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Canada's finance minister resigns as PM Trudeau deals with declining popularity

Canadian Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland, long Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's most powerful and loyal minister, announced Monday she was resigning from the Cabinet in a move that stunned the country and raised questions about how much longer the unpopular Trudeau can stay in his job.

Freeland, who was also deputy prime minister, said Trudeau had told her Friday that he no longer wanted her to serve as finance minister and that he offered her another role in the Cabinet.

But she said in her resignation letter to the prime minister that the only "honest and viable path" was to leave the Cabinet.

"For the past number of weeks, you and I have found ourselves at odds about the best path forward for Canada," Freeland said.

Freeland and Trudeau disagreed about a two-month sales tax holiday and \$250 Canadian (US\$175) checks to Canadians that were recently announced.

Freeland said Canada is dealing with U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's threat to impose sweeping 25% tariffs and should eschew "costly political gimmicks" it can "ill afford."

"Our country is facing a grave challenge," Freeland said in the



Canada's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland speaks to news media in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, Nov. 30, 2020.

letter. "That means keeping our fiscal powder dry today, so we have the reserves we may need for a coming tariff war."

The resignation comes as Freeland, who chaired a Cabinet committee on U.S. relations, was set to deliver the fall economic statement and likely announce border security measures designed to help Canada avoid Trump's tariff threat. The U.S. president-elect has threatened to impose a 25% tax on all products entering the U.S. from Canada and Mexico unless they stem the flow of migrants and drugs.

Trudeau has said he plans on

leading the Liberal Party into the next election, but there are some party members who do not want him to run for a fourth term. It wasn't immediately clear what Freeland's resignation from the Cabinet means for Trudeau's immediate future.

"This news has hit me really hard," a shocked Transport Minister Anita Anand said. She added she needed to digest it before commenting further.

No Canadian prime minister in more than a century has won four straight terms.

The federal election has to be held before October. The Liberals must rely on the support of at least

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PUBLISHER'S DESK

Freeland's Resignation a Very Strategic Move, says Professor Amarasingam

By Harrish Thirukumaran

Canada has just witnessed an incredible shakeup in its already fragile politics as we head into the holiday period and the New Year. On December 16, 2024, Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister, announced she was resigning from her Cabinet post. And it has taken the media and public circles by storm, spelling further trouble for the Liberal Party's electoral prospects.

Accordingly, this occurred mere hours before Justin Trudeau's government was set to deliver its fall economic statement. It is especially crucial given that Canadians have continued to struggle with the rising cost of living, an issue that they urge the government to do more about.

This recent event puts even more pressure on the government under Trudeau to call an election, as discussed in a previous issue of the Monsoon.

I spoke with Amarnath Amarasingam, a professor at Queen's University, who had a few things to say about Freeland's resignation.

Below is a list of questions and answers from our conversation:

Q1. If you had to briefly summarize recent developments in Canadian politics, what exactly does Finance Minister, Chrystia Freeland's surprise resignation mean for Canadians generally?

A1. "I think it goes to show that there is an increasing sentiment in the party itself that is not favourable to having Trudeau continue on as leader. It was also a very strategic move on her part to set herself up as leader."

Q2. Do you see Justin Trudeau resigning as Prime Minister based on reports of infighting and calls for a revolt within his own caucus?

A2. "I think he sees himself as a fighter and will likely hold on for as long as possible. He will kick the can down the road a bit with the hope that the passage of time over the holidays and the Trump inauguration may improve his political chances domestically."

Q3. You mentioned Freeland's resignation letter reads more like a campaign speech and she herself mentions that she will be running for her seat in the next election, do you see her as a likely candidate for a potential leadership race if called by the Liberal Party?

A3. "It is hard to believe that she did what she did and wrote the letter the way she did without having an eye to eventual leadership."

Q4. Former Conservative House Leader, Peter Van Loan noted that he sees Trudeau proroguing parliament as the most likely scenario but not set in stone. You mentioned that he did not do that, but for our purposes what does prorogation mean exactly?

A4. "Proroguing Parliament means temporarily suspending its activities without dissolving it. It is a power exercised by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. When Parliament is prorogued all legislative business is halted, committees cease their work, MPs and Senators are not required to attend sessions, and so on."

Q5. Also, if he did not call it, do you think it is possible for that to still take place?

A5. "Yes, he can still do it."

Q6. Are there any past examples of parliament being prorogued in Canadian political history?

A6. "The most recent examples are when Prime Minister Harper prorogued parliament in the mid and late 2000s in order to avoid a non-confidence vote himself. So, we are seeing very similar dynamics play out here."

Q7. What would the benefits of proroguing parliament be from Trudeau's perspective?

A7. "It allows the government to reset its legislative agenda, clearing unfinished bills and introducing new priorities through a Speech from the Throne. It provides time to regroup, reshuffle the Cabinet, or manage controversies without parliamentary scrutiny. Prorogation can preempt opposition tactics, such as non-confidence votes, and shift public attention away from contentious issues."

Q8. What are confidence votes?

A8. "Confidence votes are votes in the House of Commons that test whether the government has the support of a majority of MPs. Maintaining this confidence is essential for the government to remain in power. If the government loses a confidence vote, it typically resigns or calls for an election."

Q9. Even though the NDP has voted in confidence throughout the duration of the fall 2024 sitting of Parliament, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh called for Trudeau's resignation and the NDP's House leader, Peter Julian told the CBC that its members would vote in favour of a no-confidence motion if the prime minister was still leader in the New Year.

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Do you see the NDP as having the political guts to vote in favour of a non-confidence motion, forcing a snap election?

A9. "This is the big question. The Liberal party doesn't seem like it can survive with NDP support. The NDP also stands to suffer if a new election is called. They don't really have the funds or support to run a good election at the moment. So, they are in a tough spot. But, after having said that Trudeau needs to resign so vocally, it would be hard for them to switch course in the new year and vote in his favor. But, anything is possible I guess."

It is also worth mentioning at the time of writing, NDP Leader, Jagmeet Singh recently opened up on why he is asking Trudeau to resign but stopping short of supporting a motion of non-confidence. "Why would I box myself in and say I'm going to do something definitive when we don't know what's going to happen?" as he stated to CTV News in an interview. This is in reference to the recent announcement of tariffs that US President-elect Donald Trump intends to impose on Canada. He further notes that he wants to wait to see until Canadians get a better sense of what this means for the country. However, this direction changed after he announced via a letter to Canadians that he will forward and support a vote of non-confidence in Trudeau's government on December 20, 2024. The NDP Leader plans to carry this out when the opportunity presents itself in parliament as Trudeau shuffled his cabinet on the same day.

The New Year shall spell for interesting, albeit uncertain times for Canadians like the readers here and myself. As mentioned in our previous issue, the electorate should stay informed about the current direction of Canada's politics as well as exercise their right to vote. While it is a matter of when the next federal election takes place in 2025, Canadians should prepare themselves to select a government that can lead us in the best way possible during these difficult times.

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

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Canada's finance minister resigns...

one major party in Parliament, as they don't hold an outright majority themselves. If the opposition New Democrats pull support, an election can be held at any time.

Trudeau channeled the star power of his father in 2015, when he reasserted the country's liberal identity after almost 10 years of Conservative Party rule. But the son of late Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau is now in big trouble. Canadians have been frustrated by the rising cost of living and other issues like immigration increases following the country's emergence from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Freeland said in the resignation letter that Canadians "know when we are working for them, and they equally know when we are focused



Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau takes part in a press conference on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Oct. 14, 2024

helping Canada dodge the worst of the global economic crisis that the U.K. named him the first foreigner to serve as governor of the Bank of

minister and, until a couple of years ago, was seen as Trudeau's heir as Liberal leader and prime minister. "

Wiseman said leaks from the prime minister's office suggest that she was a poor communicator and made Freeland's status questionable.

"There was talk about her becoming foreign minister again and that would have been a good fit for her but the stab in the back from the prime minister's office cast the die," Wiseman said.

Daniel Beland, a political science professor at McGill University in Montreal, also called it a political earthquake and not just because Freeland was the second most powerful official in government.

"Also because of how she resigned: by publishing a letter on social media that clearly criticizes the Prime Minister only hours before she was supposed to present the government's fall economic statement," Beland said.

"This is clearly a minority government on life support but, until now, the (opposition) NDP has rejected calls to pull the plug on it. It's hard to know whether this resignation will force the NDP to rethink its strategy."



Mark Carney, the U.N. special envoy on climate action and finance, speaks during The Museum of American Finance Gala, at the Ziegfeld Ballroom in New York City, March 7, 2024

on ourselves. Inevitably, our time in government will come to an end. But how we deal with the threat our country faces will define us for a generation, and perhaps longer."

Freeland's resignation comes as Trudeau has been trying to recruit Mark Carney to join his government. Carney is the former head of the Bank of England and Bank of Canada.

He was so well regarded after

England since it was founded in 1694.

Carney has long been interested in entering politics and becoming the leader of the Liberal Party. It wasn't immediately clear if Carney has agreed to join Trudeau's Cabinet.

"This is quite a bombshell," said Nelson Wiseman, professor emeritus at the University of Toronto. "Freeland was not only finance minister but also deputy prime



WORLD NEWS

Environmental groups condemn new laws threatening soybean restrictions in Brazil's Amazon



An aerial view of soy plantations flanking the Amazon forest in Mato Grosso state, Brazil, Sept. 8, 2011

Dozens of environmental nonprofits issued a manifesto Thursday condemning new laws in Brazilian states that threaten to dismantle the Amazon soy moratorium — a landmark voluntary agreement banning trade in soybeans from recently deforested areas.

The 18-year-old moratorium stipulates that traders and oil producers refrain from buying soybeans grown on land cleared after 2008. The deal gathered strange bedfellows, ranging from environmental groups Greenpeace and WWF to U.S. commodity giants Cargill, Bunge and ADM.

However, new laws recently enacted in the Amazon states of Mato Grosso, Brazil's largest soybean producer, and neighboring Rondonia have cut tax incentives for processing and trade companies that adhere to the agreement. Two other states and Brazil's Congress are weighing similar legislation.

"This means penalizing companies committed to ending deforestation, promoting the continued expansion of agribusiness in Amazon forest areas, creating subsidies for deforestation and discriminating against the granting of tax incentives based on companies' environmental commitment," Thursday's declaration stated.

"Therefore, those who are more ambitious in environmental protection lose the incentive," said the manifesto, whose 67 signers include Greenpeace, WWF and Climate Observatory, a

network of 119 organizations watching federal climate policy in Brazil.

The document argues soybean production grew exponentially in the Amazon under the moratorium as it expanded into pastureland. Its area jumped from 1.6 million hectares (4 million acres) in 2007 to 7.28 million hectares (18 million acres) in 2022, according to a moratorium report.

The manifesto also calls for the companies that operate in Mato Grosso and Rondonia to maintain their commitment to the agreement even though it means losing millions of dollars in tax incentives — a tough decision for small and medium-sized companies.

Researchers have found the moratorium is helping to preserve the Amazon forest. A 2020 study in the journal *Nature Food* found that the agreement, in combination with public policies, contributed to the steepest reduction of deforestation recorded in Brazil, between 2003 and 2016.

In a written response, the government of Mato Grosso said it enacted the law because the moratorium is harsher than Brazil's legislation, which already has "the world's strictest environmental regulations." It also stated that most of the state is covered by original rainforest trees and plants.

"We challenge these nonprofits to name any state, in any country, that is a major food producer and preserves 60% of its territory," the statement said.

Anger and soul-searching follow sentences in French rape trial



A man holds a placard reading 'Thank you for your courage Gisele Pelicot' outside the Avignon courthouse, southern France, Dec. 19, 2024

Feminists and other critics say the sentences handed down in France's mass rape trial are too lenient with some calling them shameful. The trial has shocked the nation of France and made international headlines.

Speaking to reporters in the southern French city of Avignon, 72-year-old plaintiff Gisele Pelicot said she respected the verdict. She said she never regretted going public — which she said aimed to give other victims of sexual assault the courage to speak out.

Pelicot's ex-husband, Dominique, received the toughest sentence — the maximum of 20 years in prison — for drugging his wife and allowing dozens of men to rape her as she slept. The attacks went on for nearly a decade until police detained him for another sexual incident and discovered scores of videos of the rapes.

Some 50 other defendants received sentences ranging from three to 15 years — many less than what prosecutors had recommended. Some walked out free after receiving suspended sentences. It's not immediately clear whether Dominique Pelicot or others will appeal their sentences.

Protesters outside the court in Avignon slammed the sentences as shameful and insufficient.

So did women's rights activists like Laura Slimani, of the Women's Foundation. On France Info radio, she criticized the French justice system for what she said was its inability to handle sexual violence cases.

The Pelicot trial has sparked soul searching — and protests — in France about rape and other forms of gender-based violence.

Pelicot herself has become something of a heroine for her courage and dignity. She said France's so-called macho, patriarchal society must change how it looks at rape. After the verdicts, many again saluted her courage — including German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. "The shame must change sides," Scholz said on X. "Thank you, Gisele Pelicot."

WORLD NEWS



US repatriates 3 Guantanamo detainees, one held 17 years without charge



Christine Funk, right, attorney for Malaysian defendant Mohammed Farik bin Amin, speaks after a hearing for her client and Mohammed Nazir bin Lep, on Aug. 31, 2021, at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The two men have been transferred to Malaysia, the Pentagon said on Dec. 18, 2024.

