துரைக்க லான்

Like a tomtom, the base one will broadcast whatever information they come by..

Except for those who twist their hands and break their jaws, mean characters, will not even shake their food-moistened fingers. Good men of virtue give charity, at the mere call for help, but ignoble ones will give only when crushed like the sugar cane. If base men see their neighbors well-fed and clothed, they will hasten to discover vices in them. The idea is that envy and jealousy are basic characteristics of worthless, mean, and unscrupulous men. What is the use of unscrupulous men in this world? If misfortune comes, they will quickly sell themselves to the highest bidder.

(Kural:1071-1080)



EDUCATION & CAREER

How to Succeed in School



Do you wonder how you can succeed in school? Well, there are a few main areas that you need to focus on to achieve this goal. Succeeding in school is the dream of many kids which typically starts in high school. This is because their high school grades determine their post secondary options. Also kids in general are not sure how they can succeed in school. Some think that they will succeed if they do their homework everyday, while others think they will succeed if they ask their teachers a lot of questions in class.



By: Mahinan Mathyalagan,
Grade 10 Student

In order to succeed in school, you must focus in class, get extra help and have good habits.

Firstly, to succeed in school you need to focus in class. Focusing in class may look different for everybody, but primarily you need to first listen to the teacher's lesson. You can do this successfully by not worrying about anything that is happening around you, and just taking in the information that your teacher is telling you. To focus in class, you also need to make sure that you are not distracted in class, by closing your laptop screen and putting your phone away. You also need to make sure that you are not listening to music with your headphones during a lesson because it will not let you focus in class. To demonstrate to your teacher and to help you stay focussed in class, you need to be taking notes as this will help you better understand the lesson. These are all of the things that you need to do in order to stay focussed in class and succeed in school.

Secondly, to succeed in school you need to get extra help. This may look different for every student as some students may need more assistance than others. In terms of getting extra help you can first ask your teacher for assistance outside of your regular class time. This may be during recesses on designated days of the week or even before or after school. If you understand a new topic when it is taught in class with the extra assistance from your teacher you are fine but if you still do not understand it, you may want a tutor. A tutor will work with you and address the area you are having trouble with to help you understand and become crystal clear in that area whether that be math or science. If you understand the concept after the teacher's lesson and additional help from the teacher, but still are not confident you can turn to YouTube for help. Seeing problems being solved and explained by others, might help you understand it. These are all of the ways that you can get extra help and succeed in school.

Thirdly, to succeed in school you must have good habits. You should start off by having a good sleeping schedule that you follow every school night. A good sleeping schedule means that from Sunday to Thursday, you get at least 9 hours of sleep. That can be from 9pm to 6am or 9:30pm to 6:30 am, whatever gives you at least 9 hours of sleep and ensures that you are awake in time to get ready and go to school. You should follow this schedule from Sunday to Thursday because when you wake up in the morning you have school. Not only is it important to rest each school

night, but it is also important to review your notes and what you learned everyday after school. This will help you prepare for tests in advance. This means that once you are made aware of an upcoming test, you start reviewing your notes and getting ready for it. Furthermore, to succeed in school it is important to maintain good health. This includes having a well balanced diet, adequate exercise, enjoyable recreational activities and good family relations. These are all additional problems that will prevent you from achieving your goals. Therefore you need to have good habits to help you succeed in school.

In conclusion, succeeding in school is the goal of all students. Most importantly, if you want to be successful in school you need to listen to the teacher's lesson to focus in class, get a tutor or watch videos to help yourself review the lesson you learned after school and to build good habits by having a good sleep schedule. Following these three ideas will ensure your success in the future. These are the ways you can succeed in school and continue into post secondary and achieve your dreams.



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Applications are now open for the Explore Brampton Youth Pass

For the third year, the City of Brampton has launched the Explore Brampton Youth Pass to encourage local youth to discover our city and get active this summer.

Last year, 1,680 Explore Brampton Youth Passes were distributed. This year, the City of Brampton is offering up to 2,500 passes for Brampton residents aged 12 to 16 years old. Priority will be given to vulnerable youth. Passholders will get free fares on Brampton Transit and gain free access to select Brampton recreation drop-in programs, including swimming, skating and select sports. Passes are valid in the summer months between July 1 to September 4, 2024.

Applications for the Explore Brampton Youth Pass are now being accepted online. Eligible residents can apply [here](#). Applications close at 5 pm on May 19, 2024.

For more information on the program, visit brampton.ca/ebyp.

“Empowering Brampton’s youth to explore, engage and thrive, the Explore Brampton Youth Pass ignites a summer of discovery and activity. With free transit and access to recreation, it’s more than a pass, it’s a gateway to opportunity. As Brampton continues to champion growth and development for young residents, this pass reinforces our commitment to fostering a future where every youth can flourish.”

- **Patrick Brown**,
Mayor, City of Brampton

“As Chair of Community Services, I am proud to announce the continuation of the Explore Brampton Youth Pass program for its third consecutive year. This initiative underscores our dedication to empowering Brampton’s youth by providing opportunities for exploration and physical activity. With an increased offering of up to 2,500 passes, prioritizing vulnerable youth, we aim to extend the reach of this impactful program even further. I encourage all eligible youth to seize this opportunity and embark on a summer filled with discovery and growth.”

- **Rowena Santos**,
Regional Councillor, Wards 1 & 5;
Chair, Community Services

About Brampton

As one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada, Brampton is home to nearly 700,000 people and more than 90,000 businesses. People are at the heart of everything we do. We are energized by our diverse communities, we attract investment, and we are embarking on a journey to lead technological and environmental innovation. We partner for progress to build a healthy city that is safe, sustainable, and successful. Connect with us on X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. Learn more at www.brampton.ca

CITY OF BRAMPTON CELEBRATES 50TH BIRTHDAY BY INTRODUCING FREE ANNUAL RECREATION MEMBERSHIPS FOR SENIORS



In celebration of Brampton’s 50th birthday since incorporating in 1974, the City is giving eligible seniors 70 and older a free Annual Recreation Membership, beginning June 1, 2024. This initiative aims to support the well-being of local seniors by increasing access to more recreational activities offered by the City of Brampton.

Previously, the City of Brampton offered free Swim and Skate Memberships and Walking Track Memberships to residents 70 and older. With access to a free City of Brampton 70+ Annual Recreation Membership, local seniors can enjoy a wider variety of amenities and programs such as:

- ▶ Fitness Centre Membership
- ▶ Racquet Membership
- ▶ Swimming and Skating Membership
- ▶ Walking Track Membership
- ▶ Most general interest programs
- ▶ Fitness programs
- ▶ Swimming and skating group lessons
- ▶ Aquafit drop-ins
- ▶ Fitness drop-ins
- ▶ Public swims and skates
- ▶ Shinny and shoot around drop-ins
- ▶ Sports drop-ins
- ▶ Dance drop-ins

Most general interest drop-ins (some drop-ins require additional fees)

Residents can visit any City of Brampton recreation centre to verify their eligibility. Individuals interested in signing up for a free 70+ Annual Recreation Membership must provide:

- proof of being a Brampton resident, such as a driver’s licence or a letter with a home address
- ▶ proof of identity and age
- ▶ proof of Canadian citizenship or being a permanent resident.

Starting June 1, residents who have confirmed their eligibility and registered for a 70+ Annual Recreation Membership will be able to utilize it and enroll in drop-in programs. On June 10, 70+ Annual Recreation Membership holders can register for summer programs included in their membership at no additional cost. These programs will begin in July 2024.

Brampton is proud to be home to more than 57,000 residents 70 years old and older. Recognizing the connection between physical activity and better health, mental wellness, and emotional well-being, the City remains committed to empowering residents to lead healthy and active lives through its recreation amenities. To learn more about the new free 70+ Annual Recreation Membership and to review eligibility requirements, visit brampton.ca/memberships.

Save the date

Join the City of Brampton to celebrate Seniors Month with a 70+ Annual Recreation Membership kick-off event.

Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024

Time: 11 am

Location: Cassie Campbell Community Centre, 1050 Sandalwood Pkwy W., Brampton, ON L7A 0K9

Additional Resources

For more information about the City’s recreation memberships, visit brampton.ca/memberships.

The City of Brampton is committed to ensuring residents have the services and support they need to stay healthy, age safely and enjoy a high quality of life. For more information about the City’s supports, programs and activities for seniors, visit brampton.ca/seniors.

“As we celebrate Brampton’s 50th birthday since incorporation, we are taking a significant step towards promoting inclusivity and the overall health of our senior residents by introducing our new free 70+ Annual Recreation Membership. This initiative recognizes the valuable contributions of our seniors and ensures they can stay healthy and participate in fun recreational activities without financial barriers.”

- **Patrick Brown**, Mayor, City of Brampton

“Seniors have played a vital role in shaping our community and deserve to continue to lead healthy and active lives and age with dignity. This new free 70+ Annual Recreation Membership reflects our commitment to creating an age-friendly and accessible community. By eliminating financial obstacles, we proudly support our seniors in maintaining their well-being with free, local recreational activities.”

- **Rowena Santos**, Regional Councillor, Wards 1 and 5; Chair, Community Services, City of Brampton

“We are excited to roll out this initiative promoting active and healthy aging. Our recreation team is ready to extend a helping hand, assisting with the verification and registration process and ensuring seamless access to our diverse range of programs, which are now available to seniors 70 years old and over. Physical activity is beneficial for everyone, and we look forward to welcoming Brampton’s seniors to our centres.”

- **Bill Boyes**
Commissioner, Community Services,
City of Brampton

CITY OF BRAMPTON CELEBRATES EARTH MONTH

April is Earth Month and the City of Brampton has many initiatives planned throughout the month to celebrate. Residents can participate in free, family-friendly activities including park cleanup events, tree plantings and the third annual Earth Day Environmental Celebration on Saturday, April 20.

Residents are encouraged to come out and join in the fun and show how Brampton is a green city!

Residential Tree Giveaway

The planting and care of trees on your residential property is an important part of maintaining and improving Brampton's urban forest. As a part of Brampton's goal of planting one million trees by 2040, the City, with the generous sponsorship of CN, is giving away free trees. Residents can select from four tree species (Red Maple, Red Oak, Bur Oak, Ironwood, Blue Beech and White Spruce) and two species of shrubs (Nannyberry and Serviceberry). To date, residents have helped in planting over 100,000 trees in Brampton.

