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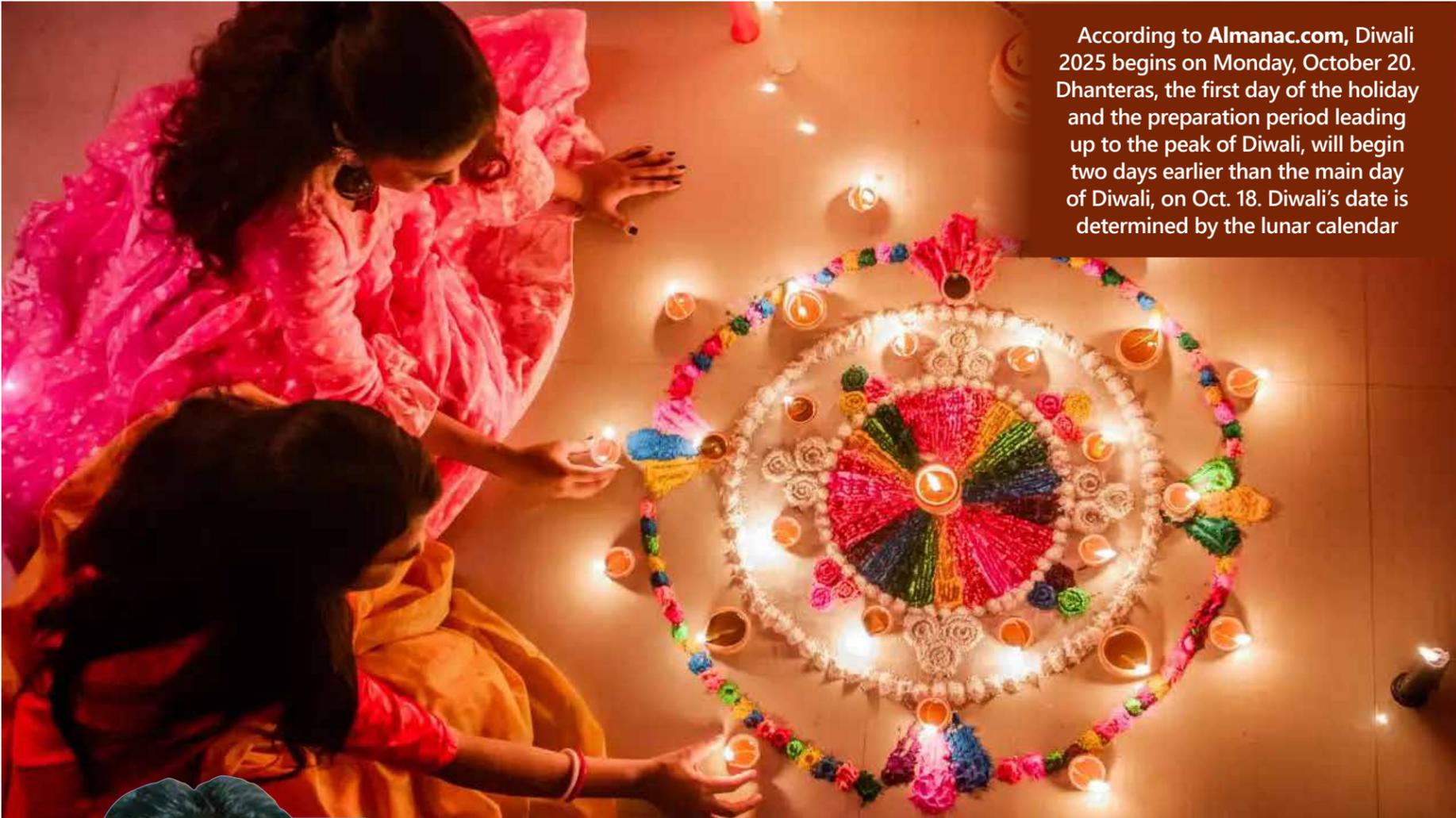
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According to Almanac.com, Diwali 2025 begins on Monday, October 20. Dhanteras, the first day of the holiday and the preparation period leading up to the peak of Diwali, will begin two days earlier than the main day of Diwali, on Oct. 18. Diwali's date is determined by the lunar calendar



Congratulations Neethan Shan in winning the by election held on Monday, September 29, 2025, elected back again as Toronto City Councillor for Scarborough-Rouge Park.

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KARUR STAMPEDE CLAIMS 40 LIVES AT ACTOR VIJAY'S RALLY



Karur, Tamil Nadu – A massive political rally addressed by actor-turned-politician Vijay turned tragic on September 28 when a stampede claimed the lives of at least 40 people and left dozens injured. The incident took place at Vijay's "Tamizhaga Vettri Kazhagam" (TVK) event in Karur, where thousands had gathered to hear the popular actor deliver a campaign speech.

According to eyewitnesses, the tragedy unfolded when overcrowding near the stage led to chaos. Several attendees reportedly fainted due to suffocation in the packed venue. Vijay, who was speaking at the time, paused his address as he noticed people collapsing. He immediately called for ambulances, distributed water bottles from atop his campaign vehicle, and urged the crowd to

remain calm. Despite these efforts, the crush intensified, resulting in heavy casualties.

Vijay, visibly shaken by the turn of events, later issued a statement expressing his grief. "I am shattered and writhing in unbearable pain and sorrow. My heartfelt condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones," he said. He also prayed for the speedy recovery of those injured.

As a relief measure, Vijay pledged financial compensation: 20 lakh for the families of the deceased and 2 lakh for each person injured and undergoing treatment. Meanwhile, the Tamil Nadu government has also announced aid and ordered a detailed probe into the incident.

Police have registered a case against senior leaders and organizers of Vijay's TVK party under charges

including culpable homicide and negligence. While Vijay himself was not named in the initial complaint, security around his residence in Chennai has been tightened following public outrage and the high-profile nature of the case.

The Karur stampede has sparked widespread debate about safety arrangements at mass political gatherings in the state. Critics point to inadequate crowd control measures and poor planning, while supporters argue that the sheer scale of public turnout overwhelmed local arrangements.

For now, the incident stands as a sobering reminder of the risks inherent in large-scale political events, and investigations are expected to determine accountability in the days ahead.

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PUBLISHER'S DESK

Navaratri and Embracing the Feminine

By Danesh Thirukumaran

On the first day of Navaratri — nine nights to celebrate the divine feminine — I feel reminded to embrace the femininity within me. This, to me, is the freedom to connect to the world in various ways. Simply allowing myself to be receptive, without my logical mind's ambitious nature budding in to try and understand everything. This tendency to overwrite an experience as not making sense or not fitting into my current framework of life is limiting, as my logic at a given moment cannot reach beyond what I know in that moment.

Here are some of the things I made connections to this morning, not caring if it made sense or not:

The weather, and specifically this photo below felt like femininity



Typically I do an annual ancestral ritual (Shraddha) for my mom in Canada, but this year I did it in the US. I felt nervous about doing it because usually I do it with my older brother. On the way there I felt frantic because I was late, and I kept thinking to myself did I bring all the right supplies for it? I just wanted it to go well. When I walked into the building, I surprisingly encountered a friend of my fiancé's who I had not yet met right before I did the ritual, and I felt that even in unfamiliar territories, there is a force out there looking out for me.

Doing the ritual for the first time in the US is clearing any residual impressions from my mom as now I have done at

least one ritual for her in all of the places she lived in her life.

A few years ago when my dad unknowingly had metastatic cancer and had a burning stomach pain and could hardly eat, we visited the temple for Tamil New Year. On the way back he felt hungry but was afraid to eat. I took him to Wawa and we got a bagel, which he normally would pass on because he did not like how bagels have an overly chewy and hard texture. However, he thoroughly enjoyed this bagel and felt happy that he could eat it without it causing much after-effect, unlike most food at the time. On the way to the temple this time, again on a weekday morning, I passed by the same Wawa and thought of him. Later in the day, my fiancé wanted a bagel and I suggested if she wants one from Wawa and she happily said yes. It felt like his presence was here.

After doing the ritual it felt like a new opportunity to move back into my house because now I was liberating mummy from this place and she could look after me and the house from a new place of freedom instead of stagnation. I re-setup her framed photo along with my dad's after many months of them sitting packed away after doing renovations. I placed them in a specific spot in my house and then thought maybe I should check the right placing of them according to Vastu Shastra. After checking, I saw that I intuitively placed it in the right place. The southwest location of the house conveys a grounding feeling and it is recommended to keep ancestral photos there, and I naturally gravitated toward it, again feeling empowered by my own sensitivity to these subtleties.

Later in the morning, when I was discussing my connection to friendships and understanding how I am in them, I felt willing and able to discuss my experience in ways that didn't seem to make sense logically to me. For example, I described how I sometimes tend to be less direct with people in my energy even though the words may be of substance when it feels like the topic may lead to a strong response in them, especially when the topic feels close to home. I described the feeling as below:

In retrospect, the feeling is wide, almost like casting a net.

The words I say may be the same in substance from one situation to the next, but the way I am saying it feels different depending on the topic and who I am saying it to. I talked to my fiancé about this, and she said it sounds like I am essentially gearing up to receive a range of responses. This may be due to the lack of directness with myself around a sensitive topic and how it sits with me, or just a general discomfort for holding strong responses from others and internalizing their discomfort as my own. I was only able to even get to this level of understanding because I embraced the feminine (graceful, gentle, right in front of me) within me to approach something illogically (intuitively) and then backtrace it with the masculine, logical mind (brute force, step by step).

Receiving insights bypassing the slow, at times grueling process of logic is a gift, and training my ears to listen to these insights, just like sharpening my mind's logic, is a skill I want to continue to cultivate. The first step is to

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feel free in allowing myself to connect with everything and anything no matter how seemingly nonsensical.

It feels like I am receiving insights slowly but surely. After mummy passed, I remember constantly trying to connect my experiences in the world with her. Her passing sparked the rise in my own femininity.

I am seeing that my experience thus far in medical school is training my logic. Embracing the logical mind is something that society already agrees with, so it's easy to grow that. From my experience though, there is a subtle undertone to discredit feminine energy, as if something is not already claimed with substantial evidence it is not heard. This may be true when it comes to offering population level advice. When offering advice to a population, that which supports the most at risk is best as it is all inclusive. When it comes to individuals, it is important to utilize both the practitioner's and patient's intuitive understanding of what is going on as a clinical tool. That is the art of medicine. When entertaining new ideas to shift the field, becoming receptive to profound insights without overriding their plausibility with our limited logic is what will bring liberation to individuals from whatever currently holds them back. Instead of denying something, instead by saying, this could be true, and we have yet to prove it false so we can state that we are uncertain instead of immediately discrediting grand and disruptive ideas. Similar to the court system's innocent until proven guilty.