The United States has transferred two Malaysian detainees at the Guantanamo Bay U.S. military prison to their home country after they pleaded guilty to charges related to deadly 2002 bombings in Bali and agreed to testify against the alleged ringleader of that and other attacks, the Pentagon said Wednesday.

Prosecutors say Mohammed Farik bin Amin and Mohammed Nazir bin Lep worked for years with Encep Nurjaman, known as Hambali, an Indonesian leader of al-Qaida affiliate Jemaah Islamiyah. That includes helping Nurjaman escape after bombings on Oct. 12, 2002, killed 202 people at two nightspots in Bali, U.S. officials said.

The two men entered guilty pleas to conspiracy and other charges in January. Their transfer comes after they provided testimony that prosecutors plan to use against Nurjaman, the alleged mastermind, the Pentagon said in a statement.

Nurjaman is in custody in Guantanamo awaiting resumption of pretrial hearings in January involving the Bali bombings and other attacks.

The two Malaysian men's transfers leave 27 detainees in custody at the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo Bay. Then-President George W. Bush set up a military tribunal and prison after the

Sept. 11, 2001, al-Qaida attacks on the United States.

At its peak, Guantanamo detained hundreds of men, most of them Muslim, in the U.S.-led global war on terrorism after the attacks.

Just two of the men at Guantanamo are serving sentences. U.S. prosecution of seven others currently facing charges has been slowed by legal obstacles — including those presented by the torture of the men in their first years under CIA custody — and logistical difficulties.

Kenyan held 17 years

On Tuesday, U.S. authorities repatriated a Kenyan man, Mohammed Abdul Malik Bajabu, after 17 years at Guantanamo without charge.

His release leaves 15 other never-charged men awaiting release. The U.S. is searching for suitable and stable countries willing to take them. Many are from Yemen, a country split by war and dominated by an Iranian-allied militant group.

Amnesty International urged President Joe Biden to end the detention of those never-charged men before he leaves office. If not, the rights group said in a statement, "he will continue to bear responsibility for the abhorrent practice of indefinite detention without charge or trial by the U.S. government."

Popular actor in southern India is freed on bail in stampede case



Dec. 13, 2024, as he leaves a hospital where he was taken for medical checkup by policemen before arresting him after his appearance at a film screening allegedly led to a crush of fans in which a woman died.

A popular actor in southern India was released from jail on bail on Saturday, a day after he was arrested by police in connection with a stampede that led to the death of a woman at the premiere of his movie earlier this month.

A 35-year-old woman died and her 8-year-old son was critically injured in the stampede, which occurred during the screening of Allu Arjun's release for Pushpa 2: The Rule in southern Telangana state's Hyderabad city on December 4.

Arjun was arrested after the woman's husband filed a case against him, his security team and the theater's management for not informing police of the actor's plan to attend the screening, which resulted in a larger-than-expected crowd. Police charged the actor, his security team and the theater's management staff with culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

Police have already arrested the theater's owner and two of his employees in connection with the case.

A local court on Friday ordered the actor to spend 14 days in jail, but within hours the Telangana High Court granted him bail. However, the actor had to spend the night in jail because prison authorities did not receive a copy of the bail until late Friday, the Press Trust of India reported.

The accident happened after the 41-year-old actor made a surprise appearance at a local theater where the movie was being screened. As his fans surged toward the venue, the theater's main gate collapsed, resulting in the stampede.

The actor did not comment on the police charges or his arrest. But shortly after the accident, Arjun wrote on the social platform X that he was "heartbroken by the tragic incident." He later announced financial assistance of \$29,000 for the woman's family and promised to take care of the medical expenses for her injured son.

Deadly stampedes are relatively common in India, where large crowds gather in small areas with shoddy infrastructure and few crowd safety measures.

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WORLD NEWS

Sri Lanka, India shore up ties in Sri Lankan president's first overseas visit



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (L) and Sri Lanka's President Anura Kumara Dissanayake shake hands before their meeting at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Dec. 16, 2024.

India and Sri Lanka vowed to bolster ties during a visit to New Delhi by Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, whose left-leaning coalition won a landslide majority in parliamentary elections last month.

After the two leaders held talks on Monday, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that he had assured Dissanayake that New Delhi will be a reliable partner for Sri Lanka's development. He outlined several areas in which they plan to boost cooperation such as establishing a petroleum pipeline between the two countries and connecting their power grids.

"We are honored that Dissanayake picked India for his first official visit," Modi said at a joint press conference. "This will give new speed and energy in our relations."

Dissanayake's party's roots in Marxist ideology had raised some concerns in New Delhi that he would lean towards China.

But by making New Delhi his first overseas stop, he signaled that "India will indeed be our closest ally" according to Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director of the Center for Policy Alternatives in Colombo. "That is the symbolic dimension of this visit."

Both rivals India and China have vied for influence in the island country that sits strategically along shipping routes in the Indian Ocean. Before Sri Lanka's economy collapsed in 2022, Beijing poured in billions of dollars to build infrastructure projects that included a port which India feared could affect its security.

However, New Delhi and Colombo reset ties as India helped the country tide over its economic woes by extending aid worth \$ 4 billion as the cash-strapped country struggled to buy food, fuel and medicines.

"We faced an unprecedented economic crisis two years ago and India supported us immensely to come out of that quagmire," Dissanayake said. Addressing New Delhi's security concerns, he said "we will not let our land be used in any way that is detrimental to the interest of India."

Analysts say Dissanayake will build ties with India as he tries to revive the economy. "The cooperation with India will certainly flourish and I want to reassure our continued support for India," the Sri Lankan president said.

"Sri Lanka has to balance between India and China but Dissanayake is very much a pragmatist and not an ideologue. He knows that at the end of the day he

cannot do anything to get on the wrong side of India, because India as its closest neighbor, is going to be there always," according to Saravanamuttu. "China will also be in Sri Lanka but on the question whether China will get a larger stake, I don't think that will necessarily be the case."

In New Delhi, the Sri Lankan leader also met other top Indian diplomats — foreign minister Jaishankar Subramanian, and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval.

"Our conversations focused on strengthening Indo-Sri Lanka economic cooperation, enhancing investment opportunities, fostering regional security, and advancing key sectors such as tourism and energy," Dissanayake said in a statement.

Ahead of the president's visit, Colombo said it will go ahead with a port project being developed by Indian conglomerate Adani Group in Colombo.

The government had earlier said it would review the project after the United States filed an indictment against the group's founder and top officials charging them with duping investors by concealing that a huge solar energy project in India was being facilitated by an alleged \$250 million bribery scheme.



Pakistan media experienced surge in violence, suppression in 2024



AFP

Police officers fire tear gas shells to disperse protesters in Islamabad on Nov. 26, 2024. Coverage of the protest led to one journalist being detained briefly and another called in for questioning amid a surge of media suppression and violence in Pakistan this year.

Malik Zafar Iqbal Naich was delivering copies of the newspaper he works for last week when gunmen on a motorbike shot and killed the journalist.

Naich, a 45-year-old reporter and newsagent for the Daily Khabrain, became the 12th journalist killed in what has been a deadly year for Pakistan's media industry.

Police are investigating the case in central-eastern Punjab province and have not yet identified a motive. However, the journalist's employer suspected it could be related to his reporting.

"We demand that the Pakistani authorities ensure justice to the bereaved family," Blaise Lempen, president of the Press Emblem Campaign, said in a statement.

The Geneva-based media safety and rights body says the killings in Pakistan come amid criticism over a lack of justice or impunity for journalists' murders.

The Committee to Protect Journalists, or CPJ, has also flagged a failure to ensure accountability. It said that Pakistani authorities should implement urgent measures to curb attacks on media.

"The surge in violence is closely linked to the political turmoil and security situation in the country, but more alarming is the Pakistan government turning a blind eye to the sharp rise in journalist killings," Beh Lih

Yi, the CPJ Asia program coordinator, told VOA.

"This failure to put an end to impunity is sending a chilling message to newsrooms across the country that such heinous acts are tolerated in Pakistan," she said via email.

Alongside violence, journalists are at risk of arrest or threats for covering issues deemed critical or sensitive to authorities, including a crackdown on anti-government protesters.

Pakistan's minister of information, Attaullah Tarar, told VOA he would respond to a request for comment but at the time of publication, no response had been received.

Tarar said in September that the government was working closely with provincial authorities to address challenges facing journalists.

'Deep-rooted impunity'

The Islamabad-based Freedom Network, an advocate for press freedom, has determined that at least half of the journalists killed this year were targeted over their work.

"There is more than one factor contributing to the physical elimination of journalists," said Iqbal Khattak, the executive director of the nonprofit network. He noted that no one has been held accountable for the killing of journalists to date.

"I think deep-rooted impunity for crimes against journalists and media organizations is encouraging press

freedom predators to continue these attacks," Khattak told VOA.

Amir Zia, a political talk show host, said that journalists face threats from multiple fronts, including state actors, political party supporters, religious and sectarian groups, and militants.

"In rural areas, particularly the southern province of Sindh, feudal lords — many affiliated with the provincial ruling party — remain responsible for the murder and torture of journalists," Zia said.

The Sindh government denies the charges. Last month, it announced the establishment of a commission to protect journalists. The panel would provide legal assistance, arrange training and develop safety policies.

However, critics remain skeptical about the commission's effectiveness.

Most media freedom violations documented by the Freedom Network in 2024 were in Sindh, with Punjab and Islamabad the second- and third-most affected regions, respectively.

But Zia said that authorities alone are not responsible for the safety and security of the media.

"Pakistani media organizations hardly take the safety of journalists seriously. There is hardly any training, and an overwhelming number of media persons even lack proper safety gear for covering violence and terrorist incidents," he said.

The CPJ has noted that various parties — from police to tribal chiefs — often

WORLD NEWS

Continue from page 9

Pakistan media...



pressure relatives, particularly those from rural areas, to abandon efforts to secure justice, with families in some cases paid in exchange for silence.

Legal threats

Watchdogs, too, have long criticized Pakistan for the poor media freedom environment, including laws that target media, arrests, accusations of torture and harassment. Coverage of protests last month led to one journalist being detained briefly and another called in for questioning.

Harmeet Singh, a journalist from the country's minority Sikh community, has been summoned to appear for questioning by the Federal Investigation Agency Cybercrime Center next week. The anchor for Such TV faces allegations of propagating a "misleading, concocted and baseless campaign against state institutions and security agencies of Pakistan."

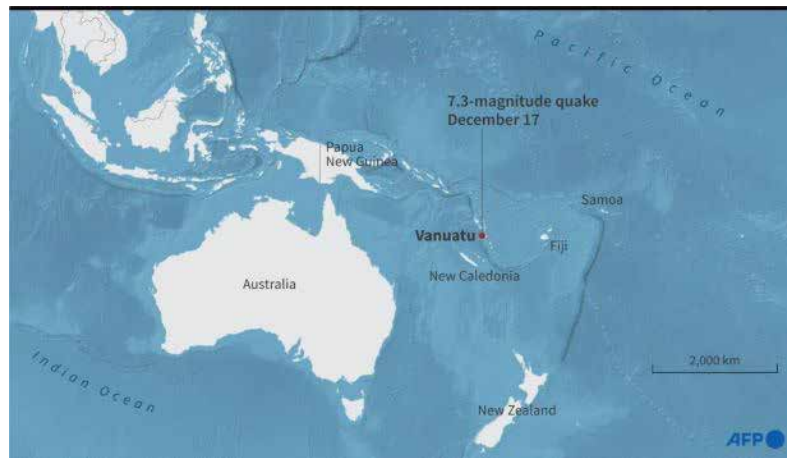
The case stems from Singh's coverage of a Nov. 26 opposition protest march in Islamabad by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, or PTI, party of jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Pakistani security forces used tear gas, rubber bullets and live ammunition on protesters, according to local and foreign media.

The PTI reported the deaths of at least 12 people and said that many more are still unaccounted for. The government refuted any casualties resulting from gunfire, saying that security forces were not armed with "lethal" weapons.

"The targeting of Singh is part of a broader pattern of intimidation against journalists in Pakistan," said CPJ's Beh. She added that a second journalist — Matiullah Jan — was arrested on terrorism charges for his coverage of the same protest.

Major quake crushes buildings in Vanuatu capital, bodies seen World



Map showing Vanuatu where a 7.3-magnitude quake struck on Tuesday (December 17, 2024) - AFP

A powerful earthquake hit the Pacific nation of Vanuatu on Tuesday (17), smashing buildings in the capital Port Vila including one used by foreign embassies, with a witness telling AFP of bodies lying in the city.

The 7.3-magnitude quake struck at a depth of 57 kilometres (35 miles), some 30 kilometres off the coast of Efate, Vanuatu's main island, at 12:47 p.m. (0147 GMT), according to the US Geological Survey.

A 5.5-magnitude aftershock struck minutes later, followed by a string of lesser tremors — shaking the low-lying archipelago of 320,000 people that lies in the quake-prone Pacific Rim of Fire.

The ground floor of a four-storey concrete block in Port Vila — used by US, French, British, Australian and New Zealand diplomatic missions — was flattened, AFP photos showed.

US and French embassy staff are safe, the two countries said. The United States closed its embassy until further notice. France said its mission was "destroyed".