How to participate

Starting March 28, residents can register online to receive a free tree at brampton.ca/trees.

CITY OF BRAMPTON WARNS DRIVERS AND VEHICLE OWNERS OF AUTOMATED SPEED ENFORCEMENT PENALTY SCAM

The City of Brampton is warning drivers and vehicle owners about a potential text message scam involving Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) monitoring (photo radar).

Reports indicate that text messages advising of a fine for a speeding violation are being sent. These messages also include a link directing to a website where the penalty can be paid. The City has notified Peel Regional Police Cyber Division of the malicious web address included in the message to take further action.

ASE fines are never sent by text message. Fines are only issued by mail to the address to which the vehicle licence plate is registered. To pay a fine online, an individual must visit the City of Brampton website, as the City does not solicit third-party websites for penalty payments.

Individuals who receive this text message should not click on any links and are encouraged to report it to Peel Regional Police by visiting their nearest station. Such fraud reports are not taken over the phone.

For more information about fraud and scams, visit [Fraud and Scams - Peel Regional Police \(peelpolice.ca\)](http://Fraud and Scams - Peel Regional Police (peelpolice.ca)).



Each household will receive one tree. Residents enrolled in this year's program can pick up trees at the following locations:

Date: Saturday, April 13, 2024

Time: 9 am - 2 pm

Location: Norton Place Park, 170 Clark Blvd, Brampton, ON

Date: Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Time: 4 pm - 8 pm

Location: Brampton Fire Training Division, 129 Glidden Rd., Brampton, ON

For tips on how to plant and care for your tree, visit brampton.ca/trees.

Preserve Brampton's urban forest – request a permit before you cut

The City of Brampton strives to maintain a healthy urban forest. In accordance with the City's Tree Preservation By-law and the Woodlot Conservation By-law, property owners must apply for a permit before pruning or removing any tree located more than two metres from an occupied building and with a trunk diameter of 30 centimetres (about 12 inches) or more, measured at 1.37 metres (about 54 inches) above the ground at the base of the tree. Residents can apply for a permit online, in person or by mail. Click here for more information.

Brampton's Parks Cleanup Program

Generously sponsored by Alectra Inc., Capital Power and CN, the Parks Cleanup Program helps keep Brampton clean. Each year from April 1 to November 1, families, friends, community organizations, businesses and school groups are invited to participate. Individuals can choose to host a self-led cleaning or join an organized cleanup day. High school students will be provided volunteer hours at community cleanups. E-waste collection is also available during cleanup days in partnership with Let's Get Together.

Join an organized cleanup day

Date: Saturday, April 20, 2024

Time: 10 am – 1 pm

Location: Gore Meadows East Community Park, 10150 The Gore Rd., Brampton ON

Date: Saturday, April 27, 2024

Time: 10 am – 1 pm

Location: Duggan Park, 75 Vodden St. E., Brampton, ON

For more information about the Parks Cleanup Program and community cleanups, visit brampton.ca/cleanup.

Community Tree Planting

To ensure the health of its urban forest, the City of Brampton is hosting a

community tree planting event in honour of Earth Month. Join this year's event to give back to the community in a green and sustainable way.

Date: Saturday, April 20, 2024

Time: 10 am – noon

Location: Gore Meadows Community Centre & Library, 10150 The Gore Rd, Brampton, ON

City of Brampton Earth Day Environmental Celebration & Grow Green Awards

The Grow Green Awards celebrates individuals, businesses and organizations from across the city that have demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing the Grow Green Vision to conserve, enhance and balance our natural and built environment to create a healthy, sustainable and resilient Brampton.

Although parking for the event is available on site, participants are encouraged to take Brampton Transit, cycle or walk to Gore Meadows Community Centre & Library. Learn more at brampton.com/earthday.

Event details

Date: Saturday, April 20, 2024

Time: 11 am – 3 pm

Location: Gore Meadows Community Centre & Library, outdoor ice rink

Litter Reduction Charter and Virtual Tool

The City of Brampton is embarking on a goal to become Canada's first litter-free city and is leading several initiatives to achieve this. Building on its inaugural Litter Reduction Forum last fall, Brampton's Community Safety and Well-Being Office Litter Reduction Working Group is collaborating on two new initiatives, Brampton's Litter Reduction Charter and a new Litter Reduction Virtual Tool.

Brampton's new Litter Reduction Charter is a resource to foster community participation to beautify Brampton by eliminating litter. As the City continues to finalize the goals of the Litter Reduction Charter, starting on April 20, community members are invited to provide input and feedback during the community consultation phase.

In addition, on April 20, the City is launching its new Litter Reduction Virtual Tool. This tool will allow residents to track their cleanup efforts by reporting the area they have visited and the amount of litter they have collected. Through this tool, residents can share their results to challenge other neighbourhoods to undertake their own cleanup efforts to keep Brampton clean.

Additional details are coming soon to brampton.ca/communitysafety.

For more information on Earth Month visit: brampton.ca/earthmonth

"April is Earth Month and in Brampton I look forward to celebrating all of the efforts we have made and continue to make to ensure we are a green city. With initiatives ranging from park cleanups to tree plantings, each initiative symbolizes our

dedication to building a greener, more sustainable future for all."

- Patrick Brown,
Mayor,
City of Brampton





FAROUK AT PERUMAL TEMPLE

Short story (Original in Tamil)
English version By Siva Sinniah



Perumal Temple was full of people Farouk looked at the entrance and was wondering what to do. This is his first visit to a temple. After removing his shoes at the entrance, he stepped in. Devotees were seen carrying Pooja trays and going in while some were seen coming out.

Which is the outskirts of the Temple, where is the Sanctum Sanctorum, where will be the priest, where will the pooja be conducted? He was unaware of all these details and was standing to a side and looked at everything with wide open eyes.

He was wearing jeans and a t-shirt.

“

“Look, tell us the truth. You must be a member of a terrorist group. You must have come to see where to plant a bomb. Have you people planned to blast the temple? Tell us the truth if not we will beat you now?”

”

Had a small beard. These showed him as a Muslim. Some were looking at him from top to bottom. Some were seen talking secretly to each other.

Suddenly four people circled him. One guy asked him “who are you? why are you standing here?”.

“My name is Farouk“ he answered

“See what I said is correct. He must be a Muslim,” the other guy said.

Another person asked him “what are you doing inside the temple?”

“I came to see priest Anandakrishnan “he replied with fear.

Short Story

FEATURE & OP-ED



“If you want to meet him, you should have gone to his house. why should you come to the temple?”

He was about to answer but another guy cut in and said, “if you ask him like this he will be giving all sorts of answers. He must have come here with a plan. We caught him on time before any dangerous incident. Better to give him two or three blows and get the truth out of him.”

Farouk began to look with fear in his eyes.

“Look, tell us the truth. You must be a member of a terrorist group. You must have come to see where to plant a bomb. Have you people planned to blast the temple? Tell us the truth if not we will beat you now?”

When he heard all these, he began to tremble out of fear.

“What has a Muslim boy to do with the priest? Just call the police and they will take him to the station and get all the truth out of him” said one guy and all the others agreed to it.

As time passed by many joined the group but no one was prepared to listen to him. After finishing the Pooja priest Ananda Krishnan came out. He got upset when he saw the crowd in front of the Temple. He inquired from a boy about the crowd formed near the entrance. He replied that a Muslim boy wanted to see you and entered the temple.

“To see me. Who is that ? . The priest asked the crowd to let him see the boy. They moved away. One of them asked the priest “do you know this boy?”. He looked at him closely and said, “I don’t know him”. Look, he told us a lie and entered the temple. The priest himself has told us that he doesn’t know him. “Why are you all delaying in giving him some blows and calling the police and handing him over to them”, so saying one person raised his hand to beat him. “Please stop, just wait, let me talk to him” said the priest. So everyone stood silent, including the person who went to beat him.

“Boy who are you? why do you want to see me?” asked the priest.

He looked at the priest intensely and tears fell down from his eyes.

“Don’t be afraid, tell me who you

are?” asked the priest.

“I am the son of Yuma mosque Imam Ibrahim”.

“What, you are Ibrahim’s son?”

Priest was shocked and was reminded of a past incident.

Priest Krishnan was returning home on his motor bicycle one day. As he was entering the main road from a narrow lane, a speeding lorry knocked him down and proceeded without stopping. Ibrahim was walking along the edge of the main road and saw the accident. He came rushing to help the priest who was lying down on the street unconscious, while blood was running from his head. Ibrahim immediately called

“

We can chase this boy as a Muslim but the entire blood running in my body is that of a Muslim senior, his father. If we have to chase him out, you have to open my body and take the blood out and leave me dead” said the priest, while holding his hands and crying.

”

the ambulance, and the priest was taken to the hospital, accompanied by him.

The priest lost blood due to the injury and was in need of blood for transfusion. Ibrahim volunteered to donate blood. Surprisingly his blood group matched to that of the priest. Krishnan was saved from death due to this. The priest thanked Ibrahim profusely for his rare gesture.

“I helped another human being that’s all,” said Ibrahim.

“It may be an ordinary act for you, but for me it is my life given back” said the priest

Ibrahim got hold of his hands and told him “don’t speak like this priest. This is human relationship. There is no other bond greater than this. We will be friends forever. The priest embraced him closely with tears in his eyes. Both were good friends after this incident. But Ibrahim passed away after two years. Even though he was dead, the priest never forgot him.

Now Krishnan came back to his sense and asked the boy.

“Brother why you came to see me now?”

“I did not come to see you”, the boy replied.

“Then why you came to the temple”.

“I came to see my father”

The priest was emotional, and his eyes were filled with tears.

“When my father died. I was not able to attend his funeral since I did not get a flight from Saudi Arabia. I arrived the next day and by then they buried him. I was unable to see his face for the last time. My mother told me about the accident only yesterday. I thought of seeing you, because my father’s blood is running in your body. Since I have to return to work today, I had no time to visit your house hence I decided to see you at the temple.”

As Farouk was saying this. Krishnan started crying and held both his hands.

The crowd around him was wondering as to what was happening.

“Samy this Muslim boy entered our temple, instead of driving him away, you are holding his hands and crying. This is disrespectful. This is not done,” said one old man in the crowd.