Training my intuition is something I have to embrace daily. Its experiential and up to the individual. In order for me to transcend whatever my current self is at every step in life, I need to embrace this. Sharpening my logic is important as it will help me share my intuitive insights by being able to backtrace them step by step. Combined, these will empower me in utilizing both mine and an individual's intuitive insights about their health as a clinical tool in supporting their journey. These experiences today reinforced my value in femininity and I am grateful.

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

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AGO Art Bash gala marks 125 years of great art, raises record \$1.4 million in support of the museum



Capping a summer of 125th anniversary celebrations, the Art Gallery of Ontario's (AGO) 2025 Art Bash set new records for funds raised

AGO Art Bash 2025. Décor by Candice & Alison. The VIP dinner was designed by the AGO Culinary team

Capping a summer of 125th anniversary celebrations, the Art Gallery of Ontario's (AGO) annual fundraiser Art Bash set new records for funds raised. Presented by Tricon, the event on September 25, 2025, brought more than 1000 AGO supporters together — many of whom are part of the AGO's storied past, dynamic present and exciting future — to raise more than \$1.4 million to support the museum's collections, exhibitions and access programs. This fundraising achievement is the largest for the event to date. The 2025 edition of Art Bash was co-chaired by Consuelo Jackman, Trinity Jackman and Victoria Jackman.

"Art Bash is Canada's Art Party, and now more than ever, museums play a critical role in public life. This year's event was a remarkable celebration of art and community," says event **co-chairs Consuelo Jackman, Trinity Jackman and Victoria Jackman**. "We were so proud to be chairing Art Bash as the AGO celebrates its 125th anniversary, and to carry forward our family's long legacy with the museum."

"The AGO started with a gift when Harriet Boulton Smith gave her home, the Grange House, and a dream of creating an Art Gallery for Ontario. Today, a community of supporters continue to build the AGO as each generation aspires to leave a better art gallery for the next," says **Stephan Jost, Michael and Sonja Koerner Director, and CEO, Art Gallery of Ontario**. "Like the AGO, Art Bash is made possible by our incredible community of supporters. Thank you to Consuelo Jackman, Trinity Jackman, Victoria Jackman, and to our Art Bash Committees for your tireless commitment to culture and making Toronto even better — for all of us."

AGO Art Bash VIP Event Sponsor is RBC Capital Markets and Entertainment Sponsor is Intact Insurance. The 2025 VIP Dinner Committee is Daniel Abichandani, Sonja Berman, Sunir Chandaria, Rochelle de Goias-Jackman, Jessica de Ruiter, Cleophee Eaton, Daniel Faria, Andrew Federer, Francesca Feldman, Emmanuelle Gattuso, Amanda Gotlieb, Maxine Granovsky Gluskin, Robert Harding, Beth Horowitz, Rosamond Ivey, Shanitha Kachan, Josée Letarte, Emily Masuda, Liza Mauer, Jennifer Tanenbaum, Susan Wortzman and Robin Young. The 2025 Art Party Committee is Tarini Chandak, Erika Ceddia, Nina Neimarlija, Jack-Malcolm Samedi, Madeline Sarracini, Jaime Shulman.

Contributing artists for this year's Art Bash included musical

performers Felix Cartal, Dre Ngozi, and the Nat Beja Trio, and a burlesque performance by Cake Cabaret and Dangerous Beauty Entertainment. The museum welcomed one-night-only art installations by contemporary artists Fiona Freemark, Jacob Robert Whibley, Marie Lambin-Gagnon, Marigold Santos, Moses Salihou, and Rachel Joanis. Décor for the event was provided by Candice & Alison. The VIP dinner was designed by the AGO Culinary team.

Purchase an AGO membership or Annual Pass to get unlimited access to the AGO Collection and all exhibitions. Admission is always free for all Ontarians under 25, Indigenous Peoples, AGO Members, and Annual Passholders. For more details on how to book your tickets or to become a Member or Annual Passholder, visit AGO.ca. @AGOToronto | #SeeAGO

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ABOUT THE AGO

Located in Toronto, the Art Gallery of Ontario is one of the largest art museums in North America, attracting approximately

one million visitors annually. The AGO Collection of more than 120,000 works of art ranges from cutting-edge contemporary art to significant works by Indigenous and Canadian artists to European masterpieces. The AGO presents wide-ranging exhibitions and programs, including solo exhibitions and acquisitions by diverse and underrepresented artists from around the world. The AGO is embarking on the seventh expansion project undertaken since it was founded in 1900. When completed the Dani Reiss Modern and Contemporary Gallery will increase exhibition space for the museum's growing modern and contemporary collection and reflect the people who call Toronto home. With its groundbreaking Annual Pass program, the AGO is one of the most affordable and accessible attractions in the GTA. Visit ago.ca to learn more.

The AGO is funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. Additional operating support is received from the City of Toronto, the Canada Council for the Arts, and generous contributions from AGO Members, donors, and private-sector partners.

Photos by Ryan Emberley & the AGO



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DJ Dre Ngozi performs at AGO Art Bash 2025



DJ Felix Cartal performs at AGO Art Bash 2025



Amy Kaiser, Ken Rotman, Jennifer Tanenbaum, Ken Tanenbaum



Les Montagnes (The Mountains), 2025. A live dance performance presented at AGO Art Bash 2025

Is It Time to Buy the Dip on Investment Condos?

This Opinion Article was originally published on Storeys.com on Sept 29, 2025 and it was written by:
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A recent CMHC report titled “Is Toronto’s condo market downturn a repeat of the 1990s?” pointed to a possible future rebound as new supply has essentially stopped. The argument is straightforward: with no new projects breaking ground today, the eventual shortage could drive another wave of appreciation tomorrow. That thesis is the foundation for many to ask and question whether or not it’s time to buy investment condos.

It is a question worth exploring. Toronto has experienced cycles where underbuilding eventually led to renewed price growth, and CMHC is correct to highlight that construction slowdowns can set up future scarcity. For many investors, the current environment feels like a classic “buy when there’s blood in the streets” moment: prices have fallen from peaks, sentiment is negative, and conventional wisdom says to avoid the asset class entirely. But before assuming that contrarian instincts and long-term supply dynamics alone make condos a smart buy in 2025, it is worth looking at the mechanics that investors actually face today. When you do, the investment case breaks down quickly.

The Core Problem: Negative Cash Flow for Investors

Almost every condo in Toronto is cash-flow negative at current interest rates and prices.

Consider a typical downtown one-bedroom listed at \$619,000. Even with a 4% mortgage rate and 30-year amortization, monthly costs hit \$3,349: \$2,364 for the mortgage, \$699 in maintenance fees, and \$286 in property taxes. Against rental income of \$2,600, that creates a monthly loss of \$749 before taxes, vacancy, and repairs.

In the past, negative cash flow was not disqualifying because price appreciation offset monthly losses. Without a trend of strong appreciation, the negative carry just subsidizes tenants every month with no guarantee of payoff.

Even significant rate cuts would not solve the problem. At 3.25%, investors would still lose \$540 monthly. To break even on cash flow would require an interest rate of roughly 1.1% or a purchase price around \$423,000, roughly \$196,000 below current levels. Major bank economists like CIBC’s Benjamin Tal forecast the Bank of Canada policy rate declining to only 2.25% by the end of 2025, nowhere near the levels needed to make condo investment viable.

What the Condo Investment Thesis Really Was

The condo investment thesis evolved over time from rental income to pure speculation. While early condo investors may have focused on steady rent returns, the model gradually shifted to a leveraged momentum

trade dressed up as property ownership. Most “investors” were not holding units for steady rent checks, they were speculating on price growth through pre-construction contracts.

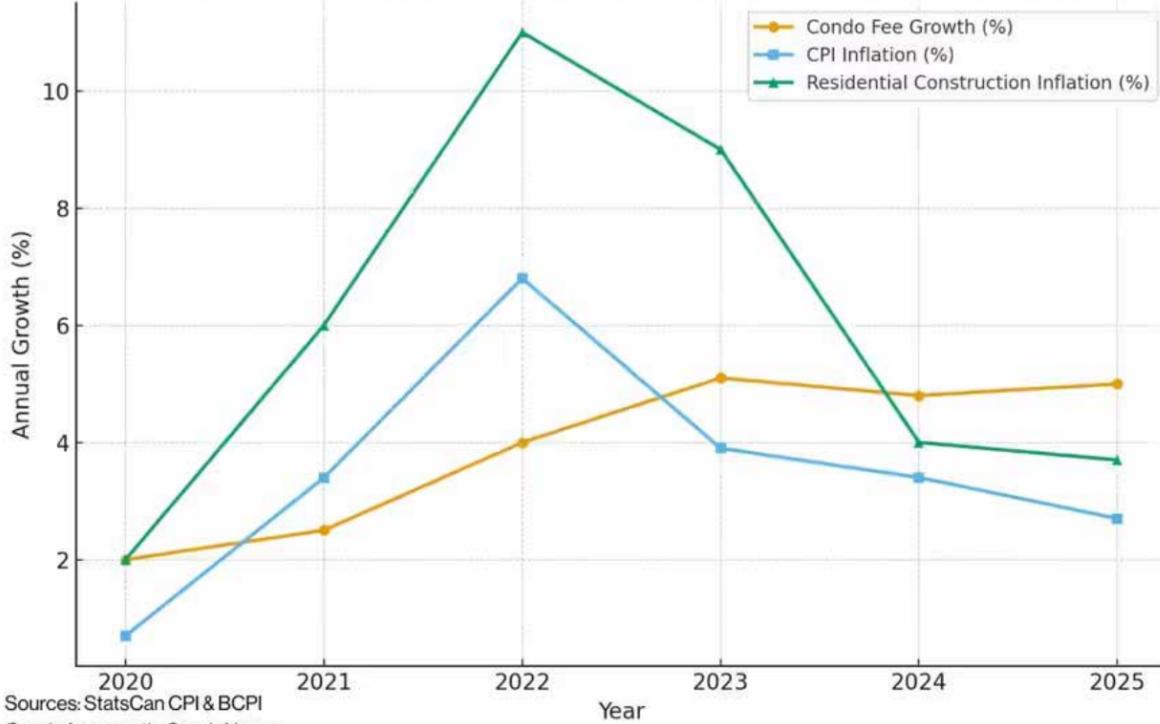
Pre-construction operated like commodity futures contracts, where buyers lock in fixed prices for future delivery while betting on asset appreciation. A buyer would put down 20 percent over several years, lock in a purchase price, and ride the market higher without taking on a mortgage. If values rose, the contract could be flipped before closing for significant profit. It was leverage without carrying costs.