"There's people in the buildings in town. There were bodies there when we walked past," resident Michael Thompson told AFP by satellite phone after posting images of the destruction on social media.

A landslide on one road had covered a bus, he said, "so there's obviously some deaths there".

As well as destroying the ground floor of the diplomatic building, the quake also knocked down at least two bridges and toppled other buildings, Thompson said.

— 'Completely flat' —

The bottom floor of the embassy block "no longer exists," he said.

"It is just completely flat. The top three floors are still holding but they have dropped."

"If there was anyone in there at the time, then they're gone," said Thompson, who runs a zipline adventure business in Vanuatu.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said there were unconfirmed reports of at least six dead and estimated 116,000 people could be affected by the worst impacts of the quake.

The hospital in Port Vila had been damaged,

with tents set up outside for the influx of patients, it said, adding there was also significant disruption to telecommunications and the two main water reservoirs had been damaged.

"Immediate response efforts are ongoing as humanitarian partners and authorities work to overcome access and communication challenges," it said in a situation update.

Some people injured in the quake were driven in flat-bed trucks to a Port Vila hospital where others lay in stretchers outside or sat on plastic chairs, their arms and heads wrapped in bandages, public television VBTC images showed.

Landslips sent tonnes of earth and large rocks tumbling down a steep hill over the international shipping terminal, images verified by AFP showed.

The port buildings did not appear to be damaged.

Australian and other regional airlines including Qantas, Jetstar, Virgin Australia, and Fiji Airways diverted or suspended flights — some citing reports of possible damage to the facilities and runway.

The quake cut off most mobile networks on the Pacific island, Thompson said.

— Broken glass, debris —

"They're just cracking on with a rescue operation. The support we need from overseas is medical evacuation and skilled rescue, the kind of people that can operate in earthquakes," he said.

Video posted by Thompson and verified by AFP showed uniformed rescuers working on a building that had collapsed, crushing parked cars and trucks below.

The streets of the city were strewn with broken glass and other debris from cracked buildings.

Nibhay Nand, a Sydney-based pharmacist with businesses across the South Pacific, said staff in Port Vila reported that most of the store there had been "destroyed" and other buildings nearby had "collapsed".

"We are waiting for everyone to get online to know how devastating and traumatic this will be," Nand told AFP.

A tsunami warning was issued after the quake, with waves of up to one metre (three feet) forecast for some areas of Vanuatu, but it was soon lifted by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre. Australia stands ready to help, said Foreign Minister Penny Wong.

"Vanuatu is family and we will always be there in times of need," she said in a statement.

Vanuatu is ranked as one of the countries most susceptible to natural disasters such as earthquakes, storm damage, flooding and tsunamis, according to the annual World Risk Report.

- AFP

“A smile is a curve that sets everything straight.”

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Meet Tharsika

A TAMIL COORDINATOR TRANSFORMING PALLIATIVE CARE IN SCARBOROUGH



For Tharsika Manokumar, serving Scarborough’s diverse community as a Palliative Care Coordinator at Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is both a professional calling and a personal mission.

Tharsika immigrated to Scarborough from Sri Lanka in 2005 and has seen first-hand the challenges her community faces in accessing equitable healthcare. With a deep connection to Scarborough’s large Tamil population, she understands the cultural nuances, language, and traditions that can make a world of difference in providing compassionate care.

“As a Tamil woman, it brings comfort to my patients and their families to see someone who understands their values and needs—not just medically, but culturally,” she says.

Tharsika is part of SHN’s Rowntree Palliative Care Centre, established with a generous \$5 million donation from the late philanthropist Bryan Rowntree.

The Centre provides Scarborough

residents holistic end-of-life care, whether in the hospital, at home, or in hospice. Its person-centred approach ensures patients receive pain management, symptom relief, and emotional support while respecting their cultural and spiritual practices.

Tharsika’s role involves helping patients and families navigate difficult transitions with empathy and clarity. She recalls one family hesitating about involving the palliative care team, fearing it signalled “giving up.” She gained their trust through patient communication, helping them find comfort and relief. “Even after her mother moved to hospice, the daughter thanked me,” Tharsika shares. “Moments like these remind me why I do this work.”

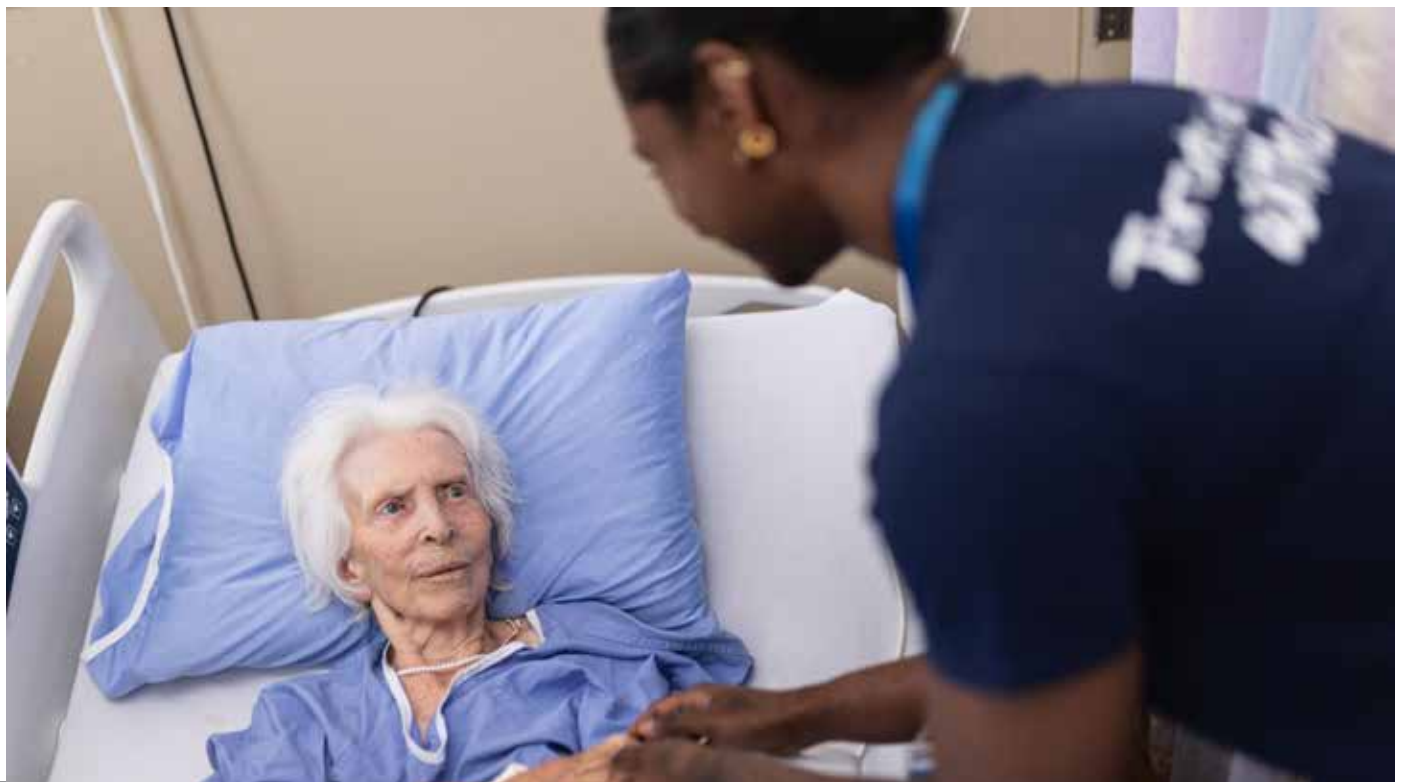
Tharsika is one of the new faces of Love, Scarborough, a fundraising campaign that seeks to raise \$200 million for SHN’s three Scarborough hospitals. The campaign highlights

Scarborough’s resilience—its “grit”—and invites donors to imagine the possibilities with improved resources.

“Our hospitals have done so much with so little,” says Tharsika. “But with more resources, we can ensure everyone in Scarborough has access to the compassionate, equitable care they deserve.”

For Tharsika, supporting Love, Scarborough is about giving back to the community she calls home. “Scarborough’s diversity and strength inspire me every day. I hope others see the beauty in serving and supporting this incredible place.”

Learn more or donate at LoveScarborough.ca.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

BRIDGING CULTURES, BREAKING CYCLES: TRANSFORMING WORKPLACES THROUGH LATERAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

By Cindy Staffa, MA

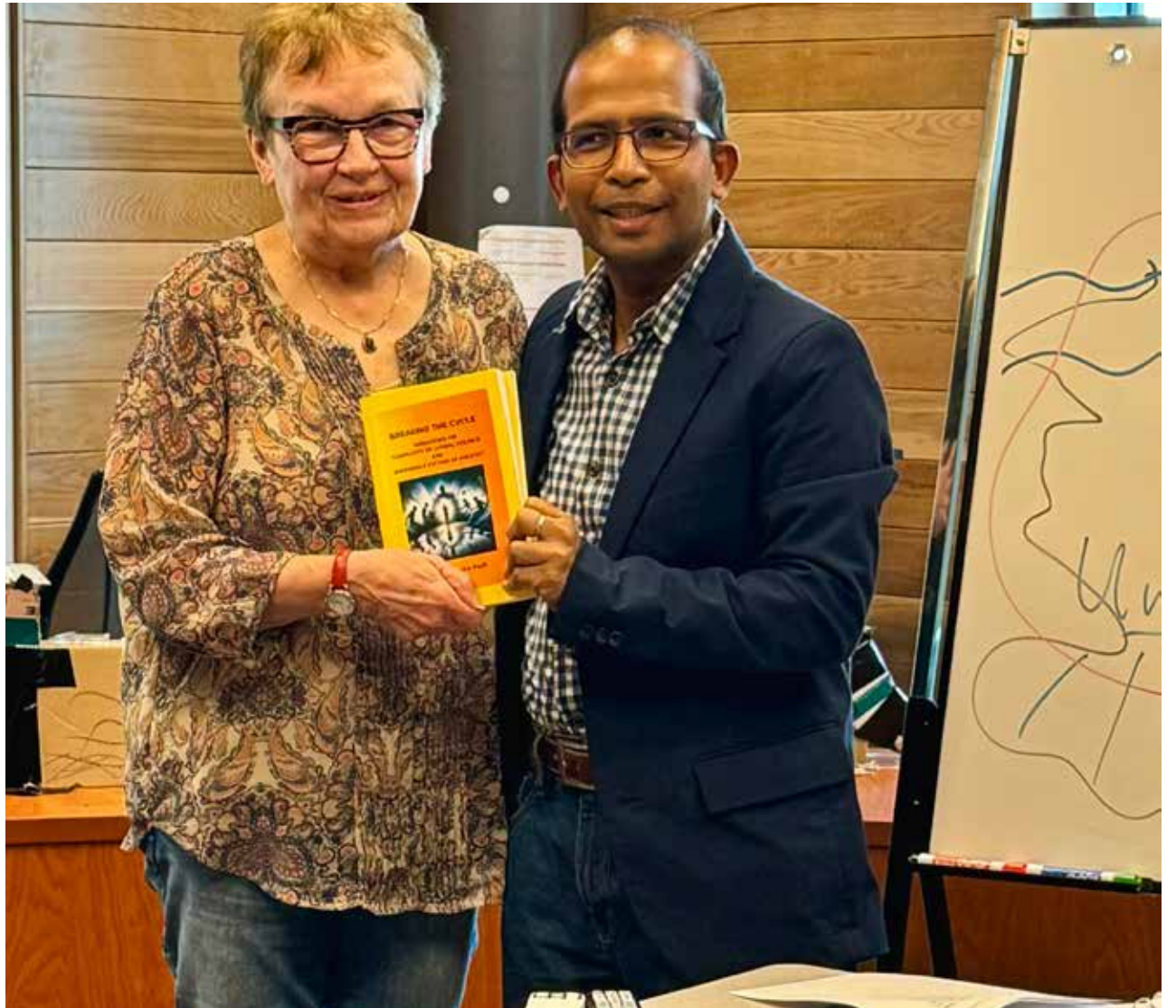
In workplaces across northern Manitoba, a quiet but powerful transformation is underway. The “Lateral Violence Prevention in the Workplace” training program, led by Dr. Fonseka of the Integrative Mindfulness Center, is not only addressing a long-standing issue but also cultivating a profound sense of cultural awareness and community healing.

This innovative program explores the roots of lateral violence—a deeply ingrained phenomenon stemming from intergenerational trauma, systemic oppression, and historical injustice. Lateral violence, often manifesting as conflict, hostility, or sabotage within organizations, affects Indigenous and non-Indigenous professionals alike. By shining a light on these dynamics, the training empowers attendees to break free from the cycle and foster a culture of mutual respect and collaboration.

The program’s foundation lies in the intersection of cultural sensitivity, mindfulness, and emotional intelligence. Participants engage in hands-on exercises designed to recognize the signs of lateral violence, understand its underlying causes, and implement prevention strategies. Through mindfulness and loving-kindness practices, professionals are equipped with tools to de-escalate conflicts and create harmonious workplace environments.

One of the training’s standout features is its focus on Indigenous perspectives and cultural practices. By honoring traditional knowledge and integrating it with modern therapeutic approaches, the program becomes a bridge between worlds—connecting historical wisdom with contemporary needs. Professionals leave with a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by Indigenous communities and how these intersect with workplace dynamics.