“We can chase this boy as a Muslim but the entire blood running in my body is that of a Muslim senior, his father. If we have to chase him out, you have to open my body and take the blood out and leave me dead” said the priest, while holding his hands and crying.

“I would like to ask you all a question. When you are in hospital on the verge of death and needing blood from the blood bank, do you ask them whether this is from a Muslim, a Hindu, or a Christian. You are keen on surviving, now tell me why are you all silent” asked the boy.

No one answered and was waiting in shock.

Krishnan was holding the shoulder of Farouk and left the temple, when the crowd stood aside in amazement.



COMMUNITY WATCH



Durham Tamils Association Serving Our Tamil Community Over 20 Years

Durham Tamils Association is always looking for ways to help our members, youth, and our seniors. We are continuing to provide free virtual activities almost every day for kids to seniors. Thank you to our fantastic volunteers who do not expect anything and are serving the community voluntarily. DTA is truly grateful for your continued support. Also, DTA's Tamil school continues to provide virtual Tamil classes for our students.

DTA'S HOMELAND PROJECTS

DTA is proud to announce that we have completed 50 homeland projects as of Feb 28, 2024. Watch out more for this year as we wish to continue this momentum and provide more opportunities back home.

Thank you to Mr. Subramaniam Kathirithamby & Mr Maylvahanam (Sri Lanka) for coordinating this project.

DTA EVOLVING ELDER CARE IN HOME SUPPORT

We are proud to announce that DTA will be providing Evolving Elder Care in Home support. This will allow us to provide these services to any Seniors in need in Durham. We can provide following service:

- Meal Delivery
- Transportation
- Volunteer Drop offs:

- Grocery Assistance
- Doctors Appointments
- Friendly Visits
- Light House Keeping Assistance

For more information please contact our office Mon-Fri (647) 968 9549 or (647) 286 9549.

You can also visit our website @ DTAseniorsinhomesupport.ca

DTA and the volunteers have graciously given rides to our seniors to temples on auspicious days and have delivered hot meals to more than 300 seniors with this program.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

DTA proudly celebrated women's day with all the ladies. All the ladies came out and had grand night with entertainment and inspirational stories shared by the ladies. Thanks again to all the volunteers who help put this event together and made it successful.



Durham Tamil Association Evolving Elder Care In-Home Support Senior /Transportation Service

Seniors Onboard: A volunteer-based service for eligible seniors with low-Income and vulnerable, aged 55 and up.

OUR SERVICE

- Temple Drop off (Drop off / pick up)
- Church Drop off (Drop off / pick up)
- Medical Appointment (Drop off/ pick up)
- Grocery shopping (Drop off / pick up)

CONTACT US

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 9:00am - 5:00PM

Contact Number:

- (647) 968-9549
- (647) 286-9549

For More Information Visit Our Website:

dtaseniorsinhomesupport.ca

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Age Well at Home Initiative |

DTA SENIOR'S MARCH MONTHLY MEETING

DTA Senior's March monthly meeting will be held on Sunday April 28, 2024 at 5:00 pm at DTA Centre.

66B Harwood Ave S, Ajax L1S 2H6.

Event Time: 5-9 pm

Please all Senior (ages 55+) members attend the meeting.

Register online:

durhamtamils.org

Members who were born in March, please mention in the comments section to organize your cake-cutting at the meeting.

Durham Tamil Association Evolving Elder Care -in Home Support for seniors

Training

- Free Training and a certificate of completion from Computek College in Ajax
- 50 volunteer hours placement

Benefits

- Free Vulnerable Check
- Unlock valuable life skills with Free Standard CPR and First Aid Training
- Volunteer Travel Expense \$0.58/km
- Join us to make a positive impact on seniors lives while gaining valuable skills and experiences.

Contact US

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 9:00am - 5:00PM

Contact Number:

- (647) 968-9549
- (647) 286-9549

Durham Tamil Association
66 Harwood Ave, S Ajax L1S 2H6

Durham Region

Serving Eight Municipalities

- Brock
- Uxbridge
- Scugog
- Pickering
- Oshawa
- Clarington
- Ajax
- Whitby

For More Information Visit the website: dtaseniorsinhomesupport.ca

Volunteers Needed!

Join our volunteer team and gain more than just experience – unlock valuable life skills while making a positive impact on seniors' lives in Durham!

Volunteer Gala : Twice a Year!

- Summer Gala 2024
- Winter Gala 2024
- Spring Gala 2025
- September Gala 2025

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Age Well at Home Initiative |



RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS (ADULTS & YOUTH) FOR THE FOLLOWING PROJECT:

EVOLVING ELDERCARE - IN-HOME SUPPORT FOR SENIORS

Next training sessions are:

April 20th & 21st- Cohort #3

May 11th & 12th- Cohort #4

June 15th & 16th- Cohort #5

June 22nd 23rd- Cohort #6

Saturday workshop - 4 hours in-person. Time: 10-2 pm.

Sunday workshop - 6 hours virtual Zoom class from 9 am-3 pm.

You can register for either one of the workshops.

Do not miss out on this great opportunity!

At Durham Tamil Association, we enable our volunteers with free training and a certificate of completion from ComputeK College in Ajax. Join us to make a positive impact on seniors' lives while gaining valuable skills and experiences. Together, let's shape a brighter future!"

Training Details:

- Free Training with completion certification
- Unlock valuable life skills with Free Standard CPR and First Aid Training to shape your future.
- 50 Volunteer hours placement.
- Free Vulnerable Check.

Volunteer Travel Expense reimbursement: \$0.58/km

Please complete the following volunteer application form:
<https://forms.gle/GBrfmq9sSQZLYfS9A>

For additional details please visit the website below:
<https://dtaseniorsinhomesupport.ca/>

THANK YOU TO DTA'S ANNUAL SPONSORS

DTA thanks our annual sponsors ComputeK College of Business, Healthcare & Technology. Nava Wilson LLP. Chapel Ridge Funeral Home & Cremation, and all our sponsors for your continued support throughout the year. If you are interested in being annual sponsor please reach out to the below contacts.

For more information on all DTA's Community Support Programs and Sponsor contacts please visit

www.DurhamTamils.Org

Tel 905.428.7007

Unity Is Strength

COMMUNITY WATCH



TAMIL SCHOOL

Tamil class registration is open for the School Year from 2023-2024!

In-person or Virtual class options are available!



வளரும் முதியோர் பராமரிப்பு - வீட்டில் ஆதரவளித்தல்

இலவச உணவு விநியோக சேவை

அசைவம் அல்லது சைவ விருப்பத்தை நீங்கள் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கலாம்

- சூடான, புதிதாகத் தயாரிக்கப்பட்ட உணவு
- எங்களின் தன்னார்வர்களால் சரியான நேரத்தில் உணவு விநியோகிக்கப்படுகிறது

எட்டு நகராட்சிகளுக்கு இலவச சேவை வழங்கப்படுகின்றது
Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa, Clarington, Brock, Uxbridge, Scugog

மேலதிக விபரங்களுக்கு எங்களை தொடர்பு கொள்ளுங்கள்
அலுவலக நேரம்: திங்கள் முதல் வெள்ளி வரை
தொடர்பு எண்:
(647) 968-9549
(647) 286-9549

டெலிவரி தேதிக்கு குறைந்தபட்சம் 5 நாட்களுக்கு முன்னதாக உங்கள் ஆர்டரைச் செய்யுங்கள்.
தகுதி: பாதிக்கப்படக்கூடிய மற்றும் குறைந்த வருமானம் கொண்ட முதியவர்கள்: வயது 55 மற்றும் அதற்கு மேற்பட்டவர்கள்



dtaseniorsinhomesupport.ca

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Age Well at Home Initiative | 

டுறம் தமிழ் ஒன்றியம் "Evolving Elder Care In-Home Support" வளரும் முதியோர் பராமரிப்பு வீட்டில் - ஆதரவளித்தல் எனும் முதியவர்களுக்கான தன்னார்வ அடிப்படையிலான சேவைகளை வழங்குகிறது.

இலவச சேவை

- உணவு விநியோகம்,
- தன்னார்வர்கள் மூலம் போக்குவரத்து சேவை: மருத்துவமனை நியமனங்கள், மருத்துவரைபார்வையிடல், மளிகைப்பொருள் கொள்வனவு நிலையங்கள் போன்றவை
- முதியோருக்கான சிறு வீட்டு பராமரிப்பு
- நண்பர்களாக வீட்டுக்கு வருகை தருதல் - நட்பு உரையாடல்கள், மற்றும் திறன் வளர்ப்பு உதவிகள். (Zoom, YouTube, google search...)
- போக்குவரத்து சேவை - வழிபாட்டு தலங்கள், Mail, உணவு விடுதிகள் போன்றவை.

எங்களின் தொடர்புக்கு

அலுவலக நேரம்: திங்கள் முதல் வெள்ளி வரை
தொடர்பு எண்:
• (647) 968-9549
• (647) 286-9549

மேலும் தகவலுக்கு எங்கள் இணையதளத்தைப் பார்க்கவும்:



dtaseniorsinhomesupport.ca

டுறம் தமிழ் ஒன்றியம் வளரும் முதியோர் பராமரிப்பு வீட்டில் - ஆதரவளித்தல்



வயது 55 மற்றும் அதற்கு மேற்பட்டவர்கள்

பாதிக்கப்படக்கூடிய மற்றும் குறைந்த வருமானம் உடைய முதியவர்கள்

எட்டு நகராட்சிகளுக்கு இலவச சேவை வழங்கப்படுகின்றது

PICKERING, AJAX, WHITBY, OSHAWA
CLARINGTON, BROCK, UXBRIDGE, SCUGOG,

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Age Well at Home Initiative





City of Waterloo receives funding for active transportation

Infrastructure Canada has provided \$150,000 in grants to the City of Waterloo for three active transportation projects that will increase options for efficient and safer commutes.

As announced by Infrastructure Canada in a news release, the City of Waterloo's three projects are part of 50 active transportation planning and design projects across Ontario with investments of more than \$2.3 million that the government is supporting through Infrastructure Canada's Active Transportation Fund.

The total investment will provide the necessary resources for municipalities and organizations to plan for the paths, trails, footbridges, wayfinding signage, and other infrastructure they need to support more active travel in their communities.