From 2016 through 2021, developers launched tens of thousands of condo units that were quickly sold to small investors chasing momentum, not end users who planned to live in them. Those projects are now delivering into an entirely different market defined by higher interest rates, weaker rents, and falling resale values. The very strategy that drove condo investment is now the source of its vulnerability.

The speculation-driven market also shaped what developers actually built. For years, developers optimized units to satisfy investor demand rather than end-user livability. As prices climbed, units got smaller and layouts became more cramped to hit lower price points that attracted speculators. The result

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Toronto Condo Fees vs CPI vs Construction Inflation (2020-2025)



is a glut of small, poorly designed units that offer limited livability for actual residents. Even if the pre-construction market eventually recovers, developers will need to start building units that people actually want to live in, not just speculate on. This means what investors are purchasing now represents leftover inventory from a development era that no longer exists.

When rates are extremely low, investors can justify holding cash-flow negative assets because carrying costs are minimal and momentum-based appreciation covers shortfalls. But when rates rise, fundamentals reassert themselves. Higher capital costs turn manageable losses into crushing monthly drains, while also cutting off the new buyer flow needed to sustain price growth.

Rising Maintenance Fees and Construction Inflation

Maintenance fees are a drag on cash flow, and they are structurally set to rise. A 2023 study of 60 condo corporations across the GTA found average fee increases of 5.1 percent year-over-year, while contributions to reserve funds rose by 11.8 percent on average. Reserve funds, which cover big-ticket items like windows, roofs, and elevators, now represent about a quarter of the typical condo budget.

Those costs are driven by construction inflation, not consumer goods inflation, and that distinction is critical. Most of a condo's operating budget goes to maintenance, services, and repairs, while the reserve fund is entirely exposed to construction costs. As the chart below shows, construction costs have consistently outpaced general inflation, creating persistent upward pressure on maintenance fees even as broader price levels have moderated.

Condo corporations face constant pressure to raise fees to keep pace with higher contractor quotes and material costs. The situation may worsen because reserve fund studies are conducted only every three years, meaning many buildings have not yet gauged how recent price increases need to be accounted for in future budgets. Even though construction inflation has moderated from its peak, the massive price increases from 2022-2023 are baked into the cost base, and it will take years of sustained lower growth

for other costs to catch up.

Supply and Demand Misalignment in the Investor Market

The CMHC report is right about one thing: new condo launches have slowed to almost a complete stop. But that long-term supply crunch is colliding with a near-term oversupply. The projects launched during the low-rate era are now completing, adding thousands of units to the resale and rental markets. Even with some cancellations, the pipeline remains large enough to act as a drag for years.

At the same time, rental demand has softened. Housing analyst Ben Rabidoux from Edge Analytics has documented a strong correlation between non-permanent resident growth and Ontario rental prices, as shown in the chart below. Federal policy has cut back temporary resident inflows, particularly student permits, which were a key driver of downtown condo rentals. The dramatic decline in non-permanent resident growth from its 2022-2023 peak coincides directly with the cooling rental market, illustrating how policy changes have removed a critical source of rental demand.

Without that steady churn of new tenants, the upward pressure on rents has stalled. Urbanation reported that average condo rents in the GTA fell by 2.8 percent year-over-year in Q1 2025, down to \$3.78 per square foot (about \$2,612 for a typical 692-square-foot unit). At the same time, active condo rental listings were up 29 percent year-over-year, pushing available supply to 1.4 months of inventory, well above the 10-year average of 0.95 months. A rental market under pressure colliding with new supply is not a recipe for investment success.

Institutional Competition in the Rental Market

Another overlooked factor is the growing

role of institutional players. Pension funds, REITs, and private equity are building large rental portfolios across Canada. Unlike small investors, they operate with vertically integrated business models, combining construction, financing, and property management under one umbrella.

They also benefit from CMHC-backed financing that offers better loan terms such as lower downpayments, lower rates, and longer repayment periods (40-50 years). These are a huge advantage which are not available to small investors purchasing individual condo units. Institutional players are rapidly capitalizing on these programs: in the first three quarters of 2024, CMHC provided mortgage insurance for over 200,000 apartment units totaling C\$48 billion, a 59% increase year-over-year.

This institutional capital is also targeting the same rental market that small condo investors depend on. In 2024, 40% of condo units in the GTA were rented, up from 29% in 2014, but condo rental units average approximately 50% higher rents than comparable purpose-built rental units. As institutions build more purpose-built rental supply at scale, they can offer tenants better value while still achieving superior returns due to their financing and operational advantages.

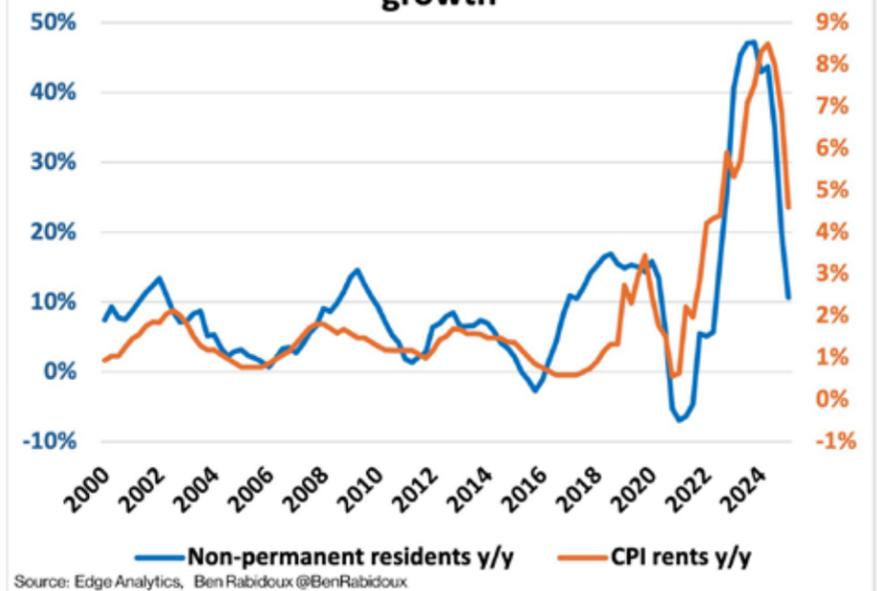
That structural advantage means institutions can weather market volatility while achieving superior returns through operational efficiencies. Smaller condo investors are left competing in a game tilted against them.

Conclusion: Answering the Question

So, is it time to buy the dip on investment condos? The CMHC report raises valid concerns about long-term supply constraints, and history does show that construction slowdowns can eventually support price rebounds. But while CMHC focuses on multi-year supply dynamics, the mechanics facing individual investors today tell a different story entirely. Today's investor faces negative cash flow, oversupply, weaker rental demand, institutional competition, and steadily rising costs.

The supply crunch thesis may prove right someday. But in 2025, the risk-reward is firmly against small condo investors.

Non-permanent residents drive rent growth



CMHC's long-term optimism about supply and demand doesn't change the fact that buying the dip today is not an investment, it is speculation on future conditions that remain uncertain.

Op-Ed**WORLD NEWS**

SCO SUMMIT:

INDIA, CHINA & RUSSIA IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

From August 31 to September 1, 2025, the northern Chinese port city of Tianjin hosted a landmark event in geopolitics: the 25th Heads-of-State Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). This summit was the largest in the organization's history, serving as a powerful symbol of Asia's deepening cooperation across economics, finance, defense, and digital transformation. It underscored principles such as sovereign equality, adherence to international law, multilateralism, people-centered approaches, and action-oriented implementation. What began over two decades ago as a regional security platform has now evolved into a bloc with substantial economic ambitions and a vision for shaping a new global order.

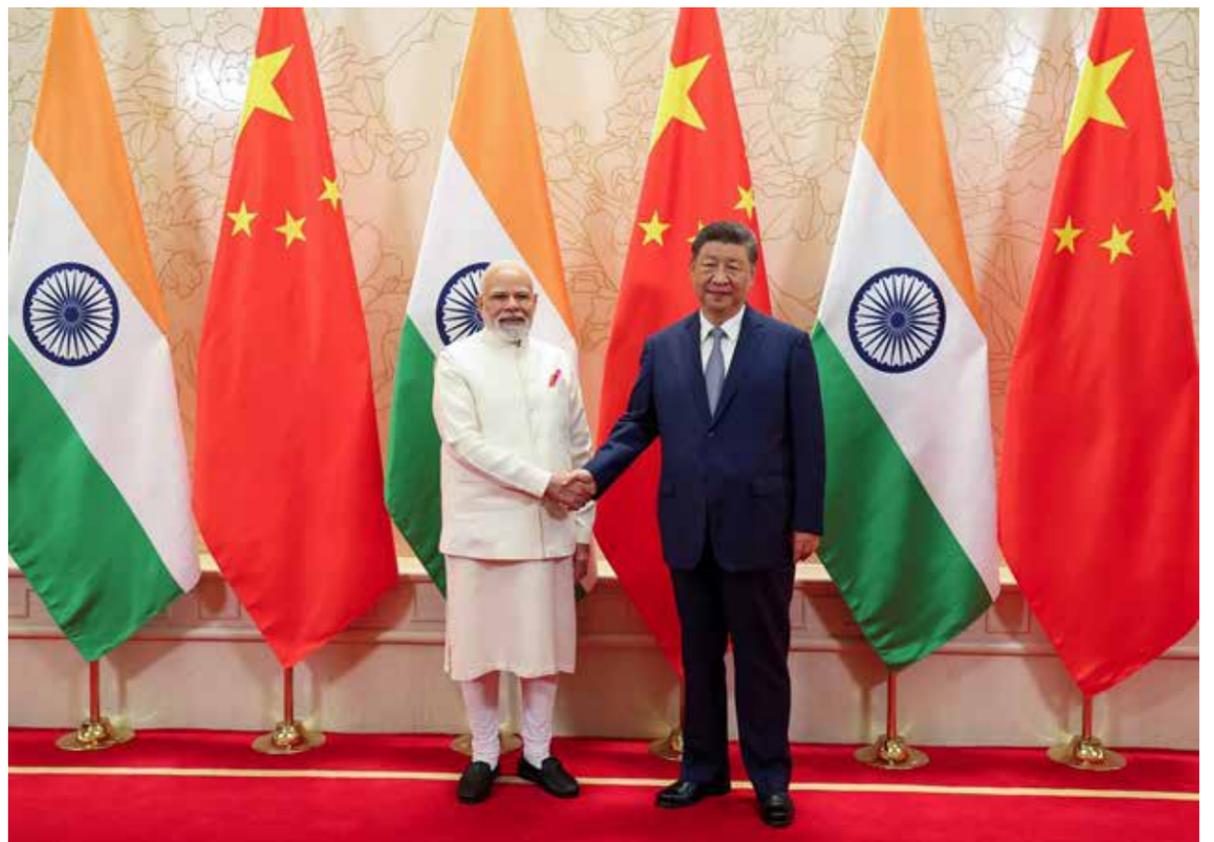
At a time when Western economies face slowing growth, rising debt burdens, and political fragmentation, Asia's emerging powers—China, India, and Russia—are actively rethinking strategic alignments, economic architectures, and digital infrastructures. The SCO summit revealed that the continent is no longer merely participating in the global economy; it is beginning to design new frameworks of cooperation that rival and potentially replace Western-centric institutions.