The significance of this work cannot be overstated. Recent



Cindy Staffa and Dr. Nuwan Fonseka

workshops at the University College of the North brought together a diverse group of professionals, all united by a common goal: to create healthier workplaces and communities. Participants shared how the training inspired them to reflect on their practices, embrace cultural sensitivity, and champion kindness within their organizations.

Dr. Fonseka’s book, *Breaking the Circle: Unraveling the Complexity of Lateral Violence*, serves as an invaluable companion to the training. Dedicated to Kathy Jenson, MSW, RSW, a trailblazing social worker who devoted her life to supporting Indigenous children and families, the book has garnered widespread acclaim for its depth and accessibility. Jenson’s legacy underscores the importance of compassion, cultural awareness, and perseverance in addressing systemic challenges.

As multicultural workplaces become more common, the relevance of this training grows. In today’s interconnected world,

understanding the nuances of cultural dynamics is not just a professional asset—it’s a necessity. Programs like this offer a roadmap for navigating these complexities, fostering inclusion, and building stronger communities.

Northern Manitoba is leading the charge in this critical work, but the message resonates far beyond its borders: by breaking the cycle of lateral violence, we pave the way for collaboration, healing, and progress.

As Dr. Fonseka’s training and book remind us, meaningful change begins with understanding—and grows through action. For professionals committed to creating a better workplace and world, the “Lateral Violence Prevention in the Workplace” program is a call to action and a source of hope.

Cindy Staffa, MA, is a therapist and writer dedicated to exploring cultural and social dynamics in professional spaces. She specializes in trauma therapy and is passionate about fostering understanding through education and storytelling.



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SPECIAL FEATURE

Aviation & Airlines

A First in Sri Lanka A Third Generation of Aviators. WOW !.

By: Kane Siva

I believe strongly that this is a fact to be sure of a family who are blessed with the 3rd generation of aviators, a first in Sri Lanka and if I am wrong, stand to be corrected. All of this started in 1947 when the National Airline of Ceylon, Air Ceylon was in its infancy and recruiting qualified people to serve them after the end of World War 2. The Ceylonese Government acquired 3 DC-3 aircraft better known as Dakota, made by Douglas Company USA. A young, amiable and vibrant John Rajkumar Vethavanam, who was born in Nallur, Jaffna, studied at St John's College Jaffna and later at Trinity College Kandy where he represented the college in the First Eleven Cricket team, joined Air Ceylon as its first Radio Officer on the DC-3 aircraft. He was the son of a Magistrate and District Judge. John Vetha obtained his credentials after training in India and then completed his licensing examinations conducted by Director of Ceylon Civil Aviation. He had the honor of being the First Radio Officer and also a crew member of the first ever Air Ceylon Flight and a passenger flight to Madras (Now Chennai) on the 10th December 1947.

This humble Patriarch John Rajkumar Vethavanam by his honesty, tenacity, sheer diligence and hard work achieved greatness by passing the Torch Of Aviation to a third generation which none in Sri Lanka's aviation history have been able to achieve or blessed with so far. This is an admirable feat. What an achievement by an honest and simple soul who was always humble beyond any words in the Dictionary.

His only son Duleep Vethavanam got inspired by his father's bravado in the blue skies, took his flying lessons soon after his 11th standard and kept honing his skills at an early age, maybe 20 years. Duleep was my colleague when I joined Air Ceylon's Flight Operations in 1972 and a person whom still I can call a friend. In fact my first flight in an aircraft was with Duleep soon after I joined flight operations. He was the pilot in command of the Pushpak, a two seater single engine aircraft donated by the then President V.V. Giri of India to the Flying School at Ratmalana. I was really nervous and young



Vetha tapped me on my shoulder and said "Machchan Blue Don't Worry" you are in safe hands. I will never forget this moment the first ever flight for me in the air and also the coolness of my pilot friend. But I really got nervous when he flew really quite low over the fishing boats at Bolgoda lake as if he was going to beat them up. I remember this well and muse over about

that day and still it brings goosebumps. In my Advanced Level examinations in 1968 for the Zoology paper one of the questions was like this "An Organism is a Product of Heredity and Environment" please discuss. My good friend Vetha is proof of this statement. I remember Duleep's reflection as to what had inspired and motivated him to don his father's



caps. Dinner table talks of his father's courageous, confidential and crowning moments over the Strait Of Malacca in 1948 almost in the face of disaster. In the olden and golden days the pilots flew their machines with minimum Navigational aids and equipments. Mostly they used Landmarks as waypoints and Air Routes. Present day GPS and other Nav. Aids were nil heard. Senior Vetha's career as a radio officer was more troublesome and a painstaking vocation as his ears drums were almost in pain because of the incessant sound waves. If he did not receive a response



from any enroute ATC facilities he had to keep on calling them till they responded to ascertain their position. The Patriarch's flight to Sydney in 1947 was news all over Asia. Air Ceylon's Charter flight to Sydney is on record as the First ever Flight by an Asian Airline ran into difficulties over the Straits Of Malacca. The flight encountered severe bad weather and heavy storms. The crew could not contact any of the air traffic control facilities and almost desperate to find their bearings. The tireless efforts of John Vethavanam and another officer D.L. Sirimanae saved the day for the crew and Air Ceylon. Eventually John Vetha managed to contact the Singapore ATC and all ended well. I would paraphrase this was a Miracle and give credence to the perseverance and unwavering dedication for aviation by John Senior Vetha after his historic flying career as a senior

distinguished radio officer for Air Ceylon, continued his career as an administrative officer for our flight operations department doing crew rostering and performing all the administrative duties till he retired in 1974 / 75. I was fortunate enough to have worked with him for a few years when I joined Flight Operations in 1972. He was a genial personality to the bone and always adored by his peers and subordinates. His composure in times of difficult operational matters taught me many lessons and considered the tenure really as a God sent opportunity.

In 1972 his son Duleep joined with G.A. Fernando, Iqbal Cader and myself as pioneer flight operations officers. Duleep worked really hard to earn his wings. After working as our colleague in flight operations for a period of 4½ years got his ATPL, Air Transport Pilot License. When



J.R. VETHAVANAM

Canada in 1996 and continued my passion in aviation by working in Houston for 17 years in an airline industry.

Four of us had a get together on the 29th of November after 45 years at Marino Beach Hotel, with the arrival of Cader and myself. It was a nice and memorable meeting of the Foursome and Awesome and reminisced the good old days at Air Ceylon. Ours is a union and friendship that withstood the test of time and counting 53 years as I am inking this narrative. Duleep Vethavanam flew with Air Lanka and Sri Lankan as a Captain on the Airbus A330 and A340 aircrafts. He is an instructor and an examiner on these two aircraft.



the infant airline Air Lanka stretched its muscles Duleep joined as a trainee pilot and never looked back on his career. G.A. Fernando also flew for Air Ceylon as captain and also joined Air Lanka as a trainee first officer eventually becoming a Captain on the A340 and later flew with Singapore airlines. Iqbal Cader went to England and eventually worked as Manager for Kuwait Airways in London. I left in Sri Lanka 1981 to work for Abu Dhabi Airport and eventually migrated to

What Duleep had learned from his father imbibed his young progeny Dinesh and he carried the Mantle Of Aviation to much greater heights than his grandfather ever imagined. The Patriarch was a God fearing man and always did it right. Dinesh followed in his father's and grandfather's footsteps and took up aviation to keep the flag flying. Dinesh started his career with Sri Lankan airlines as a trainee pilot and now

pursuing his fervor with Etihad airlines as a Captain on Boeing 787 - Dreamliner for quite some time. I would term this continuity as a great endorsement for aviation. He is proudly and literally wearing the "Aviation Attitude Indicator Necklace" painstakingly handmade in Ruby Stone (Normally made in wood) by his paternal grandmother, late Ruby Vethavanam who was a stickler for discipline and a good Piano teacher.

The passion of aviation fuelled by late John Vethavanam still keeps burning brightly and that propelled the third generation to astounding success and to lofty heights. This reminds me of JFK's famous speech in 1963 "The Torch has been passed to a New Generation". This gives me an impression that by God's grace we will not be surprised in years to come a 4th generation of aviators and I will relish that day.

I want to fold my wings of this narration with these few lines. "In life if our purpose and intention are good, honest at all times in whatever situation we are in then the end result will be an unbelievable success story, where you may not have enough pages left to ink". People may laugh at my insinuation. This is my unshakeable belief and profound theory of success in life. Always Walk The Talk.

This is the life of Sri Lanka's greatest aviator John Rajkumar Vethavanam and I am blessed to eulogize on his anniversary 12.18.24.

Finally Patriarch Vetha is smiling through the 'Cirrus Clouds' of the skies and saying "Blue Boy" You know well that I always did it right" No Matter What. Further I wonder whether Senor Vetha believed in this Philosophy:

*Never Think You Are Nothing;
Never Think You Are Everything;*

But

Always Think That You Are Something;

And

You Can Achieve Almost Anything By The Grace Of God!

God Bless Your Beautiful Soul
And Blessed To Have Known You
Señor. Tu Mucho Bueno Gente.

Big Thank You For Giving Us A Third Generation Of Aviators.

**Success Is Not Final;
Failure Is Not Fatal;
It Is The Courage To
Continue That Counts.**



K.N. Sivagnanasunderam (Blue)

Former Flight Operations
Officer, Air Ceylon Ltd.

Kanesiva6@gmail.com

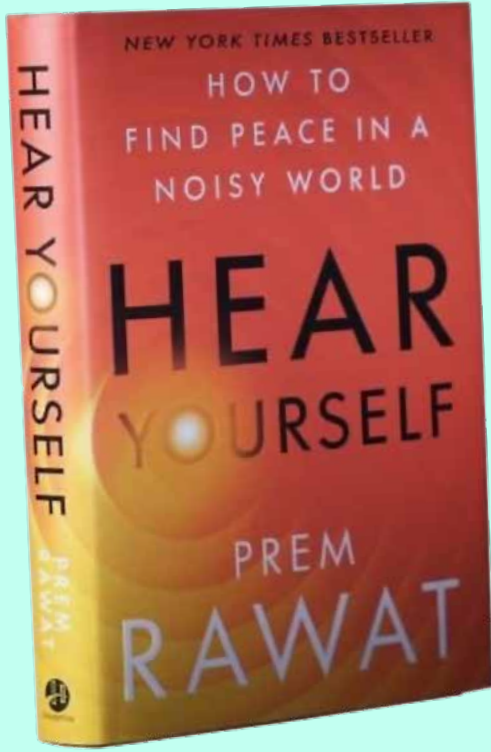
SPECIAL FEATURE

Words of Peace

WE ARE COMPLETE

EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK

'HEAR YOURSELF'



Gratitude comes from what is, not what might be. That does not mean we must abandon our needs and wants, our wishes, hopes, and dreams. But we don't need to wait for external success to arrive before we give thanks for what we already have. Our imagination and enthusiasm can achieve great things in the external world- for us and for others-but we don't need achievements to make us complete, we are complete.

We can always choose to accept things as they are, experience them as they are, and appreciate them as they are. When we truly appreciate what is, our gratitude is infinite. Our contentment cannot be measured. Our joy cannot be measured. Our love cannot be measured. Our understanding cannot be measured. Our happiness cannot be measured. Our inner peace cannot be measured. We

can't run a tape along their dimensions, like a tailor and call out the numbers of their shape. We can't put them on the weighing scales. They are infinite and formless, but utterly real for us.

When we value every breath, this is reality. When we fully connect with the peace inside us, this is reality. All of this can only happen in the here and now. What is good Karma for 'now'? The good karma for now is consciousness. The good karma for now is joy. The good Karma for now is gratitude.

LOVE YOUR LIFE

In every moment we are given the great opportunity to experience and appreciate the gift of existence. Right now we can turn away from the dark to the light of gratitude, and feel life flowing through us. When we do that, we love what is for us. Eachday, we can choose to love our breath. to love our joy. To love our clarity. We can fall in love with life.

With each breath that comes in and out, we can accept the grace of life. When that happens, our heart fills with gratitude, and that brings more love. And thus an endless cycle flows onward.

உள்ளத்தின் குரல்

இந்த புத்தகத்தை உங்களுக்கு அறிமுகப்படுத்துவதில் மட்டற்ற மகிழ்ச்சி அடைகிறோம்.

"உலகத்து செல்வங்களால் நமது விருப்பங்களை பூர்த்தி செய்யலாம். ஆனால் உள்ளத்தின் செல்வம் தான் எங்களது தேவைகளை பூர்த்தி செய்கின்றது."

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By: J A Rajah

- viacharacter.org

“Kandu kettu undu uyirthu uttu ariyum iypulanum, On dodi anne ulla”

“கண்டுகேட்டு உண்டுயிர்த்து உற்றறியும் ஐம்புலனும்
ஒண்தொடி கண்ணை உள்”

All the five delights of sight, sound, taste, smell and touch are experienced together only in the embrace of this resplendent damsel. That is, the pleasures experienced through all the five senses are together found in complete harmony only in the embrace of this gracefully ornamented young lady. The medicine is distinct from the disease for all illnesses, but the pain she causes, the bejewelled maiden herself, is the cure. Is the world of the lotus-eyed God Himself any sweeter than the tender arms of the loving maiden in a delightful embrace.? Where did she acquire this tremendous inner fire of love, which burns me so when held away and cools refreshingly when embraced? The lady with the flower-decked tresses provides one with whatever joy is fancied.