"I am so excited to announce the federal government's support for 50 planning and design projects that will lead to more and improved active transportation infrastructure across Ontario," said the Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities. "Investments in active transportation are a key part of building strong, connected and sustainable communities. Bike paths, sidewalks, footbridges and multi-use trails connect our homes to our communities and beyond, helping to make them the best places to live." "We are grateful to Infrastructure Canada for investing in our



active transportation network, adding more options for getting around is an important way to address affordability for citizens and increases mobility for all," says Dorothy McCabe, Waterloo Mayor.

The funding will go towards planning and design costs for:

- ▶ The Davenport Road separated cycling project;
- ▶ The Lexington Road separated cycling project; and;
- ▶ The rehabilitation/replacement of a pedestrian bridge in Waterloo Park.

The two cycling projects would connect residents to transit routes, local schools, parks and amenities. The Davenport project would provide access to GRT's transit hub and the ION Light Rail station at Conestoga Mall.

"Enhancing and connecting these routes and trails to broader transportation networks provides more access to local

services and more options for getting around," says Bob Henderson, Director of Transportation Services. "If you don't have a car or choose not to use one, this connected system would offer more mobility choices."

The pedestrian bridge in Waterloo Park would be upgraded and widened to accommodate the increase in active transportation traffic. "More people are walking, cycling and even using scooters to get where they need to go," says Henderson, "which supports our environmental goals as well."

The City of Waterloo has been designated a gold cycling community partly because of its accessible routes and connections. Waterloo is hosting this year's Ontario Bike Summit.

The Davenport Road planning project is already in progress, the other two are scheduled to begin in 2024.

Region of Waterloo Launches Reimagining Doon Heritage Village for Public Input

Waterloo Region – The Region of Waterloo is seeking input from residents on the future programming, experiences, stories, and new uses at Doon Heritage Village.

Like other cultural institutions around the world, The Region of Waterloo's Doon Heritage Village is reflecting on which stories of culture and heritage it shares – and which are missing. The Region of Waterloo Museum team is seeking input from the community on how it might expand the stories, resources and experiences it provides to all residents and visitors through a world-class museum experience.

Through the Reimagining Doon Heritage Village Project the Region will engage with residents, especially those with underrepresented stories, to enrich the narratives shared at Doon Heritage Village. This feedback will inform a new Interpretive Plan for Doon Heritage Village. This plan outlines how diverse histories are represented and shared through programming and living history

re-enactment. In addition to community engagement, staff are currently working with an advisory committee of community members and an external team to lead engagement within equity-deserving communities.

"A reimagined Doon Heritage Village should tell stories that resonate with our community, provide opportunities for learning and conversation, and create unique experiences for residents of Waterloo Region and visitors," said Karen Redman, Chair of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. "We are excited to hear and celebrate the stories and memories of Doon Heritage Village from the past 60 plus years, while listening to important feedback from the community on how missing or underrepresented stories, histories, and traditions could be expanded to reflect the identities of our community."

Doon Heritage Village, a 60-acre living history museum that opened in 1957, offered visitors the opportunity to experience what life was like, for some community members, in Waterloo Region

in the year 1914. The site featured guided tours, special events and school class visits. In 2023, operations were paused to begin a utilities replacement project. These updates include utility services to allow more accessible public programs, safer evening and winter events with efficient lighting, reliable and sustainable building heating, new water mains for washrooms and fire response, and improved connectivity.

Residents are invited to participate in the engagement, including an online survey and in-person sessions, to share past experiences of Doon Heritage Village and help shape its future.

Public input sessions will take place on-site at Doon Heritage Village on Saturday, April 27 10am - 11:30am and Sunday, April 28 2pm - 3:30pm.

Museum admission is included, and participants will receive a free family pass for their contributions.

For more information and to participate in the engagement activities, please visit www.engagewr.ca/reimagining-doon-heritage-village.



Stockyards prepares for take-off at the Region of Waterloo International Airport (YKF)

Waterloo Region - The Region of Waterloo International Airport (YKF) is thrilled to welcome new food, beverage and retail provider Stockyards.

Inspired by the people who make Waterloo Region what it is today, Stockyards celebrates everything the community has to offer. Construction of "Stockyards at YKF" is currently underway, and scheduled to open in late spring 2024. The space will feature a licensed sit down dining area, grab and go options and retail merchandise located within the departures lounge.

"This partnership with Stockyards will further elevate the passenger experience at YKF as we continue to invest in our airport," said Karen Redman, Chair of the Region of Waterloo. "YKF will bolster our economic future and the overall quality of life here in Waterloo Region. We are thrilled to welcome Stockyards, a company with deep local roots, and look forward to what is next as we continue to grow."

Guided by passenger survey data, the Region of Waterloo began a search for a food, beverage and retail vendor that would provide an exceptional airport experience. The request for proposal (RFP) asked for affordable healthy food and beverages. Stockyards exceeded the RFP criteria by proposing a world-class airport dining experience, including the creation of YKF-branded coffee and light beer.

"My roots run deep in this community," said Ryan Lloyd-Craig, Chief Operating Officer of Stockyards. "I have lived in Waterloo Region for a long time and have watched YKF transform from a flying club to an international airport. Now we have an opportunity to champion what

makes our community stand out from the crowd – we have access to the best fresh local ingredients in the country and we are going to use them to create an unforgettable experience.



Stockyards will bring the combined expertise of Graffiti Market, Stockyards Coffee and Stockyards Breweries to YKF. Originally established in 2018 by the Huber and Schlegel families, the Stockyards team takes pride in keeping cultivation and sustainability at the core of what they do - supporting the farms and farmers that make fresh affordable produce available locally. Leveraging their relationships established through the St. Jacobs Farmers Market, the team will create an affordable menu, fueled by hyper-local farm-to-table suppliers.

"Our entire team are excited by the opportunity YKF represents," said Willy Huber, Chairman of Stockyards. "We are drawing on our lived experience to build an offering that will leave a lasting impression on passengers travelling through the airport. We want to celebrate our Region's heritage and diversity with flavour profiles and products that reflect our community. We are fortunate to live in such a vibrant community and excited to showcase our world-class farm-to-

table supply chain by offering affordable, healthy options to travellers."

YKF continues to be the fastest-growing airport in Canada. The success of commercial service increased passenger volumes to 445,312 in 2023.

Flair Airlines, Sunwing and WestJet provide scheduled air service to Calgary, Cancun, Fort Lauderdale, Las Vegas, Orlando Sanford, Puerto Vallarta, Punta Cana, Vancouver and Varadero. The summer 2024 schedule includes the return of Abbotsford, Charlottetown, Deer Lake, Halifax, Edmonton, St. Johns and Winnipeg. In addition, Air Canada will offer Landline service to Toronto connecting to 140+ destinations worldwide starting May 1, 2024. For more information visit www.waterlooairport.ca or contact your travel agent.

About YKF:

The Region of Waterloo International Airport (YKF) is a full-service facility that supports commercial, corporate and general aviation. YKF is owned and operated by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Ontario (Canada). For more information visit waterlooairport.ca.

About Stockyards:

Stockyards is dedicated to providing high-quality, handcrafted beverages that satisfy the diverse tastes of our customers. With a commitment to innovation, quality ingredients, and exceptional flavour, we strive to elevate the drinking experience for every consumer. For more information visit www.stockyardsbeverage.co



Transgender Day of Visibility

Transgender Day of Visibility is an annual awareness day to celebrate the lives of transgender and gender diverse people. It also raises awareness of the efforts needed to achieve trans justice. This recognition date began in 2009

through the advocacy of Rachel Crandall, following countless media stories focusing on violence against transgender people.

Ongoing violence and harm creates fear and removes opportunity for transgender people to live their lives authentically.

As a community we can work together to recognize transgender role models and create safe space for self-discovery by taking action on systems that perpetuate violence and harm.



By-election for Ward 5 Councillor to take place on June 10, 2024

The City will be holding a by-election for Ward 5 Councillor on Monday, June 10, 2024; the same date as the by-election for Mayor.

Mississauga City Council declared the Ward 5 Councillor seat vacant and passed the required by-law to hold the Ward 5 Councillor by-election on Monday, June 10, 2024; the same date as the by-election for Mayor.

In accordance with legislation, when a seat becomes vacant at this point in the term of office, a by-election can be held to fill the vacancy. In Mississauga, the vacancy was created by the resignation of former Ward 5 Councillor, Carolyn Parrish, which took effect on March 15, 2024.

Become a candidate for Ward 5 Councillor

If you want to become a candidate and run for Ward 5 Councillor, you must submit your nomination by April 26, 2024, at 2 p.m.

To qualify as a candidate you must be:

**A Canadian citizen
At least 18 years old**

A resident of Mississauga or the owner or tenant of property in Mississauga or the spouse of an owner or tenant of property in the city.

Not be prohibited under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 or otherwise by law
To register, you must:

Complete the nomination package.

Book an appointment to meet in-person with an Election Official to file your completed package. The Election Official will validate your identification and documents and will ensure your nomination package is complete and meets all requirements.

Pay a nomination fee of \$100. This payment is made once your nomination package and identification has been verified by an Election Official.

Match point! Year-round covered tennis courts coming to Mississauga

The City of Mississauga has broken ground on a new, year-round covered tennis and pickleball court facility located at Churchill Meadows Community Centre and Mattamy Sports Park, set to open in late 2024.

City of Mississauga broke ground on the new year-round covered tennis and pickleball courts in the city, located at Churchill Meadows Community Centre and Mattamy Sports Park.

The courts are made possible through a partnership between the City and Premier Racquet Clubs including \$200,000 in funding from Tennis Canada and Rogers Communications as part of the Year-Round Community Tennis Courts Program.



The new facility will be located at Mattamy Sports Park, adjacent to Churchill Meadows Community Centre, and features a six-court, air-supported dome facility that will:

- ▶ create an additional 400 hours of court time per week during the winter months
- ▶ serve the needs of recreational and competitive players in the community
- ▶ provide opportunities to host provincial, national and international events
- ▶ include drop-in and structured play, lessons and camp programming for children and youth

The facility and programming will be operated in partnership with Premier

Racquet Clubs – Mississauga.

The courts are expected to open later this year.

Quotes

“On behalf of Ward 10 and the Churchill Meadows community, we’re delighted to be receiving this wonderful addition to our community centre. This new facility is a testament to our commitment to promoting active, healthy lifestyles and will attract many residents year-round – we can’t wait to see it in action.”