The SCO summit, exploring its economic, financial, technological, and cultural dimensions, the Tianjin summit was not just another diplomatic gathering, but rather a watershed moment that could mark the start of Asia's ascent to the forefront of global economics.

As of 2025, the nominal GDPs of India, Russia, and China are approximately \$4.19 trillion USD, \$2.08 trillion USD, and \$19.23 trillion USD, respectively, making India the world's fourth-largest economy, Russia the 11th, and China the second-largest by nominal GDP. Collectively, these three nations account for over \$25.5 trillion USD, representing a significant portion of the global economy. Their combined economic activities have a major impact on global trade, investment flows, and geopolitical dynamics. In comparison, the total global economy (world GDP) is estimated at around \$114 trillion USD, highlighting the substantial contribution of these three countries to the world's economic output.

A Development Bank Takes Shape

Historically, the SCO functioned primarily as a security and political dialogue platform, addressing counter-



terrorism and border stability. But in Tianjin, the organization decisively revealed its economic ambitions.

Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the creation of an SCO Development Bank, backed by ¥2 billion in grants and ¥10 billion in concessional loans for member states. This proposal was not symbolic rhetoric—it was a practical step toward establishing an institutional financial pillar within the SCO, similar to the New Development Bank (NDB) established by BRICS in 2014.

The new bank would prioritize financing for renewable energy projects, infrastructure connectivity, and digital transformation initiatives. By doing so, the SCO is directly addressing one of the most pressing needs of its member states: access to long-term, stable financing beyond the conditionalities of Western lenders like the IMF or World Bank.

The potential of the SCO bank lies in its collective capital mobilization. China can provide liquidity, Russia can contribute energy-backed resources, and India can channel its rapidly growing fintech and IT capabilities. Together, they could fund transformative projects across Central Asia, South Asia, and beyond—creating an Asian-led financing ecosystem.

The Rise of the Electro-Yuan

Another innovation introduced at the summit was the “electro-yuan”, a digital version of China's currency designed for cross-border trade settlement. Already piloted in Uzbekistan, the electro-yuan allows member states to bypass

the U.S. dollar in energy, mining, and infrastructure contracts.

By promoting yuan-based transactions, China is positioning its currency as a regional trade anchor, eroding dollar dominance. If widely adopted, the electro-yuan could reduce transaction costs, shield SCO economies from Western sanctions, and enhance monetary independence.

Multi-Currency Vision

While the yuan is central, Indian commentators have floated the idea of an “R-Block”—a multi-currency arrangement involving the rupee, ruble, and renminbi. This would give India a stronger role in the financial architecture, preventing the bloc from becoming overly yuan-centric.

If realized, the R-Block would not only diversify risk but also empower each member to trade in its national currency. Such a system could reshape the global financial architecture, accelerating the shift toward a multipolar currency world.

Interbank Consortium Gains Momentum

The SCO Interbank Consortium, established in 2005, will also be strengthened. From 2026 to 2029, it is slated to receive ¥10 billion in new financing, providing working capital for intra-SCO trade and investment.

By scaling up interbank cooperation, the SCO is building financial muscle. This could eventually culminate in an integrated payment settlement system, similar to Europe's TARGET2, which would allow smoother financial flows across Asia.



Strategic and Defense Collaboration

The Tianjin summit was as much about geopolitics as economics. Presidents Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin jointly articulated the need for a “genuine multilateral order”—a direct rebuke to Western dominance.

The symbolism of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi walking arm-in-arm with Putin was powerful. Despite lingering tensions with China, India’s visible presence demonstrated that it is willing to engage in alternative global structures that reduce reliance on Western institutions.

India’s Strategic Signals

Modi’s attendance marked a subtle but deliberate diplomatic shift. While India remains part of Western-led groupings such as the Quad, it is also strengthening ties within Asia to hedge against geopolitical risks—particularly after facing punitive tariffs and trade barriers from the U.S.

New Delhi’s decision to not endorse a Western narrative on the Ukraine conflict, combined with its participation in SCO financial initiatives, highlights India’s strategy: strategic autonomy with diversified alignments.

Digital Security and Space Collaboration

Xi Jinping also announced that SCO partners would gain access to China’s BeiDou satellite navigation system, providing an alternative to the U.S.-controlled GPS. This is part of a broader push toward digital sovereignty, ensuring that Asia is not dependent on Western-controlled infrastructure in the digital age.

Renewable Energy and Infrastructure Stars

Central Asian states such as Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are big winners of the SCO’s new economic orientation. With China pledging billions for solar, wind, and infrastructure projects, these nations can diversify away from fossil fuel dependency while strengthening energy security.

Green Strategy as an Economic Lever

By promoting a green economy, the SCO is not only addressing climate change but also using it as an economic growth lever. Green projects create jobs, reduce import bills for fossil fuels, and position member states as leaders in renewable innovation.

Digital Sovereignty and Tech Standards

Digital transformation is another SCO priority. China’s leadership in AI, fintech, and digital infrastructure gives the bloc an edge. India’s fintech revolution—its success with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and the pilot digital rupee—complements China’s digital yuan.

Together, these initiatives could create a regional digital ecosystem with shared standards, interoperable payment systems, and reduced dependency on Western Big Tech.

Currency Diversification

The combination of the electro-yuan

and the proposed R-Block suggests a strategic decoupling from the dollar system. If Asia builds its own currency corridors, it will have far more resilience against external shocks, sanctions, or dollar volatility.

Development Finance as Geopolitical Tool

The SCO bank is not only an economic initiative but also a geopolitical tool. Just as the IMF has historically shaped economies through conditional loans, the SCO bank could influence regional policies—only this time from an Asian vantage point.

Resilience Amid Sanctions

For Russia, integration into the SCO finance system is essential amid ongoing Western sanctions. For India, purchasing Russian oil and fertilizers using national currencies has already saved billions. The SCO offers a shielded trade ecosystem, enabling members to continue commerce without interference.

Cultural Exchange, Soft Power, and Civilizational Messaging

Beyond finance and strategy, the summit carried cultural weight.

- China invoked its WWII legacy to reframe historical narratives, presenting Asia as a civilizational counterweight to Western dominance.

- Cultural performances, academic dialogues, and leadership exchanges emphasized a shared identity.

In the future, SCO cultural initiatives—academic scholarships, student exchanges, joint film festivals—could complement economic integration by fostering people-to-people trust.

Framing the Ukraine Conflict

Russian President Vladimir Putin used the summit to criticize NATO and the West, portraying the Ukraine war as a geopolitical struggle rather than a unilateral act of aggression.

India and China struck a more cautious tone, calling for multilateral solutions—reflecting both countries’ desire to prevent the conflict from derailing Asian growth.

Should the Ukraine war conclude, the SCO could position itself as a stabilizing force. With financial resources, infrastructure capacity, and diplomatic weight, the organization could participate in post-war reconstruction, linking Eurasia through economic connectivity.

Challenges

- India’s cautious stance: unresolved border disputes with China prevent full alignment.

- Diverse political systems: SCO members range from democracies to authoritarian states, making consensus difficult.

- Institutional infancy: The SCO bank and financial mechanisms remain underdeveloped; their credibility depends on governance, transparency, and accountability.

Green and Digital Pathways

The SCO’s combined emphasis on green energy and digital transformation offers

a blueprint for sustainable growth. With India’s tech expertise, China’s financing power, and Russia’s resource base, the bloc could pioneer an Asian model of development.

By creating its own bank, interbank consortium, and digital currency system, the SCO is laying the foundation for a parallel financial architecture—less beholden to the West, more reflective of Asia’s priorities.

The SCO is not a rigid military alliance like NATO. Rather, it is a flexible balancing mechanism, allowing members to cooperate economically while managing political differences. This flexibility may actually be its greatest strength.

A New Chapter in Asian Economic Sovereignty

The 2025 SCO Summit in Tianjin was more than diplomatic pageantry. It was a watershed moment in the evolution of global economics. By launching financial innovations, signaling strategic unity, and promoting green and digital cooperation, the SCO has shown that Asia is no longer a follower of Western economic models—it is crafting its own.

- Financial innovation (development bank, electro-yuan, R-Block) is building new channels of capital.

- Strategic signaling (India’s balanced diplomacy, SCO unity) reflects a reconfiguration of global power.

- Green and digital pathways point to a sustainable, future-oriented model of development.

For the global economy, this means one thing: Asia is ascendant. The SCO has positioned itself not just as a regional bloc, but as a platform for global transformation—one that could define the contours of the 21st-century economy.

Writer

Visvalingam Muralithas is a researcher in the legislative sector, specializing in policy analysis and economic research. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Economics at the University of Colombo,



with a research focus on governance, development, and sustainable growth. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics (Honours) from the University of Jaffna and a Master’s degree in Economics from the University of Colombo. His academic background is further strengthened by postgraduate diplomas in Education from the Open University of Sri Lanka and in Monitoring and Evaluation from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. In addition to his research work, Muralithas has contributed to academia by teaching economics at the University of Colombo and the Institute of Bankers of Sri Lanka (IBSL), and has also gained industry experience as an investment advisor at a stock brokerage firm affiliated with the Colombo Stock Exchange. He can be reached at muralithas.v@gmail.com

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New emergency department experience reinvents patient care in Scarborough

BY: MELODY KESHISHIAN, COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST, SHN

Lai Chu didn't know what to expect when a sudden knee injury led her to the emergency department (ED) at Scarborough Health Network's (SHN) Birchmount Hospital.