“Uruthoru uyir tharlippath theendalal pathayku, Amirthin iyanrana thori”

“உறுதோறு உயிர்தளிர்ப்பத் தீண்டலால்
பேதைக்கு அமிழ்தின் இயன்றன தோள்”

The shoulders of this artless maid are verily the nectar from heaven because they revive me every time I embrace them. The embrace of this maiden is as delightful as the householder’s meal, taken after all the waiting guests have been fed. The close embrace of a loving couple,



Valluvar’s Views

which does not permit even the air to penetrate between them, is the most delightful.

“Uoodal unarthal, punarthal ivay kaamam Koodiyar petta payan”

“ஊடல் உணர்தல் புணர்தல் இவைகாமம்
கூடியார் பெற்ற பயன்”

Lovers, tiffs, reconciliation, and union afresh are the rare fruits of stolen love that fond lovers enjoy. Even as a man is more conscious of his ignorance, the more he learns, the more he enjoys her embrace and yearns for it. The more one learns and acquires knowledge, the more one becomes conscious of one’s relative ignorance earlier and yearns for more knowledge. The poet compares this state of affairs to the level of one’s awareness of happiness the union with the lady has given him, making him yearn more. When one acquires knowledge, he is induced to crave for more.

(Kural: 1100-1110)

Thirukkural is a compendium of human behaviour that assures people that they can attain divinity through righteous living. It is written in excellent linguistic composition with alliteration and rhyme:

“Manithan enbavan theivamahalam.” மனிதன் என்பவன் தெய்வமாகலாம்.

(This concludes the series on
Valluvar’s Views)



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Thulasi Muttulingam 10m · YouTube ·

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Thulasi Muttulingam December 18 at 12:23 AM ·

I will be very happy to hear that you are a great chess player, but I will be even happier to hear that you are a good human being.

~ DR. PADMA KUMARI, MOTHER OF D. GUKESH

The artist and his art.

Have to say, he does make an excellent pie.
 10/10 would recommend.
 Sulojan Kunashekar you really should bring him in as a guest chef sometime.
 "Jekhan's famous pies. Every Friday Night."
 Would bring all the fine diners to the yard.
 Thevanayagam Thevananth has an advertising jingle all ready too.
 Although he does need to update it from pure Jaffna food to fusion British-Jaffna food with a culinary twist.



This is not a hunting photo. Briton Alex Larenty, who resides on a game reserve in South Africa, spends his days giving foot massages to lions. One day, while applying a cream to treat an infection on a lion's paw, he noticed that the lion would relax and appear to smile. Since then, Alex has been massaging all the lions in the park daily. Thanks to this pampering, he has formed a bond with the lions so strong that they lie down, stretch their legs, and smile as soon as they see him approaching. With love and respect, all relationships are possible!
 -copied-



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SPECIAL FEATURE

Short Story

MATRIMONIAL ALTAR

Original in Tamil - English version by Siva Sinniah



After midnight, birds, insects, and flowering buds were waiting for the arrival of the Sun, Tharani who was in deep sleep, got up and opened the door when she heard many knocks on the door. “She is getting married in three hours and you are still sleeping, asked Ramya.

“Lakshmi could not sleep throughout the night. Most of the night she was crying”.

“Hey bride get up”, said Ramya patting her shoulder “Am I late?” inquired Lakshmi.

Round face, long bushy hair, broad eyes, dimple on the cheeks when smiling, rosy lips, slightly protruding teeth, glamorous nose-studs, with all these beauties, Lakshmi was knowledgeable too. On that chilly morning she had a hot bath and was rejuvenated. Adorned a red color saree. Her hair was combed, flowered and she was made up with imitation jewelry, instead of gold or diamond jewelry. Her eyes spoke her mind, even when she was dumb. So sharp were her eyes and they were beautified by her friends Ramya and Tharani.

Early in the morning she was feeling hungry. Her eyes were smarting. She was clueless of what her friends were doing. I should have got up early and

got ready. Were her thoughts running in her mind? There was absolute silence in the room. The sound of a text message on her phone broke the silence. I am ready, was the message from her friend. She smiled a bit and sent her this message. I am ready too but a bit nervous. Her friends started joking and teasing her.

After heaving a big sigh of relief by looking at her face in the mirror, she inquired as to whether everything was okay, from her friends. Then with the help of his brother sat on the wedding altar. She was feeling happy as though she had attained something. She looked at her man and felt shy, as the space in between them is going to be very close and smiled at him. With the signal to tie the sacred yellow thread (Thali) with beating drums, blowing trumpet (nathaswaram), showering of flowers, the chanting of the mantra and among the cheering crowd of friends and family, Lakshmi clasped both hands and bent her neck, Ravi kissed her on the cheek and tied three knots of the Sacred yellow string.

An unknown and unable to show out feeling arose in her mind. The anxiety of leaving the parents and marrying her lover and all the feelings got together and came out as tears in her

eyes. Ravi applied kumkum ‘pottu’ on her forehead in an embracing mood with his right hand. The lower end of his ‘veshdi’ was tied to her saree’s front piece end. Both clasped their little fingers and looked for the “Arunthathy” star. He held her small toe and fixed a silver ring on it. She had a new experience of joy and the fulfilment of her wish at the same time. He gently lifted her leg and placed it on the grindstone, and she found it difficult to keep her balance and grabbed his shoulders with affection. Both looked at each other with love and smiled.

The full moon emerged after saying goodbye to the setting Sun. On a moonlit night the room was full of fragrance from the flowers. Ravi was seated on one end of the bed and Lakshmi on the other end. Both were thinking of the next move and were waiting while the space between them was about to decrease. Ravi breaks the silence and asks her “shall we talk about something”. She agreed to his request by nodding her head and both started talking with love and affection.

“Why don’t you come near me?” he asked her. She went to his side and sat with grace. Her head was down with shyness. He lifted her chin and

Short Story

SPECIAL FEATURE



looked into her eyes. He was admiring the beauty of her eyes with affection. He was looking at her beautiful face for the first time and was mesmerized by the shape of her eyes, nose and lovely lips. She was waiting for his words without closing her eyelids. He placed his lips over hers and planted the first kiss. She closed her eyes and enjoyed it by forgetting herself. He embraced her and kissed her forehead and said, "I love you". "I love you too" she said and placed her face on his chest.

The fragrance of the incense sticks and Jasmine flowers and the gentle breeze of the night united them. Maternal love, the struggle she underwent for this marriage, the unwillingness of her parents for this marriage and after braving all these and marrying Ravi brought joy and grief a mixed feeling in her. She removed his shirt button with her red painted fingers and asked, "how are you?" gently and he came back to himself.

"I am still in disbelief that this is happening to us. Our 14 years of struggle are not in vain. I hope my father will speak to you "while saying this she raised her head and looked at him. He said "maybe". She inquired as to whether his mother would like her. "Hope they will accept us" and her eyes were full of tears." Don't cry, everything will be okay" he said and cleaned her falling tears with his cheeks.

The soothing moonlight and gentle breeze broke the room's silence and made both of them to embrace each other. Removed the hair on her ear lobes, crossed their fingers together, locked their lips, felt the breadth of one another and the mind and body got thrilled. Both of them forget themselves and Lakshmi presents him with her virginity which she had safeguarded all these years. Her cheeks were red with shyness and eyes still closed; she yearned for the scene to continue.

She heard a sound like that of a temple bell. When the alarm of the phone rang. She got up from a deep sleep and her hand was searching for the phone, while the other hand was caressing the cover sheet. All this is a dream. With a heavy heart filled with sadness, she looked at the clock. It was 6:00 a.m. Nothing is real, she thought for a while, looked around and went to sleep again.

"Hey Lakshmi, you have school today. I am preparing coffee for

myself, and shall I prepare for you too?". asked her sister-in-law. She agreed by nodding her head, got up and went to the bathroom and finished the morning rituals. Then grabbed the coffee and went through the morning paper.

"Uncle coffee for you" said my sister-in-law and gave it to her father-in-law, who sat beside me on the same sofa. She also gave her husband, who took a seat in front of them. She reminded Lakshmi about the school, and she grabbed her clothes and went into the bathroom.

After a minute of silence, his brother told his father "She's going to be 30 years of age tomorrow and what is your problem in letting her marry according to her wish". When Lakshmi heard her brother's voice she stopped opening the tap. Dreaming in the morning would make it happen was the general belief of everyone and she was happy from head to toe.

"What nonsense you are talking about. She's very adamant without realizing the consequences and what you are now saying, without thinking twice. Do you think my relatives and known friends will respect me? No one will visit our house" shouted father and his voice reverberated throughout the house. Her short-lived happiness was shattered.

"You are talking about all your social status and caste, ignoring her wishes and happiness. What was the mistake she made? asked her brother. She was able to feel the love he had on her, while forgetting the harsh words of her father. She felt the brotherly love and started crying.

"Stop it," shouted father. When hearing this she came to her real self. "Who told her to love an unknown guy. This may be because of her education and haughtiness. She is facing us with courage. This may bring destruction to us. Without understanding this you are arguing with me, said father, without any realistic approach.

"Which is haughtiness? She told us that she's in love with someone and asked us to arrange the marriage with him and she never took any action on it on her own. She respected us and requested us to do our duty and never did anything wrong" so said her brother venting out his feelings openly.

"I am not going to tolerate this nasty action. I am not going to agree to this as long as I am alive" so said her affectionate father in a very rude

manner. She felt devastated and was unable to cry aloud but tears started flowing from her eyes.

"Dad, please do not speak like this, you have lived your life. She expects us to understand her position and arrange for the marriage. She's growing old. She has nobody to help her. It is our responsibility to do the right thing". So pleaded her brother, as a father himself with a young daughter. Lakshmi forgot herself of her brother's sibling love and was immersed in tears.

"Look here if she agrees to marry a boy of my choice, then I will arrange the marriage on a grand scale. If not let her be like this as my daughter. Let her do this sacrifice for me. I want to live a respectable and dignified life. I am not prepared to live with slander. If you want to do anything after me, go ahead and do it. If you take any decision on your own, you won't see me alive. This is my final decision." said her father. These words struck her like lightning. She was shocked by his words. "Please speak softly, dad. She will feel bad if she hears that" saying so he wiped his tears and left the place.

Having listened to all this she looked at her face on the bathroom mirror with a shattered heart. Her heart forgot to cry but her eyes shed tears like a waterfall. My father feels his caste and respect is more important than me. Who am I in this family? What rights do I have to claim him as my father? Am I the one who is to uphold his caste? She started raising these questions herself.

When, where and how was this caste born? For whom was this caste born? As per the principles of caste, is love and exception? In order to uphold his caste, my father is risking the life of his own daughter and is this not trespassing social norms? Among these woes of the society: Unable to give up a father because of love and to give up her love because of her father, she was perplexed. She was unable to swallow or throw out the spit in her mouth. Unable to come to any decision, her suffering dissolved in water and became unknown to anyone.

She returned to her senses with the loud bang on the bathroom door and the words of her sister-in-law. "It is time to go to school". After making up her face and yearning for an unfulfilled wish of an altar, she came out with a false smile and bid goodbye to her sister-in-law and left for work.

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SPECIAL FEATURE

Bharathiyar

By: Kumar Punithavel

'Bharathiyar day' is celebrated on 11th of December in various parts of the world. He was a great Tamil poet who lived during the freedom struggle in India. He was born to Chinnaswami Subramania Iyer and Luxmi Ammal on Dec 11th 1882. His birth name was Subbiah. He was conferred the title Bharati when he was only eleven years old. He lost his mother when he was only five years old, and his father around sixteenth year. However, in his fifteenth year he got married to Chellamma who was only seven years at the time of marriage. Child marriages were common in India in those times.

In 1898 he moved to Varanasi and lived with his aunt Kupammal till 1902. On his return he was made the court poet by the King of Ettayapuram. He pursued many careers as a teacher etc. During his stay in Varanasi, he was greatly attracted to spirituality and nationalism. A proficient linguist he was quite fluent in 29 Indian national languages inclusive of Bengali, Hindi Sanskrit, and three foreign languages including English and French. Certainly, he would have fit in Canada very well.

Bharathyar's stay in Varanasi from 1898 to 1902 became very impressive in his life. His association with Sikh friends influenced him very much and started wearing a turban and growing a beard, which he had worn to the last day of his life.

It was during this time he not only got Hindu spirituality but also met Sister Nivedita, an Irish school teacher Miss Margaret Elizabeth Noble who became Swami Vivekananda's spiritual heir. She was the one who inspired in Bharathiar's mind to recognise the importance of women and the emancipation of women exercised in Bharathi's mind. He visualized the women as incarnations of Shakthi, a willing partner of man in building a new world order. This prompted him to sing songs like 'lets burn the idiocy that degrade women', (மாதர் தம்மை இழிவு செய்யும் மடமையை கொளுத்துவோம்) , in his song titled Freedom (*Viduthalai*).