Ward 10 Councillor Sue McFadden

“This is an exciting time for tennis enthusiasts in and around Mississauga. As part of the City’s commitment to keeping our community active by providing them with the sports amenities they need, this facility will serve the needs of both recreational and competitive players, and also provide opportunities for hosting provincial, national and international sporting events in Mississauga. We can’t wait to see these courts come to life and offer racquet-based sports for the community to enjoy all year long.”

**Jodi Robillos, Commissioner,
Community Services**

“We are really excited to have been selected for funding via the Year-Round Community Tennis Courts Program. Thank you to Rogers and Tennis Canada for their support. We cannot wait to see this project come to life and to bring year-round tennis to the Mississauga community.”

**Karl Hale, CEO, Premier Racquet Clubs
– Mississauga**

“It’s tremendous to see this program continue to flourish as we work towards our goal of making tennis more accessible to Canadians across the country. This year, our portfolio has increased from four to six facilities, as we continue to prioritize the construction of more year-round tennis courts through the acceleration of our capacity building

efforts. As always, we’d like to thank our tremendous partner Rogers for the seed money they provide and their incredible support on this program and congratulate the municipalities and club operating partners that have received funding. We cannot wait to see their projects come to life in these communities. Momentum for this program just keeps growing, and we encourage other municipalities, clubs and players to get in touch to see how they can get a project started in their area.”

Gavin Ziv, CEO, Tennis Canada

About Tennis Canada’s Year-Round Community Tennis Courts Program

With the aim of building 160 new year-round courts at up to 30 facilities



across Canada by 2029, the \$5.6 million Year-Round Community Tennis Courts Program, jointly funded by Tennis Canada and Rogers, will make year-round tennis a reality for Canadians across the country, increasing accessibility to the sport and helping to foster increased participation among youth. The program was initiated to address the fact that, at the time of its inception, Canada fell behind other leading tennis nations in providing access to the sport 12 months a year, with only 750 publicly accessible covered courts across the country, representing only one year-round court for every 50,000 people. For each project, Tennis Canada and Rogers provide up to \$200,000 in seed money.



COMMUNITY WATCH



Fore! Swing into spring at one of Mississauga's golf courses



The City owns and operates two golf courses, BraeBen and Lakeview, which offer great options for golfers of all skill levels. Courses are opening throughout April with a new 5 per cent resident benefit discount.

City golf courses are a fantastic way to enjoy the outdoors and get some exercise while having fun. Whether you're a seasoned golfer or new to the game, these courses offer something for everyone. With well-maintained facilities and friendly staff, booking a tee time is quick and easy. The City owns and operates two golf courses, BraeBen and Lakeview, which offer great options for golfers of all skill levels and accessible by MiWay.

Courses will open on the following dates:
BraeBen golf course and range: Friday, April 5
BraeBen 9-Hole Academy: Wednesday, April 24
Lakeview golf course: Wednesday, April 10

Why golf?

Golf doesn't have to be a sport you only watch on TV, it's a great sport to play as well.

Enjoy the fresh air, play at a comfortable pace, work on your mental focus and swing away! People of all ages and abilities can enjoy golf, including children and teenagers. If you're interested in instructional classes, consider signing up as there are a lots to choose from.

Whether you want to enjoy a leisurely game, or take your skills to the next level, golf is a sport that can provide you with a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. Thanks to its relaxed pace, golf also provides people with quality time to spend with their family, friends, and others they meet on the course.

New in 2024 – Resident benefit discount

Mississauga's golf courses are popular – in addition to residents, people from other communities and surrounding cities and towns also stop by our golf courses. To help manage the demand this year, Mississauga residents can access priority online bookings for tee times one hour earlier (than non-residents), beginning at 8 p.m., seven days in advance. To qualify, customers must have their profile updated.

Residents need to bring photo ID with proof of address to BraeBen or Lakeview Golf Course Pro Shops from Tuesdays to Saturdays at 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mississauga residents will also receive a 5 per cent discount off their green fees. The discount only applies to Lakeview, BraeBen Championship and BraeBen 9-hole Academy courses.

City courses BraeBen golf course

BraeBen, located in the Heartland community, boasts an 18-hole Championship Course and a 9-hole Par-3 Academy Course. Golfers can take private lessons from Accredited Golf Professionals or enroll in full-day summer junior golf clinics for kids aged six to 12.

Visit mississauga.ca/golf/braeben/

Lakeview golf course

This 18-hole course is located south of QEW, is another great option for golfers. It's one of the most picturesque courses in the GTA, having been at its present location since 1907 and hosting two Canadian Opens. It's designated as an Ontario Heritage site.

Visit mississauga.ca/golf/lakeview/

Reminders before heading to the course

Before you tee off, remember to bring your reusable water bottle, and take advantage of the water refilling stations on-site. The City's golf courses are no longer selling plastic water bottles. Another good reminder for those planning to visit BraeBen or Lakeview, is that both courses are cashless, so please remember to bring debit or credit cards for transactions.

Book your tee time

Spring is here, and it's time to get excited about golf season in Mississauga. So why not grab some friends, practice your swing, and spend a beautiful day out on the course? We hope to see you on the green soon!

Book your tee time today at mississauga.ca/golf.

Easement on your property? Here's what you need to know



An easement agreement is a legal agreement that allows municipalities to access private land to inspect or maintain infrastructure, without owning the land.

What is an easement? Municipalities and other services use easement agreements to obtain legal access to private land to inspect or maintain municipal infrastructure. The City of Mississauga is aware of over 9,000 registered agreements with the City for various purposes, related mainly to stormwater infrastructure and creeks. City staff often get asked about infrastructure and easements on their property, so

"What is an easement?"

An easement is 'non-possessory,' meaning that while the City does not own the land, they have the right to access and maintain infrastructure on the land. Easement agreements are unique to each property, yet all easements are registered on the title to the property and can be temporary or permanent.

What does a stormwater easement agreement mean for my property?

Property owner responsibilities:

You must generally maintain the area around the easement as you would on the rest of the property, in accordance with Mississauga By-Laws and per the terms of the registered easement agreement.

Most often, the easement area can not be obstructed by fencing, trees, other plants, retaining walls or permanent structures like sheds or garages. The easement location must be accessible by the City for potential inspection or maintenance.

City responsibilities:

The City is allowed to access the easement area to inspect and potentially undertake works to the infrastructure. The decision to begin work remains the City's sole decision in order to protect infrastructure, land, public safety and the environment. The City is under no legal obligation to conduct work at the property owner's request.

How do I determine if my property contains a City easement for stormwater infrastructure?

Please speak to an experienced real estate lawyer who can search title to your property and explain the terms of the easement and its precise location. The City does not offer this type of advice.



Interested in adding more homes on your property? Find out how

The City has launched a new webpage to help residents who are interested in building additional residential units



Example of a detached additional residential unit. Photo Credit: Metrosuite

Are you considering adding a garden suite in your backyard? Or, maybe you're thinking about converting your basement and second floor into apartments? You're not alone. People in cities across Ontario are looking for new ways to create more housing in their own neighbourhoods. Whether it's finding a way to age in place, building separate units for family members or creating an income property – there are lots of different reasons for wanting to add more homes on your lot.

In Mississauga, we've updated our zoning rules to make it possible to build more units on your property. This means, if you own a detached, semi-detached or town house, it's now easier to build:

- ▶ Up to two additional residential units (ARUs) in addition to your primary home; or
- ▶ A new fourplex on your lot (or convert your current home to four separate units)

While not all properties are suitable, our research shows that a detached ARU is permitted on more

than 130,000 residential lots in Mississauga. And many other homes could be converted to accommodate a second or third unit.

Getting started

Interested in building? To help you get started, the City has launched a new Building More Units webpage to help determine whether building an ARU or fourplex makes sense for you. You'll find information about:

- ▶ The types of attached and detached ARUs you can consider
- ▶ The difference between a purpose-built fourplex and fourplex conversion
- ▶ How to submit a building permit application
- ▶ Permit processing times
- ▶ Links to detailed zoning regulations

Encouraging a mix of housing options makes sense for Mississauga. We want everyone – from young people just starting out to older people looking to downsize – to be able to find a place to call home.

Visit mississauga.ca/building-more-units to learn more about building additional residential units. Increasing 'Missing Middle' housing in low-rise communities is a key action in the City's housing plan.

Read Growing Mississauga: An Action Plan for New Housing to learn how the City is working to meet the province's goal of building 120,000 new homes while streamlining building approvals and making homes more affordable.



SPECIAL FEATURE

A RARE TEMPLE OF THE COMBINED VARAHA NARASIMHA INCARNATIONS OF LORD VISHNU IN SIMHACHALAM IN ANDHRA PRADESH IN INDIA



Compiled by Kidambi Raj

INTRODUCTION

Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha temple, Simhachalam is a Hindu temple situated on the Simhachalam Hill Range several hundred metres above sea level in Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, India. It is dedicated to Lord Vishnu, who is worshipped there as Varaha Narasimha. Simhachalam is one of the 32 Narasimha temples in Andhra Pradesh. It is regarded as an important centre of Vaishnavism along with *Srikurmam* and *Sri Jagannath Temple* in Puri.