A passionate community advocate and volunteer (particularly in healthcare), Lai has lived in Scarborough for over 50 years, and is well acquainted with the hospital system—but she had never experienced an ED quite like this. The entire process was smooth and organized, and she appreciated the clear communication and timely support from staff.

Lai's journey through the Birchmount ED demonstrates the exceptional impact of SHN's new AcceleratED Care experience that is reimagining how emergency healthcare is delivered and how EDs are designed.

A warm welcome

Lai's visit to Birchmount was her first time in an ED in over 10 years, and things felt different from the moment she arrived. The layout had changed following renovations to support the rollout of AcceleratED Care in November 2023, and a staff member greeted Lai and immediately and told her exactly



Lai Chu, health care advocate and SHN patient

where she could register using a self-serve kiosk and how to do it.

"It's important to me to be acknowledged as a patient, especially when you're feeling vulnerable," Lai shared.

"That simple welcome reduced my anxiety right away."

This is one of the first tangible impacts of AcceleratED Care: a registered nurse (RN) stationed at the front of the department performs an initial quick assessment for any emergency cases, then directs patients to the self-registration kiosk, or the registration clerk if they are too unwell, helping patients avoid confusion and stress. In a setting where many patients may not speak English fluently or may be

unfamiliar with Ontario's healthcare system, these personalized touchpoints make a significant difference in flow and efficiency.

Swift triage, seamless care

Having checked in, Lai was led into a private triage bay in the waiting room within 10 minutes, where an RN assessed her condition and ordered the necessary bloodwork right away. The triage RN is able to order bloodwork and other tests before the patient sees a doctor, which helps shorten the length of time the patient spends in the ED.

Lai was then sent to a Rapid Medical Evaluation room for assessment by a physician.



This is another advantage of the new ED layout and flow: the triage RN balances the flow of patients from the waiting room into the evaluation rooms, so the next patient in line can be assessed as soon as possible.

This is part of AcceleratED Care’s “front-end model of care,” which is designed to prioritize quicker patient assessment by both a nurse and a physician.

Within the hour, Lai was referred for an X-ray in the diagnostic imaging department the next day. The quick action and coordination meant she could return to the comfort of home until her appointment.

Patients with less serious ailments move into Fast Track Zones, where they are met by a physician or physician assistant for treatment. Those with more critical needs are sent to a High-Care Area. This helps free up space in the waiting room and reduce patient bottlenecks.

“The old layout used to feel chaotic and cramped, with patients and families in close proximity,” Lai shared.

“Now, the space feels much more organized and calming. Doctors and nurses make use of

the designated care spaces to keep patients moving and seen quicker.”

Building on these successes, the Deepa and Narinder Lal Emergency Department at General Hospital was retrofitted to accommodate this innovative care experience in December 2024, seeing similar positive results in patient and staff experience and flow. The new Northpine ED at Centenary Hospital will become the first hospital in Canada to be entirely built around AcceleratED Care when construction begins later this year.

Transparent treatment and trustworthy care

Another standout feature of the AcceleratED Care experience was the open communication. Lai remarked that the staff were very attentive and happy to answer questions.

After her X-ray appointment, the physician was able to share the results with Lai and prescribe treatment right there in the ED, without unnecessary delays.

“I was able to get my results quickly because the doctor knew I was there the day before, and knew I’d been waiting for my

results. She was aware of the order of patients she’d been seeing and acted accordingly,” Lai explained.

“The doctors and nurses were not just efficient—they were warm and open. I’m glad to hear about AcceleratED Care and what it is doing for patients, especially at a time when improvements to emergency care are so critical.”

AcceleratED Care is a powerful example of SHN’s commitment to excellence in shaping the future of care. For Lai, it meant a shorter, much less stressful visit to the emergency department, and she was impressed by the work being done to provide better emergency care to her community. Her experience was the positive result of teamwork and innovation to deliver world-class healthcare, right here in Scarborough.

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Third-Generation Leader Drives Scarborough's First South Asian Gala To Benefit Local Hospitals



Shalini Sheth, COO of Surati Sweet Mart and SHN Foundation Board member, is one of the key leaders behind SHN's inaugural Lights & Luck fundraiser — bringing together community, culture, and celebration for the Festival of Lights.

Shalini Sheth grew up in Scarborough, a community she describes as “close-knit and multicultural,” where everyone feels like family. **Today, she's the Chief Operating Officer (COO) at Surati Sweet Mart**, a thriving global food manufacturing company started by her grandfather in the 1970s. “He got bored within a month of arriving in Canada and started making East Indian snacks and sweets — the rest is history,” says Shalini with a smile.

Now the **third generation** to lead the family business, she oversees a **65,000 square foot facility in the heart of Scarborough that employs over 200 people** — many of whom are newcomers to Canada. “Scarborough is home,” she says. “Our employees live here. Their kids go to school here. They rely on these hospitals. We all do.”

It's this deep connection that drives her volunteer work with the Scarborough Health Network (SHN) Foundation, including her role on the **Board and as Co-Chair of SHN's inaugural Lights & Luck Casino Night in celebration of the Festival of Lights**. Earlier this year, her family made a heartfelt donation to SHN in memory of her grandparents, Hemkunver and Maganlal, founding partners of Surati Sweet Mart. A plaque now hangs at Birchmount Hospital's Internal Medicine Unit — the very place that cared for them in their final years.

“They were the **heart** of our family,” Shalini said during the unveiling. “SHN helped us through one of the most difficult times in our lives. We'll never forget that.”

On Oct. 3, she invites the community to celebrate South Asian culture, honour her family's legacy, and **support equitable healthcare at Lights & Luck** — a dazzling evening of live entertainment, henna artistry, food stations, and a charity casino, all in support of SHN.

Learn more at SHNLightsandLuck.ca

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The Airline Passengers and Their Role in Air Safety



The interior of Singapore Airlines Flight SQ321 after it made an emergency landing at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport on May 21, 2024.

By: Kane Siva

When we talk of air safety, we talk about the pilots, cabin crew, aircraft manufacturer's misdeeds and maintenance personnel's faults. But have we ever considered the attitude, behaviour, and the unruly incidents created by the passengers on board the aircraft that may or might lead to safety in the air? The passengers who patronise commercial airlines are the money-spinners, but some of these folks create incidents inside the aircraft while on flight and this is on the increase in the most recent times. This warrants the utmost importance to pen this narrative.

I have come across time and again and experienced personally in my aviation career of a lifetime, flying

as a passenger and occasionally as a tech. crew for almost 8 years with the former national airline of Sri Lanka, AirCeylon. I mentioned in a previous write up that air safety begins not only in the air but also in the ground itself, and also with the passengers as well. The pilots and the cabin crew ensure a safer flight for all the passengers at all times, but the passengers who occupy the Aluminium tube for 5 hours or more and even for an hour contribute a lot for the overall flight safety. You may wonder how the passenger's contribution is of great importance for air safety. Yes, the flying passengers contribute a lot for air safety. I would compartmentalise the passengers contribution in three headings. The first one is preflight boarding, secondly on board the aircraft after embarkation and the last, their attitude and

behavior, after the flight lands at the destination airport.

Preflight contribution of the passenger begins from the time they are at the checking counter to check-in for their respective flights. They have to make sure that they carry the allowable baggage weight for the check-in bags and strictly follow the procedures for the hand luggage as well. More care and attention should be given to the storage of power pack, laptops and Lithium batteries. The recent alert by FAA on Tuesday, 09 September 2025, warns airlines about the dangers of lithium batteries, its usage and storage by crew members and the passengers. Quoting the FAA, "Cellphones, laptops, portable power banks, e-cigarettes and hearing aids are just some of the many devices with the batteries that could malfunction, and create a safety hazard



by causing a huge fire". Strict adherence should be there for these items storage in the cabin as per the instructions of the flight cabin crew.

Also when you are in the security make sure to be honest in declaring the items and look out for other passenger's behaviours too, if you see or notice anything irregular please inform the security officials. The second phase of the passengers contribution starts once they are on board the aircraft. The Flight steward and their respective peers are on board to take care of your safety, comforts, needs and your well being. It is of supreme importance that passengers must pay close attention to the cabin crew's flight safety instructions at all times. Safety of passengers is everyone's responsibility on board the aircraft. The passengers at all times must maintain a demeanor that should be of par excellence, even if the situation is not conducive. There are passengers who are disruptive and try to inconvenience you on your flight, please promptly inform the cabin crew concerned and never take matters into your hands. Some are overly drunk and become abusive. There were incidents where passengers had attacked flight attendants. I had experienced where passengers try to recline the seats to the maximum level so as to inconvenience your travel and mobility. Please notify the cabin crew when you are harassed or bulldozed by this kind of behaviour. Safety of air travel on any flight rests with the passengers as well. There have been incidents in the past where a passenger, may be due to mental illness or some other conditions had tried to open the emergency exit door of the aircraft, and thanks to the action of the vigilant fellow passengers, a major catastrophe was averted on more than one occasion.

The passengers should not keep any Lithium battery powered operating devices in the checked baggage. There were many instances where the Lithium powered battery equipment have caused serious fire incidents but fortunately there were no major incidents so far, but surely it raises hell out of any one's lives. The other important factor we all as passengers must strictly follow is regarding our hand luggage, we all

try to carry, including myself always carry 2 hand luggage, even if it strictly says only 1 is allowed. This always increases the weight of the aircraft and inadvertently the safety.

Once you board the aircraft, make sure to keep the seat belts on all the time, even if the message says to remove the seat belts. It is always safe to keep it on little loose so as to prevent any unforeseen accidents mainly due to turbulent weather conditions which has become highly unpredictable. The recent incidents in the last few years have become really alarming and unfathomable, especially the CAT, Clear Air Turbulence, which is a Monster, in my language, of all the weather phenomena. I experienced CAT weather, on a flight from Frankfurt to Muscat Seeb international airport, Oman, about 5 years back, the aircraft dropped all of a sudden to 3/2 thousand feet over the mountainous terrain in Teheran. All the passengers were in shock, praying and fortunately all of us had our seatbelts on mostly and, I would say this prevented anyone from getting hurt seriously. Always buckle up, buckle up otherwise we may have to feel sorry for ourself. As far as I remember there was one fatal incident due to turbulent weather on a Singapore Airlines flight on 21st May 2024 over Myanmar, SQ 321 from LHR to SIN. This was a real sad and unfortunate incident. Further, always maintain your cool at all times, be courteous to all the fellow passengers and to all the flight crew members.