Bharathi became more and more interested in world affairs which attracted him towards journalism. After being a Tamil teacher for a brief period from August to November 1904 and then joined as assistant editor in Swadesamitran. He in his lifetime edited many newspapers in Tamil, English and

Sanskrit. He also translated Vedic hymns, Pathanjali's Yoga sutra and Bhagavat Gita in Tamil.

Facing the prospect of arrest, he lived in exile in Pondicherry which was under French rule. On his return through Cuddalore was arrested by the British government and kept in prison for a brief period from 20th November to 14th December 1918. His health was badly affected by the imprisonment and by 1920, when a General Amnesty Order finally removed restrictions on his movements, Bharati was already struggling. He was struck by a temple elephant, whom he used to feed regularly. Although he survived the incident, a few months later his health deteriorated and he died on 11th September 1921, at the age of 39.

It is indeed sad to note that there were only 14 people attending this great Tamil writer poet's funeral. He was honored by the Indian Government issuing a 15 Nya Paisa postage on the 11th of September 1960, on his seventy-eighth death anniversary.

Here you will find a poem by this great man titled '**Tamil**'. Today after much research and excavations it has been established that Tamil is the oldest language. In that poem, the poet elaborates the duty of each Tamil. Instead of dwelling in the past glory he wants us to act positively. Let's do it.

Tamil

Of all the languages I've known, never known one as sweet like Tamil,

While the whole world ridicule us as barbaric beasts,

Is it fair to shamelessly call ourselves as Tamils and live on? Do tell!

Let's reverberate the melodic Tamil voices around the world!

Of all the erudite I've known, none is like Kamban, Valluvan nor Illango!

Has ever born in this world, It's indeed a fact and not mere arrogance!

We have lived like dumb, deaf and blind: Just listen to me!

To thrive in life, let the roads reverberate and echo with Tamil!

Let's translate the wisdom of the learned around the world in Tamil



- Art by Suren

Let's also write new books of eternal fame in Tamil language,

It serves no purpose to praise the past glory among ourselves,

If indeed it is a great knowledge, then foreigners too must praise it.

If there is a glow of truth in the heart, there will be a glow in the words!

If like an avalanche of a flood of arts and literature are created,

Then those in the depts of ignorance will enlighten and rise!

Those who enjoyed the ambrosia of Tamil, would have enjoyed divinity!

யாமறிந்த மொழிகளிலே தமிழ்மொழிபோல்
இனிதாவ தெங்குங் காணோம்

பாமரராய், விலங்குகளாய், உலகனைத்தும்

இகழ்ச்சிசொல்ப பான்மை கெட்டு

நாமமது தமிழ்ரெனக் கொண்டிங்கு

வாழ்ந்திடுதல் நன்றோ? சொல்லீர்

தேமதுரத் தமிழோசை உலகமெலாம்

பரவும் வகை செய்தல் வேண்டும்.

யாமறிந்த புலவரிலே கம்பனைப்போல்,

வாள்ளுவர்போல், இளங்கோவைப் போல்

பூமிதனில் யாங்கணுமே பிறந்ததில்லை

உண்மை, வெறும் புகழ்ச்சி யில்லை

ஊமையராய்ச் செவிடர்களாய்க் குருடர்களாய்

வாழ்கின்றோம், ஒருசொற் கேளீர்

சேமமுற வேண்டுமெனில் தெருவெல்லாம்

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இறவாத புகழுடைய புதுநூல்கள்

தமிழ்மொழியில் இயற்றல்வேண்டும்

மறைவாக நமக்குள்ளே பழங்கதைகள்

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திறமான புலமையெனில் வெளிநாட்டோர்

அதை வணக்கஞ் செய்தல் வேண்டும்.


SPECIAL FEATURE


“CHRISTMAS”

THE RADIANCE OF DIVINITY ILLUMINATING THE WORLD”

By: J A Rajah

-freepik.com

We are in the wake of yet another Xmas, celebrating the birth of Christ all over the World. Christmas candles will be lit in churches to signify the light of the World. Jesus was born to bring light to the World filled with the darkness of sin. Jesus is heavenly, but sin is earthly. Jesus represents the spirit of God, but Satan manipulates flesh. Jesus is sight, but sin is blindness. Jesus himself declared that he came to bring light to the World. He is the light of the World, showing the World how to lead righteous lives.

A. Significance of Light.

One could find several candles lit in Catholic churches on the altar, above and even below the altar. The light signifies prayer. The prayer is offered in faith, entering the light of God. It also shows reverence and desire to remain present in worship. Candle comes from the Latin verb *candea*, which means to shine, glow, or burn. Christ is reckoned as the perfect candle- the light of the World. John gives us a poetic description of Jesus as the candle.” In Christ was life, and life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John the Baptist was not the light but came to bear witness to the light that enlightens every man coming into the World. (John 1: 4-9)

B. Jesus’ Life - giving Power.

Jesus is the only source of spiritual life

in a world filled with the darkness of sin. Paul considered his saving vision of the glory of God to be brighter than the sun. The more excellent light Son uncovers our sinfulness by his blazing holiness and grants purifying and life-giving power into the deepest recesses of our hearts. Jesus shone brightly at the cross, bright at the empty tomb and brightened again in exalted glory. He will return like a single world illuminating bolt. All this bright light is offered to the World in the gospels and received by the simple trust in Jesus Christ.

C. Jesus Christ - Lighthouse of the World.

Jesus Christ also serves as a lighthouse. We can’t see our future, direction, or destination, but Jesus can. Like the lighthouse guiding the ship, Jesus directs us towards God’s light. The light of Christ guides us through the obstacles of sin, strife, and struggle, both spiritually and literally.

D. X’Mas - A joyous celebration.

Christmas is easily the most famous festival in the World. It is celebrated in 163 countries, where it is also declared a public holiday. Twenty-two countries, including China and Pakistan, do not celebrate Christmas. Christmas is a joyous celebration that inspires people to rekindle their faith in Jesus Christ

and instils the need to live righteous lives. In those days, we decorated our porticos with balloons and crayons and enjoyed fireworks with our siblings. At the campus, we went singing carols to the houses of professors and lecturers (in the rainy cold with leeches sucking blood from our legs at Peradeniya) and we were fed with the best of food and snacks. I still think that was the best food I have ever eaten. However, the best way to celebrate Christmas is to revive our faith in Jesus Christ and learn to absorb the values of living righteously. Every minute of our lives should be Christmas. Christ should be born in our hearts and minds. We should absorb his values and live victorious lives. Annual celebrations are vital to keeping sacred thoughts lively and supporting peace and goodwill among fellow men. Jesus, the sun of righteousness will give us light, life and energy to lead a happy life.

Jesus never failed to emphasize the fact that serving others is the only way to everlasting happiness.

“Sevai seythale kaanalam. puvu meethile, uyar vanor inpam manmeethile; aavi puharl, porul, thannalam, puvu thiyagam seythen narlume - unmayyai sevay sethale kaanalam”.

Heavenly joy can be experienced in this world only through sacrificing life, material things, lands, and selfishness for the sake of others.



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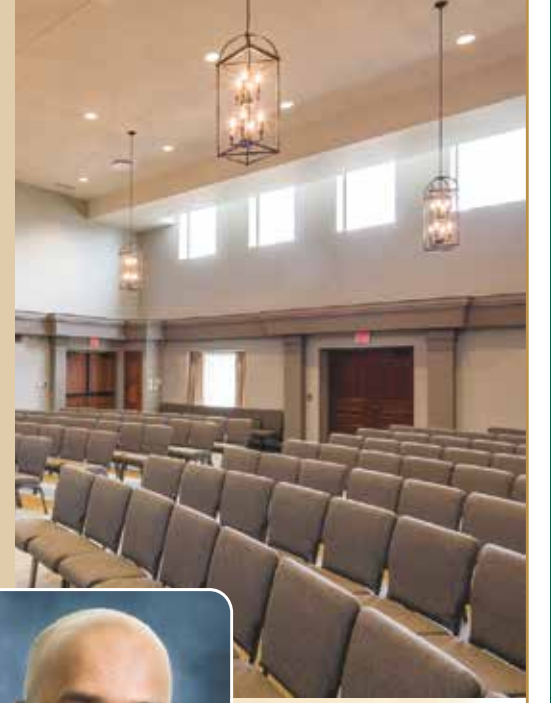


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EDUCATION & CAREER

THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCE OF VIOLENCE ON MEDIA TO KIDS



Written by:
Lisaraa Suhumar

Exposing children to violence on media is a very negative influence to them. They will learn and grow up to have negative behaviours, which will affect their health and future critically.

First, when children witness violence on media, they become desensitized.

When kids witness violence on media, such as in movies or video games, they are less sensitive to the pain and agony of others. When another person is experiencing pain (especially

physical pain), they wouldn't care as much due to being exposed to violence on media. They will not show empathy for others, and will not care to help them. Not only that, but if they experience pain themselves, they will be less sensitive to the pain than how they should normally feel. Feeling a lack of pain will cause the children to develop wounds, bruises, and other health issues more frequently, and they may go undetected. This will cause illnesses and sickness to be more frequent as well.

Basically, kids being desensitized when watching violence on media will trigger multiple negative consequences for themselves and others around them.

Next, children watching violence will cause themselves to become aggressive.

When kids are exposed to violence online, there is a higher chance that they will bully and hurt other kids. This will not only damage others physically and/or mentally, but it would also damage themselves as well. The more they bully others, the more they'll get used to it, which will then cause them to start releasing their own problems onto others in a possibly physical or aggressive way. This means they'll use violence as a way to solve their problems. For example, if they were being bullied themselves, they will release their own pain and stress onto other kids.

Aggression problems will cause themselves and other kids to be physically injured, as well as develop mental health problems.

Lastly, children will develop multiple negative traits and create an unfriendly personality. Kids who are rude to others will learn impolite manners and could refuse to understand and conform to what society says. They will be characterized by harsh and violent behaviours. Multiple problems can be caused by that.

Not only will those characteristics ruin and impact their future with stigma, this will also affect their relationships with others. Also, like I pointed out before, physical injuries and mental health disorders will have a higher chance of occurring.

When it comes to broken relationships, the children will have less trust with others, creating distance within their relationships. They will lose their connections with others they care about. Losing a best friend is an example of losing a strong relationship with someone you cared about.

Physical injuries and mental health disorders can be caused by fights and aggressive behaviour.

A few negative traits children would probably learn from watching violence on media include pathological lying, manipulation, and even irresponsible and



careless behaviour. Children must not be exposed to violence on media. It will impact them negatively, affecting themselves and others around them. Children should always be watched by a parent or guardian when watching or spending time online, and must not witness any form of violence on media. These are some reasons why children should not be exposed to aggressive behaviours online.



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2024 HOLIDAY DONATION DRIVE



The City of Markham is collecting donations of new, unwrapped toys as well as non-perishable food, pet food and personal care items to support those in need in our community. Donations will go to the Salvation Army, Markham Stouffville Hospital Children's Centre and Markham Food Bank.

Toy Drive

Now until December 16, Markham Fire and Emergency Services is collecting unwrapped, new toys for those in need in the community this holiday season. Toys will be donated to the Salvation Army and the Markham Stouffville Hospital Children's Centre.

Toy donations can be dropped off at any Markham Fire Station or Markham Civic Centre (Thornhill Entrance).

Food, Pet Food and Personal Care Items Drive

Now until January 6, the City of Markham's By-law Enforcement and Regulatory Services Department is collecting non-perishable, unexpired food (including pet food) and personal care items for this year's donation drive. All donations go to Markham Food Bank.

Items most needed:

- Canned vegetables
- Canned meat/fish
- Rice
- Cereal
- Baby food
- Pet food
- Towels and blankets for pets
- Toiletries
- Feminine hygiene products
- Cold-weather clothing (coats, gloves, scarves, etc.)



Donations of non-perishable food, pet food, and personal care items can be dropped off at Markham Civic Centre (Thornhill Entrance), 8100 Warden Avenue (Main Lobby) or any Community Centre.



NEW TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN 18 LOCATIONS ACROSS THE CITY



Richmond Hill Council approved another 18 locations where traffic calming tools, including speed cushions and pedestrian crossovers, will be installed in 2025, to continue to reduce speeding and improve safety on roads in our community.

Earlier this year, traffic calming measures, including speed cushions, gateway features, flexible bollards, curb extensions and enhanced pavement markings and signage, were installed at 17 locations across the city.

These were installed as part of the implementation of the City’s Traffic Safety and Operations Strategy which helped improve compliance to the speed limit, reduce speeding in neighborhoods by up to 22% and decrease traffic volume by up to 17%.

In 2025, in addition to installing more traffic calming measures at the 18 locations (three locations in each ward) the City will also:

- Expand their existing annual pole-mounted radar board program, increasing the number of locations from three per ward to five per ward
- Create safer pedestrian environments by planning for 13 new pedestrian crossovers (with installation in 2025/2026) at key locations across the city to assist

pedestrians crossing the road

- Reduce speed limits from 50 km/h to 40 km/h at 17 locations across the city

- Pilot a boulevard sign program in each ward

Managing traffic while keeping pedestrians and cyclists safe on City roads is a top priority for Richmond Hill as the City continues to grow and mature. To watch the City’s traffic safety video and learn more about the priority locations identified for traffic calming, visit RichmondHill.ca/Traffic.

Quick Facts

- Based on public feedback, the City conducts annual city-wide screening of the City’s streets to identify and prioritize areas of concern and implement operational and safety improvements, including traffic calming measures.