ORIGIN OF THE TEMPLE

Once, the **Four Kumaras** visited Lord Vishnu's abode Vaikuntha as children. Jaya and Vijaya,



the demigod gate keepers of Vaikuntha failed to recognize them and denied their entry. In resentment they cursed the gate keepers stating that they would have to give up divinity, born and live the lives of mortal beings

on earth. Lord Vishnu failed to revoke the curse of the Kumaras and felt sorry. He, later offered two options: either being Vishnu's devotees in seven human lives or as His enemies in three demonic lives. Both Jaya and Vijaya could not bear separation with Lord Vishnu for a long time and therefore chose the second option of three demonic lives. In their first demonic lives, Jaya and Vijaya were born as *Hiranyakashipu* and *Hiranyaksha* to sage *Kashyapa* and *Diti* in an inauspicious time during a sunset. To tease Brahma and other Gods, Hiranyaksha ensured that earth loses its vitality and sinks it into *rasatala*, the lowest level in the cosmic universe. Lord Vishnu assumed the form of a boar referred to as Varaha and restored earth to its normal position. Varaha later killed Hiranyaksha in a war that lasted a long time. Hiranyakashipu vowed to seek revenge and prayed to Lord Brahma and gained a boon which made him invulnerable to

death either by day or night, either in the morning or the night, and either by a human or a beast. The Gods headed by Brahma visited Vaikuntham to tell an account of all the happenings to Lord Vishnu, a



gate keeper name Sumukha obstructed them. They managed to meet Lord Vishnu and also conveyed the misbehavior of Sumukha. Vishnu assured them that Hiranyakashipu would be killed and Sumukha would be the serving cause. Sumukha pleaded with Vishnu for a pardon, but Vishnu denied, saying that an offence against His devotees was unacceptable. As per Vishnu's orders, Sumukha was born as Hiranyakashipu's son, Prahalada. Prahalada displayed staunch devotion towards Vishnu right from his childhood. As a result, he had to face many death attempts. Hiranyakashipu's soldiers threw him from the top of a hill and placed a mountain on him. Lord Vishnu jumped over the hill and lifted Prahalada from the sea. Prahalada requested Lord Vishnu to assume a deity form where the avatars of *Varaha* who killed Hiranyaksha and *Narasimha*, the one who would kill Hiranyakashipu soon, can be seen together. Vishnu assumed the form of Varaha Narasimha, for whom Prahalada built a temple after Hiranyakashipu's death. Worship was regularly conducted and the place was named **Simhachalam** (Lion's Hill).

HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE

After few centuries the temple that Prahalada built was neglected and subsequently decayed. The Moolavar of Varaha Narasimha was covered with crests of earth. In the next life cycle, **King Pururava** of lunar dynasty acquired a *Pushpaka Vimana*

(Divine Air Car) from Brahma as a boon. He went on that to Kailasa mountain and there met Urvashi and Apsara. They both fell in love and visited Simhachalam and settled there for a while. Pururava performed penance at Gangadhara to locate the idol. Urvashi then recalled a dream and located the idol. They unearthed the idol and consecrated it after renovation. Despite his best efforts, Pururava could not find the idol's feet. A divine voice consoled him saying that he need not worry about that and that the deity can provide salvation in its current form. Urvashi was instructed in the dream that the idol of Varaha Narasimha should be covered with sandalwood paste for the whole year except on the third day of Vaisakha month (Akshaya Tritiya day). That is practiced strictly to this day. The Varaha Narasimha idol, when covered with sandalwood paste, resembled a Siva Lingam. Saint Ramanuja took personal possession of the temple and



ordered the priests to remove the sandalwood paste. The conversion work began and before it was completed, the idol was seen to be bleeding. Feeling the deity's anger for violating the rule, the sandalwood paste was applied once again which stopped the blood stream. They presumed that the deity wished to look like a Lingam and continued the tradition except for one day. In the

The earliest inscription at the temple belongs to 11th century CE recording of the gift by a private individual in the era of Chola Chalukya King Kulottunga Chola, son of Raja Narendra of Rajamahendravaram. The second earliest inscription is a donation of Eastern Ganga Dynasty King, Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva of Kalinga, who conquered Utkala (Odisha) and ruled Ganga to Godavari. After an offering of a private individual, this is the first Royal donation to the old temple at Simhachalam in the 11th century CE. In the later

SPECIAL FEATURE



half of the 13th century, the temple complex underwent radical physical changes during the reign of the Eastern Ganga King Narasingha Deva, who built a new temple. The present temple was built under the Ganga ruler's guidance. In later years, the temple received patronage from many royal families, of which Suryavamshi Gajapati Dynasty of Odisha and Tulu Dynasty of Vijayanagara Empire. In 1949, the temple came under the purview of the state government and is currently administered by the Simhachalam Devasthanam Board.

ARCHITECTURE

Simhachalam temple resembles a fortress from outside with three outer courtyards and five gateways. The architecture is a mixture of the styles of the Kalinga, Chalukyas and the Great Cholas. As per the Hindu texts, Purushottama Samhita and Vishnu Samhita, a temple facing west instead of east, signifies victory, unlike the east ones which denote prosperity. Also, it is believed that the Gangadhara's flow from the east to the west might also be a reason why the temple faces west. There are two temple tanks: Swami Pushkarani near the temple and Gangadhara at the bottom of the hill. The temple houses a number of sub-shrines and a few mandapams.

A prakaram covers the entire temple with two gateways on the northern and western sides. The temple has a five-tier Rajagopuram (main tower) on the western gateway. Devotees enter the temple through a side door with a stairway, which leads in to the Kalyana Mandapam (wedding hall), which has 96 pillars. It has columns and walls on which the images of Lord Vishnu, His Consort Lakshmi and the Azhwars are carved. Near the entrance, the foot prints of Hindu Saint, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu installed by Bakthi-siddantha Sarasvati in the year 1930 can be seen. At the end, a gateway leads to the main hall. Before the sanctum sanctorum, an altar with the images of Radha and Krishna can be seen. The Vimana of Simhachalam temple with a gold-plated dome featuring a Vaishnavite icon can be seen.



The sanctum sanctorum of the temple is cubical shaped, whose walls feature sculptures carved in Kalinga style. The three-tier Vimana, called *pidha deula* in Odia *silpasastra*, is similar to that of the Konark temple, is shaped like a stepped pyramid with proper carving of sculptures. The corners of the base of the vimana bear lion statuettes symbolizing Lord Narasimha. On the eastern face of the vimana, images of Indra and Gajalakshmi can be seen. A gold-plated dome with a Vaishnavite symbol caps the vimana. On the southern wall of the sanctum, a sculpture of Narasimha killing Hiranyakashipu in Prahalada's presence can be

seen. Narasimha is seen in a standing posture, a unique feature of the temple's architecture. The fore arms lay on Hiranyakashipu who is kept on the left thigh and the rear arms hold a weapon on a conch. On the northern wall, a sculpture of Varaha is seen, which is similar to the ones found in *Belur Chennakesava* and *Hoysaleswara* temples. Krishna's images are found above these two sculptures. The southern wall depicts a scene of Kalinga Marthana and the northern wall has an image of Krishna lifting the Govardhan Hill.

VARIOUS SHRINES

The *moolavirat* of Varaha Narasimha is kept in a separate hall named Prahalada Mandapa. In its original form, the idol Varaha Narasimha is two and a half feet tall. The deity stands in *tribhanga* posture with a boar's head, a human torso and a lion's tail. On either side of the deity, the idols of Sridevi and Bhudevi holding lotus flowers are seen. The sculpture of Varaha Narasimha has no ornaments and drapery carved on the body. The moolavar is covered with sandalwood paste brought from *Srivilliputhur*, in Tamil Nadu. After the application of the sandalwood paste, the moolavar resembles a four feet tall Siva Lingam. There is enough space for the devotees to offer *pradakshana* (circumambulation) of the deity inside the Prahalada mandapam. There are only four main ornaments used in the temple and they are: a *Thirunamam* made of diamonds and rubies, a chain of emeralds, a 100-tola gold bracelet and a golden crown. A number of sub shrines are housed inside the temple complex. Two of them are dedicated to Andal, one of the 12 Azhwars and Lakshmi, the Consort of the principal deity. The latter is housed in a small room located near the north western wall and it serves as a cell of the temple's treasury in the past. Goddess Lakshmi is referred here as *Simhavalli Thaayaar*, and Her idol is in a lotus position with four hands. The fore arms display *abhayamudra* and *varadamudra*, and the rear arms hold a pair of lotus flowers. The remaining eleven Azhwars are accommodated in separate rooms. Sub-temples are dedicated to Saints Ramanuja and Manavalamunigal and Vishvaksena inside the main complex. Siva's manifestation Tripurantaka is the *Kshetrapala* (guardian deity) of Simhachalam. The guardian deity is identified with Bhairava, a fierce manifestation of Bhairava. Tripurantaka and his consort have a temple dedicated to them, which is located on the way to Gangadhara. It is one of the oldest South Indian temple dedicated to this deity. The other prominent sub-temples are the ones dedicated to Sri Rama, Sri Anjaneya and Kasi Visweswara, a form of Siva. These temples are located near Gangadhara.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

The religious practices and customs of the temple are formulated by the Vaishnavite philosopher Ramanuja. They are similar to the ones followed in South Indian Vaishnavite temples such as Tirupati, Srirangam and the Varadaraja Perumal temple in Kanchipuram. The prayers are made as per the *Para*, *Vyuha*, *Vibhava*, *Antaryami* and *Archana* traditions. They were modelled based on the Satvata Samhita, one of the 108 texts of the Pancharatra Agamas. There are five metallic idols associated with the deity which serve as the substitute of the. Moolavar for certain practices Yogananda Narasimha is the *Snapana Bera* (bathing idol), Govindaraja is the *Utsava Bera* (festival idol), Sudarsana Chakra is the *Bali Bera* (guardian idol) and Madanagopla and Venugopala, the two forms of Krishna, are the *Kautuka Bera* (representative idol and *Sayana Bera* respectively.

Simhachalam is the second largest temple, after Tirumala Tirupathi, in terms of income earned. Devotees believe that the deity is capable of giving progeny to women and fulfilling the wishes of the devotees. The Sthala Purana (Local legend) of Simhachalam consists of 32 chapters; the number denotes the 32 manifestations of Narasimha. It is learnt that the legends of Simhachalam and other Hindu temples in Andhra Pradesh were written in the 14th century after the attempted establishment of Islam in that region. It is said that the writers who wrote the legends were inspired from the stories of Narasimha available in the Hindu Puranas. Vishnu Purana and Bhagavata Purana form the major sources. The first four chapters of the legend cover the importance of Simhachalam, its deity and the principal water body Gangadhara.

POOJAS AND FESTIVALS

The deity worship commences in the morning at 5:30 am. The inner gates of the temple are opened and the Vayu mantra is recited. The priests chat the Suprabhatham for an hour and a half as a prelude to the regular worship activities. The morning worship continues up to 8:00 am. After 11:00 am, the temple's midday worship begins and goes up to 2:30 pm. and goes upto 7:00 pm. At 9:00 pm, Sayana seva (sleeping ritual) is performed and the temple is closed. Devotees can take part in two special rituals that are conducted in the temple. One is Nithya Kalyanam (regular marriage) of the deity which is conducted every day. The other one is Swarnapushpa archana (worship with golden flowers). It is conducted along with the morning worship ritual every Thursday. Other notable rituals of similar nature are the Sahasranama archana (recital of thousand names), Garuda seva and Cow worship to name a few.