The last and final phase of the safety of passengers begins when the flight is making preparations to land at the destination airport. This phase is a critical phase for all on board the flight, mostly as passengers fail to keep the seats in an upright position, turn off all their mobile app, make sure all other objects are kept under the seats. The most dangerous part of the flight begins after the aircraft lands at the destination airport, in the sense, the behavior of most of the passengers. I had seen on many occasions even before the aircraft came to a halt in the, apron, parking area, some of them would unbuckle the seat belts, stand up and open the overhead bins, where their hand luggage is stored. This

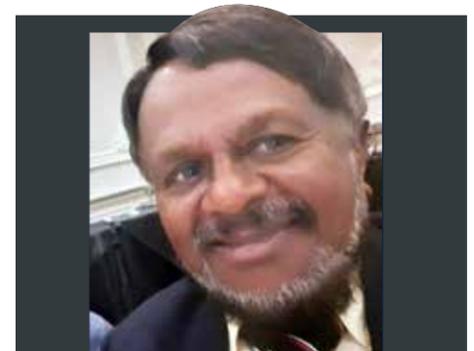
is a dangerous behaviour by fellow passengers without any concern for the well being of the other passengers. There were many a time where the baggage had fallen from the overhead bins on fellow passengers and hurt them, This kind of issue is all over the world and in most of the airlines you fly, but rampant in Asian countries. When I notice this while on a flight, the first thing that triggers me is this "The people who were seated for the most part of the flight may be for 5/6/7 or more hours and why they cannot sit down for an extra 15 minutes or more till the aircraft is positioned and ready to open the doors for disembarkation".

Humans by nature are always impatient and in a hurry. But recently the one and only airline or airport in the world have introduced an unusual way to prevent this happening in their airport. Turkey has introduced a fine for those passengers who stand up before the aircraft parked safely at the gate for disembarkation, and try to pull down the hand luggage, causing inconvenience as well as injuries to other passengers by this unruly behaviour. Turkish Civil Aviation Authorities say they have received numerous complaints from passengers. They have introduced a 70 \$ fine for each passenger. But I am wondering how they could enforce this even though it is a good way to deter the miscreants and to enhance the safety of the other passengers. I hope and pray other airports and airlines introduce the same kind of measures to enhance the safety of the passengers.

I want to quote what W.J. Wilmont Buxton said about action.

"Little By Little, No great work is ever done in a hurry. To develop a great scientific discovery, paint a great picture, write an immortal poem, become a famous general and to do anything great requires: time, patience and perseverance. These are done Little By Little, Shakespeare did not write or compose Hamlet, in a day".

We always have to be patient and pray for safer air travel.



K.N. Sivagnanasunderam (Blue)
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Words of Peace

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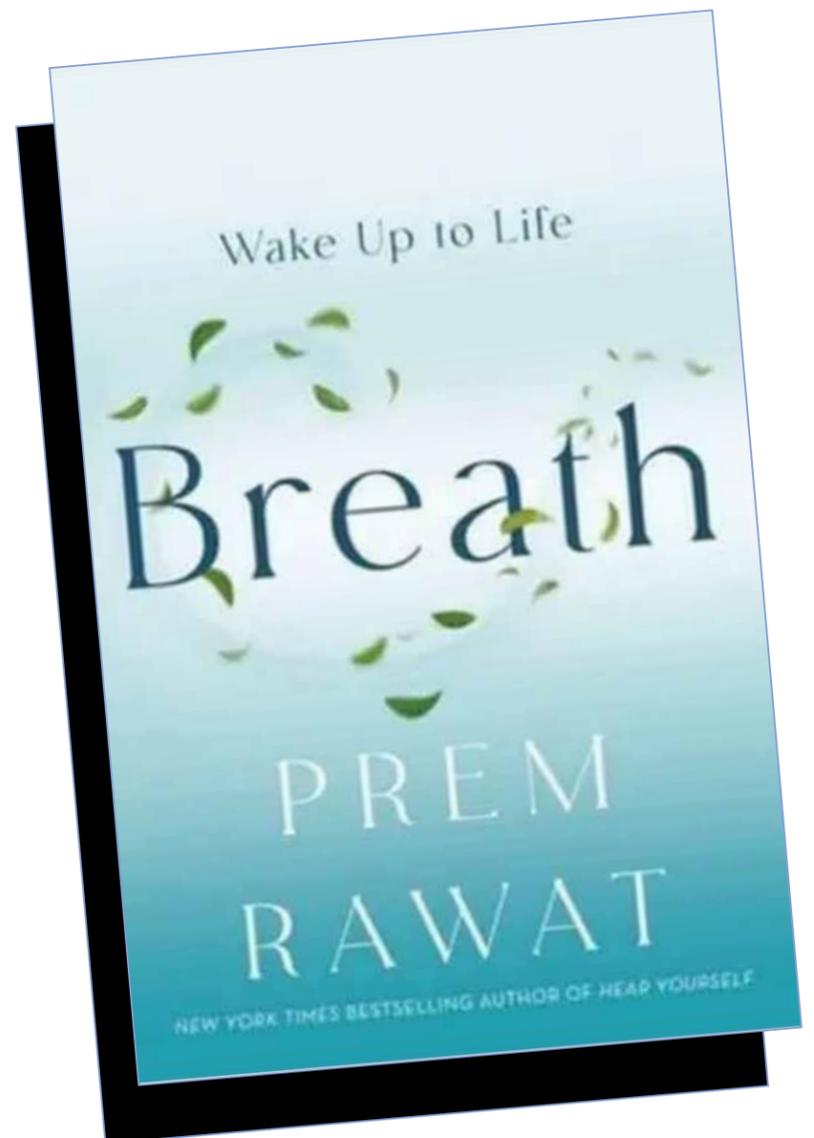
Breath. It marks the beginning and end of life. It is the one thing shared by all human beings, and yet, it is one of the most overlooked aspects of human experience. What we take for granted actually forms the basis of our shared reality. Each breath we take signals triumph over death, our defiant presence in the world, our dedication to persistence.

Global peace Ambassador and New York Times bestselling author Prem Rawat asks us to pause and take a moment to revel in our breath, to wake up to the miracle of shared human experience. Only when we do so, can we open ourselves to the possibility of Peace – both inner and outer.

Filled with intricate line drawings and flowing prose, *Breath* is a beautiful guide to finding harmony in each moment. Immerse yourself in the simple but profound power of breath to bring Peace to your Life.

Feedback:

“A transformative guide that reconnects us to the fundamental essence of our existence – our Breath. A must – read for anyone seeking to rediscover joy, peace and a deeper understanding



of what it truly means to be alive” Dr Bradley Nelson author of ‘Body code and Emotion code’

“Simple, deep, rich, and profound” UDO Erasmus

“The most influential book, I have read. It teaches me that my breath, not my ego, is the constant reminder of who I really am.” – Gabriel Gonzalus - Molina, best selling author of *Switchers*

“A simple and sweet journey” – W. Timothy Gallwey - best selling author of ‘the inner game of Tennis’.

“Prem sheds light on the hidden joy found in each breath between the first and the last – a doorway to experience the divine spark within us all.” Debraj ‘Raj’ Mukherjee MD MPH, - Director of neurosurgical oncology, Johns Hopkins school of Medicine.



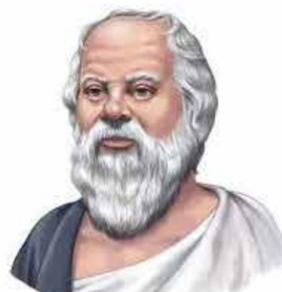
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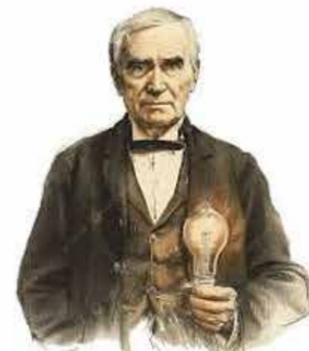
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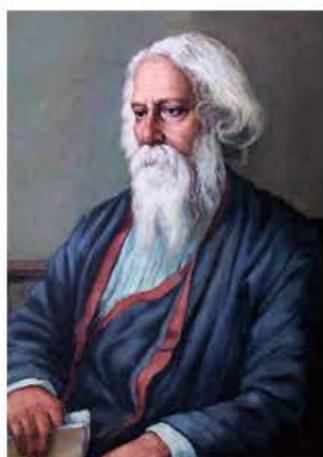
Franklin



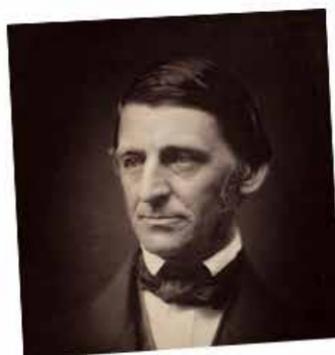
Goethe



Coleridge



Tagore



Emerson

By: J A Rajah

1. Perfection is attained by slow degrees; it requires time.

- **Voltaire**

2. A good laugh is sunshine in the house.

- **Thackeray**

3. Think not those faithful who praise all thy words and actions, but those who kindly prove thy faults.

- **Socrates**

4. Experience is the mother of science.

- **Edison**

5. A little leak will sink a great ship.

- **Franklin**

6. A fool's tongue is keen enough to cut his own throat.

- **Tagore**

7. Among the kind, the one-eyed man is king.

- **Goethe**

8. Vows made in storms are forgotten in calms.

- **Coleridge**

9. Fortunes visit the great and the small alike.

- **Emerson**

10. Talents are best nurtured in solitude; character is best formed in the billows of the world.

- **Goethe**



BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

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NHS Fife now says staff should use toilets based on biological sex

The health board has released an equality impact assessment after the equalities watchdog told it to take 'corrective action'.

The assessment also says that "no-one should be put in a position that they do not have access to suitable facilities that respect and protect their dignity and privacy". What bullshit. They didn't consider it important to respect and protect the female staff's dignity and privacy when a male doctor demanded access to their changing rooms. They went out of their way to persecute and punish Sandy for standing up for the right to single sex changing rooms.



This is the most important thing about Halloween 🐱



October

October is officially designated as Black Cat Awareness month. The month is meant to promote adoption of black cats who, sadly, have lower adoption rates than differently colored cats.

The murder of Jews at a Manchester synagogue is not a one-off.
It's part of the biggest surge in hatred of Jews since the Nazis.
No one should have to risk their lives to pray.