- Priority traffic calming locations were selected using an evidence-based network screening process which involves an annual review of all available volume, speed, collision data, and pedestrian activity across all the City’s road network.

- The City’s Traffic Safety and Operations Strategy is a 10 year plan that aims to address road safety in the community. The Strategy was approved by Council in December 2023.

- A number of key actions were completed in 2024, including the approval of new and updated policies and 86 community safety zone locations, as well as the installation of traffic calming measures at 17 priority locations. To provide pedestrian connectivity, the City also installed six pedestrian crossovers at various locations.

Quote

“I am very pleased with the results we have seen so far from the installation of traffic calming measures in our neighbourhoods this year. With more vehicles travelling at reduced speeds and less traffic using neighbourhood streets as shortcuts, we are definitely heading in the right direction. We are using measures that are necessary on the streets where families should feel safe and where children can play to ensure that vehicles travel at slower speeds. We are using the right tools in the right places to achieve the desired outcome, which is making our roads safer for Richmond Hill families.”



– Mayor David West



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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 HOMETLAND PROJECTS

DTA is proud to announce that we have completed over 85 homeland projects as of Oct 31, 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.

EVOLVING ELDERCARE - IN-HOME SUPPORT FOR SENIORS VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER



We sincerely thank each and every one of you volunteers once again for all the hours you've given, and here's to many more moments of service, compassion, and connection. A huge thank you to all the adult and youth volunteers who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the event ran smoothly. We also extend our gratitude to the entire executive team for their hard work and dedication in organizing this memorable celebration. Thank you all for making this event a wonderful experience for our community!

SAVE THE DATE: TAMIL HERITAGE MONTH AND PONGAL VIZHA

DTA is excited to host our Tamil Heritage Month and Pongal Vizha on Sunday, January 26th, 2025. FREE EVENT!

Date: Sunday, January 26, 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Audley Recreation Centre · 1955 Audley Road N. Ajax, ON L1Z 0L2.

Dance/Drama Practices for Adults & Kids
Tamil Heritage Month dance and drama practices will begin soon!

If you would like to participate, please call 905-428-7007 to confirm your spot or register online at: <https://www.durhamtamils.org/tamil-heritage-month-2025.html>



LOCATION:
DTA CENTER
66 HARWOOD AVENUE
SOUTH, AJAX, ON
L2S 2H6

YOGA CLASS FOR YOUTH & ADULTS

SATURDAYS, 9:30AM-10:30AM

AGES 10 TO 54
START DATE
SEPTEMBER 14TH

REGISTER ONLINE @ DURHAMDAMILS.ORG
TEL: 905-428-7007

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Yoga Instructor:

MALINI PARARAJASINGHAM

When: *Every Saturday from 9:30AM- 10:30AM.

Start date: Saturday, September 14th

Location: DTA Center
66 Harwood Avenue South,
Ajax, ON L2S 2H6

Ages : 10-54

PLEASE REGISTER ONLINE:
<https://www.durhamtamils.org/youth-adults-yoga-class.html>
Tel: 905-428-7007

Yoga class fees : \$5 per class
(Please pay 14 classes
fees \$70 - Sept 14 to Dec 14th)

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

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

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

Volunteers Needed!

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

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

For More Information Visit the website: dtaseniorsinhomesupport.ca

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



DTA'S SENIORS

DTA is keeping our seniors fully occupied with multiple activities and programs. DTA is here to support you in any way. If you want to participate in our programs, please check our monthly calendars. Please register for virtual Seniors programs at durhamtamils.org. Thank you to our fantastic volunteers who do not expect anything and are serving the community voluntarily. DTA is truly grateful for your continued support.

COMMUNITY WATCH

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](http://www.DurhamTamils.Org)

Tel 905.428.7007

(Unity Is Strength)

FREE TAI CHI CLASSES FOR SENIORS

In-Person Class
DTA Centre: 66 Harwood Avenue South, (Basement) Ajax, ON L2S 2H6

Zoom
Meeting ID: 844 5390 6008
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in-person & virtual Tai Chi Class option

Every Friday TIME: 6:30PM

Register now: durhamtamils.org Contact us: 905-428-7007

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for Seniors & Older Adults! * (Ages 55+)

Do not miss this opportunity!!! slow, graceful, opening and closing movements carried out at a smooth, even pace. It's suitable for those who want a low to medium-intensity exercise that improves balance, flexibility, and coordination while strengthening the body and improving internal circulation.

DAY: Fridays,

TIME: 6:30 PM TO 7:30 PM*

LOCATION: Online or in person at 66 Harwood Avenue South, (Basement) Ajax, ON L2S 2H6

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Let your inner star shine with a night of family fun and music!

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EVERY FRIDAYS STARTING MAY 3RD 8:00 PM - 9:30PM

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FAMILY KARAOKE NIGHTS ON FRIDAY

Join us for every Friday night for family fun and music at our Family Karaoke Night!

Bring your vocal talents as we gather for a memorable evening filled with laughter, singing, and bonding. Whether you're a seasoned performer or a first-time singer, there's a song for everyone to enjoy.

We will provide your favorite tunes so get ready to create lasting memories.

Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to come celebrate your talents.

DTA SENIOR'S DEC MONTHLY MEETING

DTA Senior's March monthly meeting will be held on Sunday Dec 29, 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 this month, please mention in the comments section to organize your cake-cutting at the meeting.

DTA'S HOMELAND PROJECTS

DTA is proud to announce that we have completed over 79 homeland projects as of Oct 31, 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.

The Durham Tamil Association "Evolving Elder Care In-Home Support," a volunteer-based service for eligible seniors with low-income and vulnerable, aged 55 and up.

OUR FREE SERVICE

- Meal Delivery
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- Volunteer Drop off/ pick up: -Medical Appointment, Grocery shopping, Hospital/Doctors Appointments etc..
- Friendly Visits
- Light House Keeping

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Contact Number:

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Canada



WATERLOO REGION TAMIL COMMUNITY CELEBRATES DEEPAVALI

Waterloo : The South Asian community in the Waterloo region celebrated Deepavali in 2024, with a special focus on the Indian and Sri Lankan diasporas. The annual event, which took place on October 26th, was organized by the local Tamil community in collaboration with the Waterloo Public Library. Deepavali, also known as Diwali, symbolizes the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil, making it a significant cultural and spiritual occasion for the attendees.

The celebration included a vibrant array of activities that showcased South Asian traditions. Performances featured Tamil folk dance and Bharatanatyam, a classical Indian dance form. A children's fashion show was held, offering young participants a chance to showcase traditional attire. The event also included Mehendi (Henna) or Maruthani hand painting,

and storytelling, providing attendees with a rich cultural experience.

Food plays an important role in the celebration. Traditional Tamil sweets like **laddu**, **jalebi**, and **Muruku** are prepared and shared with friends and guests. The smell of incense and the sight of festive feasts create a warm, inviting atmosphere. The event was warmly welcomed by Mrs. Shamala Venkat, the President of the Tamil Association, and Mr. Rajagopal, the Secretary, who greeted the artists and guests. The event was also supported by local businesses, with sweets sponsored by Raja Chettinad Restaurant and photography provided by FiftyPrime Studio from Guelph, Ontario.

This celebration not only honored the cultural heritage of the South Asian community but also strengthened ties within the diverse group of residents in the Waterloo region.



Sri Murugan Temple of Waterloo Region

சூ முருகன் கோவில் வோட்டர்லூ வட்டாரம்

திருக்கார்த்தகை பெருநாள்

Thiru
Karthigai
Day

வேல் மாறல்
பாராயணம்

Vel Maral Parayanam

திருப்புதல் அன்பர்கள் - GTA, Toronto

Friday, Dec 13 2024 5:30pm

Doon Pioneer Community Center, Kitchener, Ont.

Poojai, Archanai and Aarthi

SKANDA SHASTHI POOJAI CEREMONY IN THE REGION OF WATERLOO



and a time to honor the community’s rich traditions and values rooted in “Sanatana Dharma”. The President of the Temple Mr. Sivakumar Somasundram and Secretary Mrs. Sushma Rao graced the event.

Looking ahead, the next puja at the Sri Murugan Temple will be the “Thiru Karthigai” celebration on December 13th at the Doon Pioneer Community Center.

Kitchener 2024: The Skanda Shasthi Poojai held at the Sri Murugan Temple in Waterloo Region on November 2nd was a grand and spiritually enriching event, drawing a large crowd of devoted participants. The Doon Community Center was transformed into a sacred space, resonating with the vibrant energy of the devotees. Central to the puja was the “Shanmuga Arachani”, where prayers were offered to the six faces of Lord Murugan, a significant aspect of the worship.

One of the most powerful moments of the evening was the “group parayanam” of the “Skanda Shasthi Kavacham”, with the devotees chanting in unison. The collective energy of the chanting was not only uplifting but also created a deep connection between the participants and Lord Murugan, filling the atmosphere with divine presence.

Adding to the spiritual significance of the event were two exceptional cultural performances: “Thiruvathira Kali” and “Kolaatam”. “Thiruvathira Kali”, performed by the ladies from KWC, transported the audience to Kerala, with graceful dancers in white and gold sarees performing synchronized movements around a ceremonial lamp in praise of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvathi. The evening also featured the “Pinal Kolaatam”, a unique variation of the traditional Kolattam, performed by the KW ladies for the first time in the region. This vibrant display, with its rhythmic movements, symbolized unity and cooperation, while the songs chanted were dedicated to Lord Murugan.

These performances beautifully showcased South Indian cultural traditions, reinforcing the richness of spiritual and cultural heritage. The combination of worship and cultural expression during the event served as a beacon of unity, inspiring future generations to uphold these traditions and values.

For attendees, the puja was more than just a religious event—it was a celebration of shared beliefs, a reconnection with spiritual roots,



Brampton Culture Days 2024: Top Urban Community & Second Nationally



2024 Culture Days pollinator-themed watercolour visual art event at Brampton's Dearbourne Park, was also selected as a runner-up for the Best Collaborative Program Spotlight Award. Credit: City of Brampton

The City of Brampton's 2024 Culture Days lineup of events has been recognized as the Top Participating Community in the Urban Centres category by the Culture Days organization. The City also placed second overall nationally among the Top Participating Communities listing. Culture Days is a national celebration of arts, culture and heritage. This prestigious recognition highlights the City and the community's shared, ongoing commitment to fostering creativity, community engagement and cultural vibrancy.

"As a lifelong lover of the arts, I am incredibly proud that Brampton has been named among the Top Participating Communities for our Culture Days 2024 lineup. This recognition reflects our city's commitment to connecting residents with local creativity, celebrating diversity and supporting our local artists. It is inspiring to see how our community has come together to make the arts accessible to everyone, and I look forward to seeing how our arts and culture scene continues to grow and flourish in the years to come."

– **Rowena Santos,**
*Regional Councillor, Wards 1 & 5;
Chair, Community Services, City of
Brampton:*

Culture Days attracts millions of attendees from hundreds of municipalities to explore, engage and participate in more than 4,000 creative events nationwide. Each year, Culture Days recognizes communities from across the country for their dedication and efforts with

the Top Participating Communities listing, demonstrating the depth of engagement across all regions. This past fall, Brampton's lineup featured more than 200 free activities presented by community organizers and partners, including Brampton On Stage, Brampton Arts Organization (BAO), Brampton Public Library, Bovaird House, Downtown Brampton BIA and Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA), welcoming hundreds of attendees from across the community.

Culture Days 2024 was a record-breaking year across Canada, with over five million participants engaging in events and activities nationwide. Brampton played a key role in this success, offering a diverse lineup of free, inclusive and accessible events. Activities ranged from hands-on workshops and performances to tours and interactive workshops, providing opportunities for participants of all ages to explore and celebrate Brampton's art and culture landscape.

Culture Days continues to be a key event in Brampton's cultural calendar, supporting the goals of the City's Culture Master Plan to increase accessibility to cultural experiences, amplify local talent and celebrate the city's diversity.

For more information about Brampton's Culture Days and to learn about the City's arts and culture initiatives, visit brampton.ca/culture.

Be a part of Brampton's 2025 Culture Days lineup of events

Next year, Culture Days will be taking place from September 19 through to October 12, 2025, and

the City will begin looking for local creatives to partner with and host events. Stay tuned for the call for artists at brampton.ca/culturedays.

Additional Quotes

"This recognition as the Top Participating Community in the Urban Centres category and runner-up nationally is a testament to Brampton's commitment to the arts and our thriving cultural community. Culture Days is about bringing people together, celebrating our diversity and showcasing the incredible talent right here in our city. Thank you to everyone who made this achievement possible, from artists and performers to organizers and participants."

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

"I am incredibly proud of the efforts of the creative community and culture team working together in achieving this recognition as the Top Participating Community in the Urban Centres category and second overall nationally for Culture Days 2024. Their hard work, dedication and passion have truly demonstrated the power of collaboration between creatives, cultural organizations, government and residents. Together, we have created a vibrant and inclusive experience that highlights talent and diversity in our community. I encourage all local creatives to bring their ideas forward and be a part of making Culture Days 2025 even more inspiring and impactful."