MAJOR FESTIVALS

The festivals celebrated in Simhachalam have an influence of the Dravida Sampradaya, the customs followed in Tamil Nadu. The influence is observed in the way the deities are referred to as, and the usage of the word "Thiru" for few things



connected with the temple and its practices. Also, the celebrations take place at a time governed by the Suryamaana (sun-centric) system followed in Tamil Nadu, unlike the Andhra Pradesh which follows Chandramaana (lunar-centric) system.

Kalyanotsava (celestial marriage) and Chandranotsava (sandalwood festival) are the two most important annual utsavas celebrated in the temple. Other festivals include, Navaratrotsava (Festival of nine nights), Kamadhana (Burning of desire), celebrated to mark the death of Holika. The importance given to this festival shows the influence of Odisha culture in Simhachalam. Other festivals include Krishna Janmashtami, Karthikai Deepam and several minor festivals.

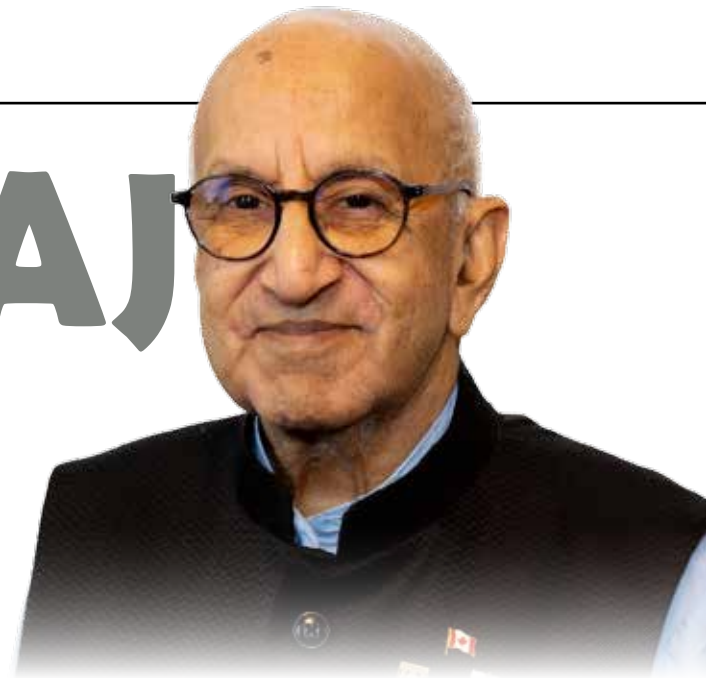




SPECIAL FEATURE

KIDAMBI RAJ

A RECIPIENT OF 2023 ONTARIO SENIOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Kidambi Raj has been a steadfast volunteer for the citizens of Ontario for over four decades, committed to enriching the lives of its residents. Helped the new comer's transition smoothly into Canadian society, by serving on the Indian Immigrant Aid Society, a voluntary not for profit organization (1972-1982). Was a member of the Board of the Bharathi Kala Manran for over 10 years, developing programs, providing key information and promoting the cultural needs of immigrants from South India and Sri Lanka.

He is very passionate about promoting cultural heritage and uniting the community through local events and teachings. Was a member of the board of the Hindu Temple Society (Ganesha Temple) for 8 years. He volunteered in Inter-cultural and various community events and also arranging Indian classical dance performances at those events thus promoting our culture as well. Played a leading role in showcasing the Hindu Temple for the Richmond Hill Doors Open event since 2015. This has led to requests from several community groups not only from the Greater Toronto Area, but also from places as far as London, Ont. On the west to Port Perry on the east. As a result of these events, the temple came to be recognized as one of the Landmarks not only in the city of Richmond Hill, but in the Greater Toronto Area.

Also is actively involved over the years in Inter-faith workshops arranged by different organizations and also the ones arranged annually by St. Robert Catholic School in Thornhill.

For close to 15 years has been giving a short talk on the Basics of Hinduism and a tour of our temple when the Grade XI Catholic School students come as part of their Places of Worship Tour. Similar

things he has been doing for the York Region Police and York Region Division of the OPP, when they visit the temple as part of their Places of Worship.

As part of public service to Sri Lankan and Indian community, he has been contributing articles every month starting from the later months of 2015 to date by writing articles on Hinduism and related topics and about the spread



SPECIAL FEATURE



Speech - The Honourable Edith Dumont



Speech - Patrick Ouellet

of Hinduism and Hindu temples outside India. These were found by the Monsoon Journal to be valuable material for both Sri Lankans and Indians living here.

He has been actively involved in participating in several committees of the City of Richmond Hill over the several years as a citizen member. To mention a few, was member of the Mayor's Cultural Leadership Council in 2013-14; Accessibility Advisory Committee from 2018-2022; Heritage Committee in 2021-2022 and Age Friendly Community Council from 2023 to date and a member of the York Regional Police Community Liasson Committee from May 2022 to date.

Major Awards and Recognitions include:

1. 2023 - Ontario Senior Achievement Award.
2. 2019 - Richmond Hill Council awarded the Niam Malik Volunteer Achievement Award for promoting Inter Cultural Friendship, Richmond Hill Council in recognition of the above award gave a Certificate of recognition stating that a Tree has been planted in Richmond Hill's Celebration Forest.
3. 2018 - The Monsoon Journal awarded Montage Award for Exemplary Contributions in Public Service.
4. 2017 - Was awarded the Most Outstanding Senior Volunteer by the Richmond Hill MP Majid Jowhari.
5. 2017 - Was awarded the, Outstanding Ward 3 Volunteer Achievement Award by Ward 3 Councilor Castro Liu.
6. 1993 - A certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Contributions as Volunteer with Bharathi Kala Manram in building a prosperous and Harmonious Ontario by the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism and the Premier of Ontario, on the 25th Anniversary of Bharathi Kala Manram.



Speech - Minister Cho



FEATURE & OP-ED

The South Asian Enigma: Why We Die More and Die Early from Heart Disease



By Ariaratnam Gobikrishna, MD

Across all ethnicities, heart disease is a common threat, but South Asians seem to bear a particularly heavy burden, experiencing it disproportionately more and at a younger age. This vulnerability went largely unnoticed due to the lack of tracking systems and long-term observational studies. However, through the observation of South Asian migrants compared to native populations in Western countries and subsequent comparisons with those back home, we've uncovered the fact that we pose the highest vulnerability to heart disease.

Fortunately, strides are being made. In 2010, the first large prospective population study began in the USA, The MASALA Study (the Mediators of Atherosclerosis in South Asians Living in America) initially focusing on professionals on the west coast but now including people from all walks of life on the East coast.

Before delving into potential explanations for this phenomenon among South Asians, it's crucial to assess established principles for mitigating heart disease severity. We need to understand their origins, the evidence supporting interventions, and their repeated effectiveness. Without this foundation, efforts to combat the issue may inadvertently lead to confusion and chaos.

Heart attacks have been recognized since ancient civilizations, from the Egyptians and Greeks to Islamic times. However, it wasn't until the Renaissance, particularly with

Leonardo Da Vinci's cadaver dissections (1506), that the correlation between calcium deposits in the arteries, and this malady became apparent. Until the early 1900s, the malady itself and these changes in particular were often attributed to fate, aging, and providence.

True investigation began with Anitchkov's feeding of pure cholesterol to rabbits (1913), revealing arterial changes. While cholesterol was already identified in bile salts, its abundance in diseased arteries was a revelation. Initially, not all animals exhibited the fat hypothesis; dogs, for instance, showed high cholesterol clearance capacities, leading to little cholesterol deposition in their arteries. This raised the question: What about humans?

As an attempt towards answers, Ancel Keys' landmark Seven Countries Study (1952) observed that nations with predominantly Mediterranean diets—less saturated fat and more unsaturated fat—tended to have fewer heart attacks. This finding was confirmed by ongoing studies like the Framingham Heart Study, which initially observed higher total cholesterol correlating with increased heart attacks, later refining into LDL/HDL fractions and most recently into Apo B 100 levels.

The significance of LDL cholesterol emerged when its excess was linked to premature heart attack deaths, notably in children. Brown and Goldstein's groundbreaking work (1973), which earned them the Nobel Prize, illuminated the mechanism by which cells absorb LDL cholesterol through LDL receptors. Their pivotal discovery came into sharper focus when

they compared normal skin cells with biopsies from afflicted children, revealing a notable deficiency in absorption capability of LDL among those children, leading to significantly elevated LDL levels in their blood. Conversely, individuals with genetically lower LDL levels from birth demonstrate a reduced incidence of heart disease, even in the presence of other risk factors acquired over their lifetime.

While observations pointed to a link between high LDL levels and heart attacks, causation remained unproven, particularly in those falling in the middle range of cholesterol levels. This spurred investigations into cholesterol reduction through various means, including dietary interventions, medications, and surgery—all with the aim of reducing LDL cholesterol. The common theme across these interventions was the correlation between lower LDL cholesterol levels and reduced heart attack rates, eventually substantiated by numerous randomized placebo-controlled double-blinded studies.

In addition to cholesterol, factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, high-fat diets, and physical inactivity—initially identified by the Framingham Heart Study (FHS)—contribute to the development of cardiovascular disease. As scientific knowledge evolves, more risk factors are continually added. The presence of multiple risk factors increases the likelihood of adverse events. However, trial after trial, LDL cholesterol stands out as an independent risk factor for heart attacks, consistently observed at the population level.

On an individual basis though, the role of elevated LDL becomes more subtle and complex. It interacts with various genetic and environmental factors, making predictions challenging. While science effectively predicts outcomes at very low and very high LDL levels, it encounters uncertainty at intermediate levels. This is where the risk calculators come into play, incorporating factors such as age, sex, and other conventional risk factors identified by FHS. In addition, risk modifiers are in use as well, like coronary calcium scoring, ethnicity (such as South Asian) and many others to categorize individual risk.

When it comes to treating individuals, lifestyle modifications take precedence for individuals without a history of heart attack or stroke, challenging the common belief that all elevated LDL levels are prescribed statin therapy. Lifestyle changes such as

FEATURE & OP-ED



dietary modifications, weight loss, and exercise can make a significant impact, rendering medication unnecessary for many. However, genetics can sometimes override these efforts. For those with borderline to intermediate calculated risk, especially non-diabetic non-smokers of middle age, a CT scan of the heart for calcium scoring may be offered to further stratify risk. A calcium score of 0 in a middle-aged individual downgrades her or him to low risk for at least the next 5 years, with risk stratification repeated thereafter. The medications will be the last resort for this category.