- Sacha Baron Cohen, October 2, 2025

StandWithUs

"Change happens by listening and then starting a dialogue with the people who are doing something you don't believe is right."
— Jane Goodall

WOMANHOOD IS NOT A COSTUME

"As they dragged me out, I called out to my girls: I'll be back. I had to believe that. But that was the last time I ever saw them. **I didn't know I should have said goodbye, forever.**"

Eli Sharabi
Former hostage who survived 491 days in captivity

AJC American Jewish Committee

Photograph by Michal Chelbin for TIME



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SPECIAL FEATURE

JEYASRUTHEE JEYAPALAN'S VOCAL ARANGETRAM (DEBUT)



Jeyasruthee Jeyapalan's Vocal Arangetram that took place 19th of July 2025 at Fairview Library Theatre was a magnificent performance that evoked us all to experience Carnatic excellence.

Sruthee my beloved niece had studied this art from the tender age of 4, beginning under the guidance of Smt. Vijayalakshmi Srinivasan. She further continued under the tutelage of her gurus Smt. Aathirai Sivapalan Roshan and Smt. Jeyarani Sivapalan for the past 12 years. Sruthee had shown a keen interest in our Tamil art forms learning Bharathanatyam and vocal Carnatic music too. We saw her dedication and immense

enthusiasm she had for our Tamil art forms with much encouragement from her parents and grandparents.

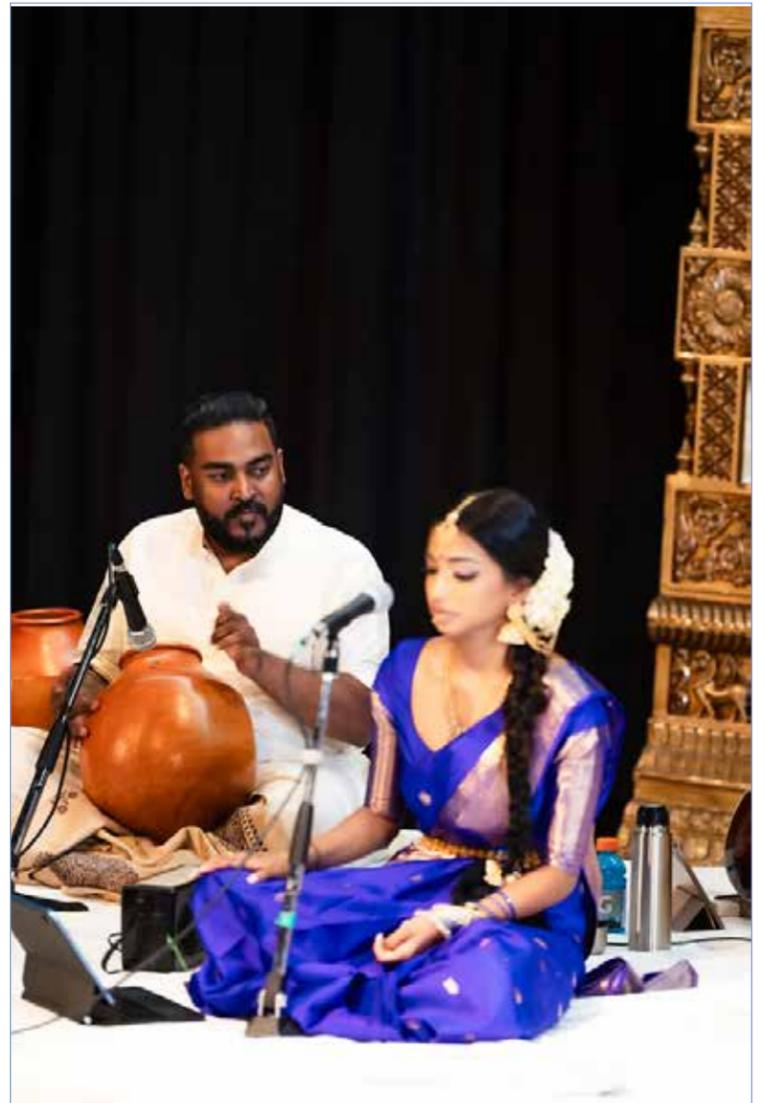
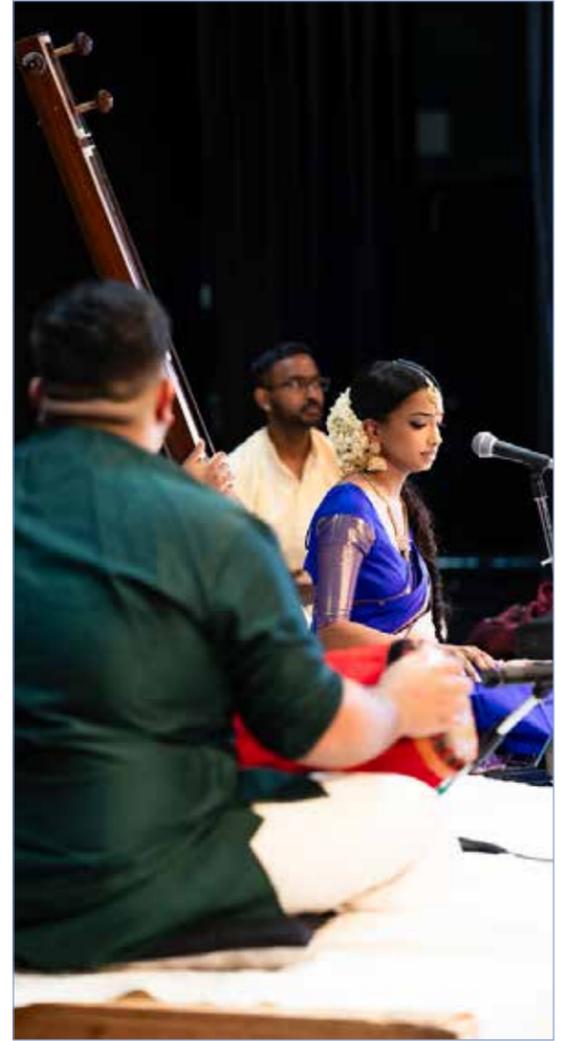
I was so honoured to be in attendance and was amazed by her melodic singing. All throughout the performance I was taken to experiencing an extravagant evening of most mesmerising singing. I was most captivated with Sruthee's crystal clear voice and entrancing ease she sang all the high frequency notes with such poise and stamina. I must also compliment her on the song choices which were very emotional and moving that it brought tears to my eyes with the sensational accompanying artists of such high

calibre. I was enthralled as was all the audiences who had clapped throughout her performances.

She had shown her vocal skills & techniques by singing so clear, crisp and with such high agility. I was most impressed with her ease she sang the high notes and long duration of songs throughout the performance without any falter. Her dedication and hard work was rewarded with an extravagant evening.

All the accompanying artistes at her debut, performed and excelled by exhibiting their mastery of skills, which made the overall performance an experience of a life-time for many of us. It is my pleasure to

SPECIAL FEATURE



thank them all wholeheartedly and especially her Gurus.

I have to also applaud Sruthee's parents and all the helpers for their meticulous

planning and execution of the event, with the entrance décor, stage décor, and

all the short eats and refreshments before and after the event. The event was well timed and executed too.

Carnatic music is a challenging art form that many learn and study for several years are not able to do an arangetram(debut).

Sruthee has indeed accomplished a great feat. We are so proud of her and wish her many successes in her life. Om Namah Shivaya.

Lavanya Poologasingam
(Chithi)



SPECIAL FEATURE

TAMILS' CHAMBER HOSTS 2ND ANNUAL ENTREPRENHER WORKSHOP



The Canadian Tamils' Chamber states that the 2nd Annual EntreprenHER Workshop, hosted by the Women's Committee of the Canadian Tamils' Chambers of Commerce (CTCC), that took place on Saturday, September 13, 2025 — and it was a tremendous success!

This year's workshop was designed to create a space where aspiring entrepreneurs could connect with experienced professionals to learn practical strategies for starting, managing, and growing a business.

Keynote Insights & Speakers

The following lineup of speakers provided participants with valuable, actionable, guidance:

- **Shayanika Suresh**, Founder & CEO of Shaya Law Professional Corporation – Shared the legal essentials of launching a business.
- **Sangeetha Punniyamoorthy**, Partner at DLA Piper – Spoke about protecting intellectual property and navigating copyright issues.
- **Jassie Dhanoa**, Senior Financial

Advisor at CIBC – Offered strategies for financial planning, loans, and grants.

- **Jamuna Jeyanthi Lankeswaran**, Associate Accountant at Jonathan Ruben Professional Corporation – Guided participants through tax considerations and bookkeeping practices for new and expanding businesses.

The workshop was met with enthusiastic support, and several attendees chose to join as new CTCC members, showing their commitment to growing alongside this vibrant community.

SheLeads Mentorship Program Launch

The Women's Committee was also proud to launch SheLeads, a mentorship program designed to connect women mentors and mentees, fostering guidance, knowledge-sharing, and networking opportunities.

Get Involved

Chamber further states that if

anyone is interested in being part of the SheLeads program—whether as a mentor or mentee, to contact one of the committee member.

Thank You & Looking Ahead

Chamber would like to extend its heartfelt thanks to all inspiring speakers, supportive partners, and all of the attendees who joined and contributed to making this event so impactful.

Chamber says, they are proud to see the Women's Committee continue to grow as a platform for empowerment, collaboration, and leadership. Looking ahead, remain committed to hosting events and workshops that uplift Tamil women entrepreneurs, providing them with the tools, knowledge, and networks needed to succeed.

Together, we are building a strong and inclusive Tamil business community that empowers both women and men to achieve success.

Stay tuned for our upcoming initiatives—we can't wait to see everyone at the next event!



IRON AGE FOUND IN INDIA

Kumar Punithavel

Humanity has made leaps and jumps in its development. Its development can be categorised into three early stages. The first being the stone age, which is essentially a prehistoric period during which stone tools with an edge, a point, or percussion surface were made. This period lasted for roughly from 3.4 million years and ended around 4000 BC, with the advent of metal. The Bronze age is an archaeological term defining a phase in the development of metallic culture among ancient societies in East Asia, west Europe. A civilization is considered to be part of the Bronze age if it either produced bronze by smelting its own copper and alloying it with tin, arsenic or other metals, or traded other items for bronze from producing areas elsewhere.

Tamil ancestry was the Sangam era literary works. Though it was of great standard and quality the ancestry was judged as 1300 BC.

The recent discoveries in Tamil Nadu archeological surveys have unearthed evidence which is much older than what was found in Turkey. Tamil Nadu discoveries by the archaeologists have unearthed six sites dating back to 2,953 – 3,345 BCE. The discoveries put the ancestry of the Tamil race was way much earlier. Previously The Sangam literature dated Tamilian ancestry about three centuries BC, very

much in par with the Mogul empire. from the rock. At the final stage the ironsmith will have to forge the metal into tools and implements. All these could not have happened in a savage undeveloped community. The Tamils had developed a well-developed written language, unlike some ancient languages which were spoken only.