– **Kelly Stahl,**
*Director, Arts and Culture,
City of Brampton*

Driving impaired has consequences: Stay sober to get to your destination safely

The City of Mississauga reminds drivers to stay sober while driving to prevent collisions



While there's a lot to celebrate this time of year, it's important to do so responsibly. Road collisions due to impaired driving continue to be a problem in Mississauga. Through the holiday season, the rate of collisions due to impaired driving is higher. That's why the City is partnering with Peel Regional Police to remind drivers to be responsible by staying sober or finding a safe alternative.

Alcohol and drug use

Driving under the influence of alcohol or cannabis is dangerous for yourself, your passengers as well as other drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. A collision that results in a fatality or serious injury has significant consequences to those involved and their loved ones.

Driving impaired is dangerous as even minimal amounts can affect your driving skills. Driving requires full control over your mind and body, and requires you to be alert so you can make quick decisions. When you drink or consume drugs, it can disrupt your

ability to focus, affecting your risk perception, motor skills, reaction time, decision-making abilities and overall co-ordination.

Impaired driving in Mississauga

According to Peel Regional Police, impaired driving (driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol) continues to be a concern in Mississauga. From January 1 to November 30, 2024, there were 89 collisions that involved impaired drivers on Mississauga roads.

Peel Regional Police has launched their Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (R.I.D.E.) program to help address impaired driving. R.I.D.E. checks are conducted throughout the year, but the holiday campaign includes increased enforcement levels and additional officer deployment. The program has already checked more than 4,600 vehicles and will continue to early January. If you suspect someone is driving impaired, call 911 to report it.

Driving under the influence of alcohol, cannabis or certain drugs is a serious offence. You

put yourself at risk of immediate license suspension, hefty fines, education or treatment programs and even vehicle impoundment. Penalties can vary depending on your age, licence type, the amount of alcohol or drugs in your system, and how many times you have been convicted or had your licence suspended.

Stay safe while out on the roads

Whether you're walking, cycling, taking transit or driving, it's important that you stay extra alert when travelling around the city to your destination.

If you're planning to drive – stay sober. If you'd like to consume alcohol or cannabis, plan an alternative way home. You can designate a driver, use MiWay to get around or use a rideshare program or taxi.

If you're walking, cycling or taking transit, remember to stay alert and be aware, especially when crossing intersections. Make sure to use a crosswalk or crossride when possible.

SPECIAL FEATURE

DWARKA TEMPLE, DWARAKA, GUJARAT STATE, INDIA

Compiled by Kidambi Raj

INTRODUCTION

The temple in *Dwaraka*, known as *Dwarkadesh* (refers to 'King of Dwarka') Temple and also as *Jagat Mandir* (Temple of the Universe), is one of the *Char Dham* pilgrimage centres considered sacred by the Hindus. The main draw for tourists coming to Dwarka is believed to be that this is established more than 2,500 years ago by *Lord Krishna's great grand-son, Vajranab*. This ancient temple was rebuilt and enlarged in the 15th-16th century. The original structure was destroyed by *Mahmud Bega-da* in 1473,

LOCATION

This temple is located at *Dwarka* city in Gujarat, India. It is situated on *Gomti creek* and is known as *Jagat Mandir* (universal shrine) or as *Trilok Sunder* (the most beautiful in all the three worlds). The temple is at an elevation of 12.19 m above mean sea level. It faces west. The town of Dwarka has a history that dates back centuries and mentioned in the Mahabharata epic as the *Dwaraka Kingdom*, situated on the banks of the river *Gomti*. According to revered Hindu scriptures, Dwarka came to be known as *Kushasthali*, *Dwarawati* and finally, *Dwaraka*, meaning *door to moksha*.

HISTORY AND LEGEND

As per Hindu legend, Dwarka was built on a piece of land by Krishna that was reclaimed from the Arabian sea. This Dwarka temple



is one of the four *Char Dham* shrines that have immense religious importance to Hindu devotees. The other three shrines that are

part of the Char Dham are *Rameswaram*, *Badrinath* and *Puri*.

The origin of the Dwarkadesh temple starts after Lord Krishna defeats His evil uncle Kans. Krishna left Mathura with the entire *Yadava* community. He built a beautiful town on the banks of Gomti River and named it *Swarnadwarika*. To prevent further attacks on His clan, Lord Krishna decided to establish a separate city on India's western coast. The great architect *Vishwakarma* gave this concept life. The submerged city of Dwarka was built by Krishna near a place called *Kushasthali*.

Lord Krishna lived in the royal palace of Dwarka which was engulfed by the sea along with Dwarka city. Generations later, His great grand-son, *Vajranabha* built the temple called *Dwarkanatha* in symbol of his devotion and respect to Lord Krishna. Many believe that Vajranabha erected the temple in one night with the help of a mysterious force.

According to another legend, *Mira Bai* who was a staunch devotee of Sri Krishna had visited this temple and for that she was punished with poison by her father-in-law. But the poison did not affect her at all. After drinking the poison, she visited the temple, and the next morning, only her *Ektara* (string) and *Kartal* (cymbal) were found at the feet of Krishna's idol. Many believed that Mira Bai merged with the Lord Krishna's idol and attained *Moksha* at this place.

According to Mahabharata, the *Sage Durvasa* once visited *Krishna* and His wife *Rukmini*. The sage wished that the pair take him to their palace and demanding that they pull his chariot like horses. The pair agreed and started to pull the chariot with the sage. The sage struck Rukmini when she fell. After a short distance, Rukmini got tired and she requested Krishna for water. Krishna dug a hole in the ground with His powers that brought in river *Ganga* to that place. Sage Durvasa was furious that he was not offered water and only Rukmini was and cursed her to remain in that place. The temple where *Rukmini's shrine* is found, is believed to

be the place where she stood when she was cursed by Sage Durvasa. According to the epic, later, finding no fault with the divine couple, Sage Durvasa blessed Krishna with invincibility everywhere except the soles of his feet and declared that Rukmini would be the foremost of the deity's spouses and would be Krishna's eternal companion in the next world as well.

Krishna and Balarama ruled Dwarka for thirty-six years during which Krishna would play a prime role in the conflict between the *Pandavas* and their cousins the *Kauravas* that led into the devastating battle at *Kurukshetra*.

Bhalka Teerth located between *Somnath* and *Veraval* on the western coast of Gujarat, is the place where Lord Krishna took His last breath. It is said that He was killed by an arrow shot by a hunter named *Jara*, with Krishna's body suffering severely and subsequently fatal injuries. *Puranas* call it *Shri Krishna Nijdam Prastan Leela*. The temple at Bhalka Teerth is known as *Mahaprabhuji's Bethak*, and a *tulsi* tree has been planted in Lord Krishna's honour. Banyan trees dot the courtyard of the spectacular Sri Krishna temple that is built in sandstone. Inside the shrine is an unusual idol of *Shri Krishna in a semi-reclining position*.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

As per Hindu legend, Dwarka was built on a piece of land by Krishna that was reclaimed from the Arabian sea. Its exquisitely carved *Sikhars*, reaching 43 m high and the huge flag made from 52 yards of cloth, can be seen from as far away as 10 km. The grandeur of the temple is enhanced by the flight of 56 steps leading to the rear side of the edifice on the side of the Gomti river.

The temple follows the common *mandala design* of Hindu architecture with four gateways in four directions that gradually lead up to the inner sanctum housing the *Dwarkadeesh idol*. The shrine has the 2.25 feet tall idol of Lord Krishna carved from *black basalt* and bedecked in ostentatious gold finery and diamonds.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Evidence such as a stone block with script, the way the stones were dressed showing that dowels had been used, and an examination of anchors found on the site suggest that the harbour site dates only to historical times, with some of the underwater structure being late Medieval. Coastal erosion was probably the cause of the destruction of what was an ancient port.

SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Dwarka temple is among the three revered pilgrimage sites associated with Lord Krishna and is part of the **48 Kos Parikrama** (Circumambulation).

Dwarka temple is the **98th Divya Desam** among the 108 religious sites dedicated to **Lord Vishnu**. The flag on the **Sikhara** of the temple has Sun and Moon symbols which indicate that Lord Krishna will be there till the Sun and Moon exist on **Bhooloka** (the earth).

Dwarka is one of the 7 holy cities of India, also known as the **Sapta Puri**. The Dwarka temple is the location of **Dwarka Peta**, one among the four **Peetas** (religious centres of Hinduism) known as **Char Dhams**.

These Petas or Char Dhams were established by **Adi Sankaracharya**, a Hindu Philosopher and Saint in the 8th century. Sri Sankaracharya is the most prominent of Hindu Sainst who visited Dwarka temple. One can find images and designs on the temple walls that depict the life of Adi Sankaracharya.

Swami Gajanand Saraswati, a renowned Hindu scholar, states that the temple was built in 7,99,25,105 years. He based this information backed by the mention in the **Prabhas Khand** of **Skanda Purana**.

SPECIAL CEREMONIES & FESTIVALS

Dwarka temple committee follows the rituals specified by **Pushtimarg**, which was introduced by Hindu saint **Vallabhacharya**. The daily rituals commence with a **Man-gal Aarti** (worshipping) early at 6:30 am. **Darshan** (auspicious sight) of the deity continues till noon, and then **Rajbhaj** (Royal lunch) is organized in the temple. The temple closes at 9:30 pm every night after **Sayan Aarti**. Besides every day rituals and poojas, several Hindu festivals are also celebrated in Dwarka temple with Great zeal.

Krishna Janmashtami festival is celebrated in grand fashion and attended by thousands and thousands of devotees.

FAMOUS TEMPLES & PLACE TO VISIT BESIDES DWARKA TEMPLE

If one is looking to embark on a spiritual journey and explore the rich cultural heritage of India, a visit to Dwarka is an absolute must. Located on the western coast of Gujarat, Dwarka is an ancient city steeped in mythology and is considered one of the holiest places in the country. With its magnificent temples, historical sites, and scenic beauty, Dwarka offers a unique blend of spirituality and tourism.

1. RUKMINI DEVI TEMPLE

A visit to Dwarka would be incomplete without paying homage to **Rukmini Devi**, Lord Krishna's beloved consort. The Rukmini Devi Temple, is located near the main Dwarka Temple is a significant place of worship. The temple's architecture showcases intricate carvings and sculptures, capturing the essence of ancient Indian art. One will feel a sense of peace and serenity as they offer prayers.



2. NAGESHWAR JYOTILINGA

A sacred temple housing one of the twelve Jyotirlingas (the radiant sign of Lord Siva) of Lord Siva in India. The temple holds immense significance for Hindu devotees and is believed to bestow blessings and liberation to those who visit. The grandeur of the main deity, Lord Siva, and the serene surroundings create a deeply spiritual atmosphere.

3. BET DWARKA

From Dwarka, take a short boat ride to **Bet Dwarka**, an island located in the Arabian Sea. This secluded island is believed to be the original



residence of Lord Krishna during His reign in Dwarka. As you explore the island, you will come across the famous **Bet Dwarka Temple**, where you can witness the idol of Lord Krishna in His infant form. The serene beaches and the gentle waves of the Arabian Sea add to the tranquility of this scared island.

4. HANUMAN DANDI TEMPLE

This temple is situated 5 km east of the Bet Dwarka's main Sri Krishna temple. This temple is very unique as it features idols of **Hanuman** and **Makardhwaj**, showcasing a rare depiction of Hanuman, who is traditionally considered a celibate, with his progeny. According to mythology, during the battle of Ramayana, Hanuman encountered Makardhwaj, who was born from Ha-

numan's sweat droplets consumed by a fish. This temple commemorates their meeting and represents themes of duty, valor and familiar bonds in the lore of Hanuman.

5. GOMTI GHAT

Gomti Ghat, a sacred bathing ghat on the banks of the Gomti River in Dwarka. This bathing ghat is believed to have been created by Lord Krishna himself. Take a dip in the holy waters of the Gomti River, and don't forget to perform the traditional **parikrama** (circumambulation) around the ghat. As you stroll along the ghat, you will be captivated by the sight of ancient temples, ashrams and the vibrant atmosphere of devotees offering their prayers.

OTHER THINGS TO DO DURING DWARKA VISIT

Apart from the famous temples, Dwarka offers a serene coastal landscape with breathtaking sunsets. Take a leisurely walk along Dwarka Beach and enjoy the panoramic views of the Arabian Sea. You can also visit the **Shankhodhar Bet**, where you can spot migratory birds and immerse yourself in the region's natural beauty. Other things one can visit and enjoy are:

- Witness unique practices at Sri Dwarkadeesh Temple**
The Dwarka temple flag is changed five times a day. This is not done in any other temple.
- Visit the Gopi Talav**
This is the place where Lord Krishna used to play with His Gopis.
- Ride a Camel along Gomti River**
Seeing the Ghats on one bank, while riding a camel on the other is an unforgettable experience.
- Dwarka Beach**
Situated along the Arabian Sea Coastline, **Dwarka Beach** offers a rejuvenating experience in the sacred coastal town of Dwarka. The beach features stunning coral reefs and is adorned with ancient temples dating back to the 1100s and 1200s. **Dwarka Shila**, a fossil piece which represents **Goddess Lakshmi** is found only here. For **Vaishnavites** who worship **Saligrama** which represents Lord Vishnu, this is very good to have, as now they have both Lord Vishnu and His Consort Goddess Lakshmi to worship.



May we all get the Blessings of Lord Krishna and His Consort Rukmini !!!

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