Before we dive deeper into the subject of why LDL is the main culprit, it's important to understand the typical blood chemistry results we encounter regularly. What we see on paper doesn't always reflect what's happening within our arterial walls, and this discrepancy is where much of the confusion arises and persists.

In an ideal scenario, interpreting blood lipid results should be simple: we would focus on the number of LDL, HDL, IDL and VLDL. Instead, the laboratories report measured total cholesterol, triglycerides and HDL, while LDL cholesterol is estimated, giving rise to confusion. In reality, fats—both cholesterol and triglycerides—are always carried in these vehicles. These lipoprotein vehicles play crucial roles in the transportation of fats in and out of arterial walls. LDL, IDL and VLDL are responsible for ferrying cholesterol into the arterial walls, where it can contribute to plaque formation. On the other hand, HDL works to remove excess cholesterol from arterial walls, facilitating its disposal by the liver. However, there's a silver lining amidst the confusion: each vehicle capable of penetrating and causing depositions (LDL, IDL and VLDL) in the arterial walls carries a protein on its surface called Apo B 100. By measuring Apo B levels, we can sidestep the need to count LDL, IDL, and VLDL vehicles separately, providing a clearer picture of atherogenic particle concentration in the bloodstream.

Hopefully, Apo B 100 levels may become a universal standard. However, until then, we must work within our current reporting system, which often assumes that high total cholesterol or LDL cholesterol corresponds to a higher number of LDL particles and that high triglyceride levels indicate a higher number of IDL and VLDL particles and vice versa. Unfortunately, this assumption is not always accurate and can lead to misinterpretation of lipid profiles.

About LDL's culpability, LDL's extended circulation time, lasting days compared to hours for IDL and VLDL, makes it the primary culprit in atherosclerosis. Roughly 90% of Apo B-carrying particles in the bloodstream are LDL, driving cholesterol transport and plaque formation in arterial walls. Unlike LDL of any size, only small size VLDL can penetrate artery walls, rendering VLDLs contribution inconsequential, with IDL quickly

cleared from circulation, making its contribution not noteworthy as well. Rare genetic mutations may impair IDL clearance, but such cases are rare exceptions.

Having established LDL's role in plaque formation, it's crucial to examine the specific mechanisms at play. Two key steps, penetration and retention, drive this process. The ideal milieu for penetration is a high pressure blood stream — arteries, not veins — with abundance of LDL, sloshing around for prolonged periods, aided by known factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes and smoking along with unknown factors — genetic or otherwise. Retention is aided by oxidation of LDL and attachment to proteoglycans exacerbated by inflammation and impaired functionality of HDL. Once the oxidized LDL is retained, it is engulfed by white cells and the vicious cycle of inflammation ensues. Thus, studies unequivocally demonstrate the importance of reducing LDL levels at the outset to mitigate plaque formation, alongside efforts to address other risk factors. However, some individuals may tolerate high LDL levels due to unknown factors, but preemptive identification is not possible. At this time they can only be identified retrospectively, for example by periodic coronary scans.

Now we know how the plaques are formed, next we need to know why they cause heart attacks. Plaques within arteries can trigger heart attacks through two primary mechanisms. First, they can gradually grow over time, narrowing the artery and ultimately obstructing blood flow. This process can lead to chest pain (angina) and, in severe cases, tissue death (myocardial infarction).

Secondly, plaques can suddenly rupture, triggering the formation of blood clots that rapidly block the artery, resulting in an acute and often fatal heart attack. This process, known as plaque rupture, is particularly dangerous as it can occur with minimal warning signs. Swift intervention to open fully blocked arteries within 90 minutes due to sudden clot formation is life-saving. This forms the basis for emergency medical services and catheterization labs in the West, albeit impractical in many developing countries. Bystander resuscitation and on-site defibrillator use further enhance these protocols in the West.

Our central theme of this article as to why South Asians are more prone to heart disease remains elusive, but several theories have emerged. A central hypothesis revolves around visceral adiposity—the accumulation of fat around internal organs. It's proposed that due to limited fat storage capacity among South Asians, excess fat accumulates around organs, leading to multi organ inflammation triggered by the slow release of harmful adipokines — in contrast to the fast release of cytokines (cytokine storm) responsible for multi organ failure in Covid-19 deaths.

This chronic inflammation damages arterial linings and promotes insulin

resistance in muscles and the liver, perpetuating the inflammatory cycle. Insulin resistance in turn results in a distinctive cholesterol profile called atherogenic dyslipidemia, characterized by low levels of protective HDL, high triglycerides, and dense LDL particles—known for their heightened plaque-forming potential.

These plaques, fueled by a highly inflammatory environment, become prone to rupture, culminating in premature heart attacks and deaths—a risk compounded by the smaller caliber of arteries in the South Asian population.

While these hypotheses shed light on potential mechanisms, further research is needed to validate their significance in South Asian cardiovascular health.

While we await conclusive research on causation, there are proactive steps we can take to mitigate our risk of cardiovascular disease.

The body stores excess calories as fat, primarily from simple carbohydrates and fats. While saturated fats can reduce LDL absorption by cells, especially in the liver, polyunsaturated fats have the opposite effect. Dietary intervention studies on cardiovascular outcomes consistently favor the Mediterranean diet, rich in polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats, whole-food carbohydrates, fish, vegetables, and less processed foods and red meat. Emulating this composition, tailored to local palates, is prudent, while avoiding our usual high consumption of processed carbohydrates, whole milk, butter (ghee), deep-fried foods and our practices of prolonged cooking times, and reuse of cooking oil. Additionally, caution is advised regarding coconut oil's safety, as evidence remains inconclusive. Moreover, it is a saturated fat known to elevate LDL while elevating HDL as well.

Engaging in physical activity is pivotal for shedding unnecessary fat and promoting overall health.

Interpreting health metrics may require a nuance from Western standards. Considerations such as a lower (body weight) normal BMI (e.g., 23 instead of 25), reduced waist circumference, and aiming for lower LDL levels may be prudent. Individuals with a strong family history of cardiovascular disease should commence screening early and adopt healthy lifestyles promptly. They should be screened for Apolipoprotein (a), a known transmissible cholesterol from parents, as well. Middle-aged individuals should consider coronary calcium scoring and elevated results may necessitate aggressive lifestyle changes and medication to lower LDL levels.

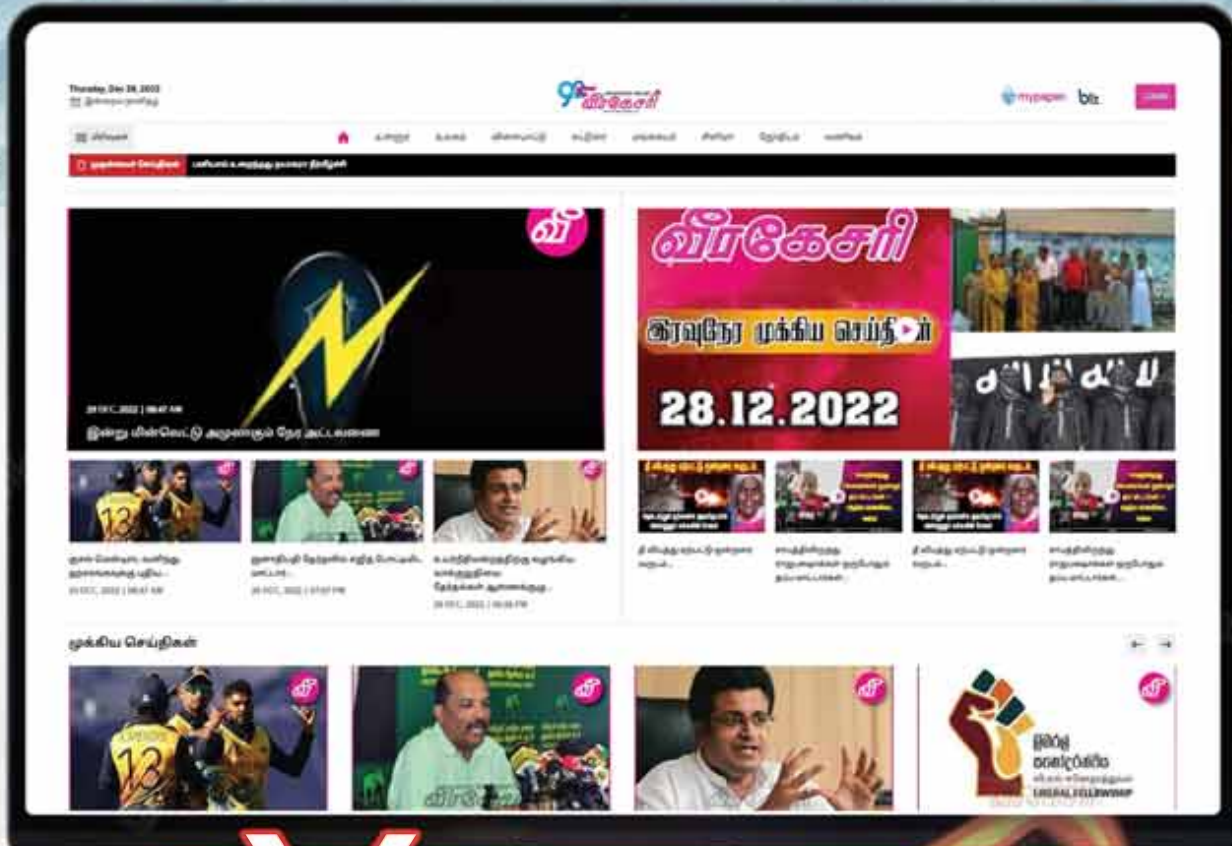
Expanding population-based prospective studies to include Asian nations could illuminate unknown factors. Public awareness is crucial, as many genetic predispositions require environmental triggers or epigenetic influences to manifest as diseases. Hence, lifelong adherence to a healthy lifestyle is paramount.

While uncertainties abound, optimism is warranted, as advancing technology holds promise for affordable solutions to seemingly intractable health challenges.

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