Remains of an iron melting furnace at Kodumanal site



Unearthed tools and weapons

The iron age which is the most recent one was believed to have begun around Turkey around 1300 BC. But this has been proved wrong by a recent article I read published by BBC (1). Since independence of India, much of the archeological surveys and excavation were done in the north of Naramata River because of the wrong belief that humans migrated from north into India. Even during colonial times Indus River was considered as the gateway of the human race into India. Only in recent times archeological surveys had been done in Tamil Naadu. As an outcome from these one would wonder whether it was the cradle of human civilization. In the past the only tangible evidence about

much in par with the Mogul empire.

The recent findings from six locations had turned the face of the world towards Tamil Nadu as the beginning of the Iron age. The Tamil Nadu locations are, Adichanallur, Sivagalai, Mayiladumparai, Kilnamandi, Mangadu and Thelunganur. A professor of archaeology at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (ISSER) Prof Parth R Chauhan, is of the opinion that the Iron age might have developed simultaneously in different regions.

However, he also mentions that if the discovery is further validated through rigorous academic study, it certainly would rank amongst earliest.

During the Sangam era which is from 500 BC, to 200 A D, we have a store of literature. Prior to this Tholkapiam, a book of Tamil grammar, is dated as 500BC. Obviously, a vibrant society must have existed not only to have a well-developed language but also to document a grammar book for the language of the quality.

Producing iron products is a very complicated process. Initially it has to identify iron-bearing rocks, then to extract the metal it has to be smelted in a furnace at an extremely high temperature and extract the metal

It was observed in the article by the archaeologists K Rajan and R. Sivananthan that so far explored a fraction of over 3,000 identified Iron Age graves containing stone coffins (sarcophagi) and a wealth of iron artefacts. They have uncovered hoe-spades, spears, knives, arrowheads, chisels, axes and swords made of iron.

In the process, they have uncovered hoe-spades, spears, knives, arrowheads, chisels, axes and swords made of iron. At an excavated burial site, they had found over 85 iron objects inside and outside urns. Unlike copper and brass in the case of iron the temperature has to go very high temperatures and sophisticated advanced hearth was needed for melting.

In one of the excavated burials, over 85 iron objects were found inside and outside burial urns. More than 20 key samples were robustly dated in five labs worldwide, confirming their antiquity according to the article by BBC (1). What other confirmation is needed to determine the antiquity? Interestingly historian Osmund Bopearachchi of the Paris-based French National Centre for Scientific Research highlights that an iron sword from a burial site, was made of ultra-high-carbon steel and dating to 13th-15th Century BC.

We could confer the honour of finding iron age to the Tamilians lived in Tamil Nadu who produced iron as early as 1500 BC.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c62e36jm4jro> iron age



ACTIVITIES THAT ENRICH ONE'S MENTAL DIET

By: J A Rajah

All day, every hour, our inner 'voice' chatters away at us in a monologue in our minds. This 'discussion' can be positive or negative, and it greatly impacts our lives in ways we might not often think about. Psychologists call it 'self-talk'. It is something that we all do, and research has shown that it can have some interesting effects-for good or ill. We may tell ourselves, 'You can do this'. Or we may tell ourselves, 'You may have no options, no chance of success. You will fail'. Assuming defeat limits outcomes.

A. Self-Talk :

Athletes use self-talk to enhance their performance using mental exercises to program their minds and bodies to properly execute actions like serving a tennis ball, jumping hurdles, or performing a competitive dive. Olympic high jumpers engage in self talk to properly execute the jump and clear the bar. Some golfers engage in negative self talk, sabotaging their performance. It is a psychological effect that negates performance. The technique of positive self-talk will enhance an athletes performance, be it track, field, ski-slope or driving tower. Athletes use this technique to see themselves performing physical actions correctly and successfully performing their attempts. They tell themselves to keep the head down, keep arm straight, tuck and twist with knees locked, and much more.

B. The Importance of Proper Mind-set :

People must cultivate the proper mindset to accomplish great things. It should be done through one's power or effort or by some mental trick with proper mindset. Tamil proverb expresses the idea clearly as 'Ullathanayathu Uyarvu"- which means that a man's rise to greatness depends on his mind. We are what we think. Great athletes control not only their physical diet-what they eat-but

also their mental diet. They exercise their thoughts as well as their bodies. They train their minds as well as their muscles. In many ways religious institutions like the church, the temples and mosques serve as places where people spend their time adding to the diet of their minds., Some schools have assemblies where experienced teachers take turns to give talks about how to cultivate the minds and live victoriously. I can remember, at St. John's Jaffna we had a Tamil teacher called Subramaniam who was a n expert in giving talks that guide students to cultivate their mindsets in a remarkable manner. We always love to wait for his turn at the assembly. My dad who was also a former student at St. John's nicknamed him 'Kadavul' - which denotes that the students held him in high esteem.

C. Essentials of Proper Mind-set :

What we feed our minds and what we allow ourselves to consume are vital. Our mental diet consists of what we see, read and hear-and what we allow our own imagination to feed us through our self-talk. The television shows, the radio programs, the words of music we hear and what we read are our mental food. Soldiers require mental effort and discipline to control

their minds and exercise the right kind of thinking to achieve their objectives. St. Paul of the Bible gives the following advice to have a healthy mental diet. "Whatever, things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there is any virtue, and if there is anything praiseworthy- meditate on these things." Valluvar emphasizes the power of the mind to shape actions and influence destiny. He highlights the importance of controlling one's thoughts as they precede words and deeds. A mind free of negative thoughts like envy, is considered a great wealth. Valluvar clearly expresses this idea in the Kural:-

Theeyavai theyana

payathathaal

Theeyavai theyilum

anchappadum.

Since evil thoughts lead to evil actions, such actions are more dangerous than fire.

Furthermore, thoughts that control the mind is a form of penance even greater than physical austerities. Enriching your mental diet is the ideal way to lead a successful and happy life.



- www.warrioracademy.co.uk



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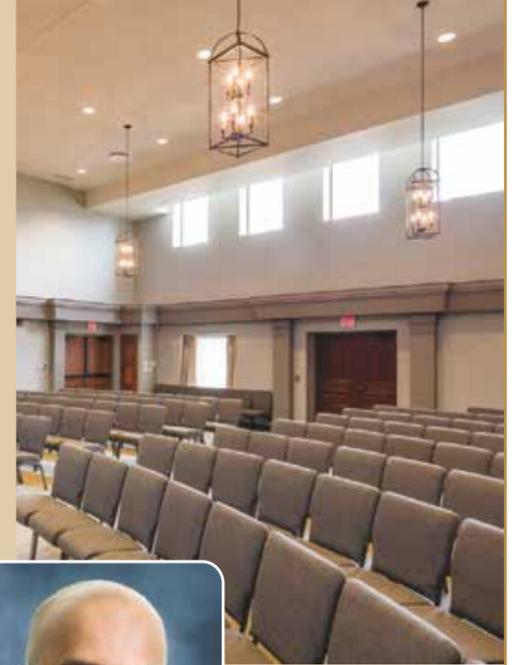
உங்கள் உறவொன்றை பிரிந்து தடுமாறும் வேளையில் இறுதி நிகழ்வுகள் பற்றிய கவலை உங்களுக்கு வேண்டாம். அனுபவத்துடன் கூடிய அன்பான சேவையை வழங்குகின்றோம்.

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THE CHAIN OF COMPASSION: HOW LOCAL UNITY PREVENTS GLOBAL CONFLICT



their family to break apart. Families would have a hostile relationship, causing their children's education to decrease and their health and money to decline, not to mention their slowly decreasing mental state, leading to depression. Meanwhile, if families lived in peace, children would study well, and their health and mental state would improve. Schools, in a way, are like a big family, and only if they are friendly with one another

By: Thulasi Thiruneelakandan
Grade 9 Student

I'm inspired by the quote: "Where there is no human connection, there is no compassion. Without compassion, then community, commitment, loving-kindness, human understanding, and peace all shrivel. Individuals become isolated, the isolated turn cruel, and the tragic hovers in the forms of domestic and civil violence. Art and literature are antidotes to that." This quote to me means that human connection and understanding are the keys to our community staying together as one, and without this connection, everyone would be living in constant hate and violence. Human connection is very important, as unity is what keeps people in touch. When



Thulasi Thiruneelakandan

people feel a connection to one another, they will care more for others and feel compassionate towards helping them. This compassion is what brings love and happiness into the world, fostering a bond that encourages everyone to be understanding towards one another.

For example, families need to live in harmony to survive and make important family decisions. If families didn't have harmony, they would always quarrel with each other about little things, causing



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can they run the school properly and ensure everything is on task. If not, the school wouldn't get along, and there would be many fights. Teachers also wouldn't know how to handle their students and co-workers, leading to fights about rules and events in the school. A good school environment is a place where the students can study, teachers and staff are all kind to everyone, and every student feels welcomed by their peers, and for this to happen, you need harmony to bond the kids and teachers together. Workplaces are also a place where harmony is necessary, and without it, businesses will often struggle to make significant work decisions, ultimately leading to indecision and, in the end, business failure. If a business is successful, that means that they work together with their co-workers to try to make the best decision for their company to prosper. If not, they wouldn't have any customers or money. If they worked together, they would get work done faster and make their business succeed, this means that they can keep for us. These are all little communities we see in our everyday life, but even a little community needs unity to live happily, and a country, or even the world, needs the same unity to survive.

We are all a community, and we must all spread kindness so everyone feels welcome and we have a strong bond with one another. When this bond is broken, people feel as if they don't have a connection with others, leading them to resent people in their community, whether it is a city, their family, school, or workplace. Sometimes they can build up so much anger that they resort to violence, causing mayhem and even more hate and fighting to spread around the world. We are all somehow connected. This means when people see fighting occur in one country for this cause, they will start resenting people in other countries, causing violence and spreading it around the world, breaking

the bond and importance of human connection. One of the main reasons that wars tend to break out between two or more countries or communities is because of the past hate that has developed between these countries and from their bond breaking from betrayal, unfairness, or other causes. When these countries fight, other nations will side with one another causing wars and fights to occur all over the world. When war breaks out across the globe, many people die from violence, and many people have to run and hide from others whom they once called family. If people just decided to live peacefully with one another, we would be able to cheerfully talk with people in our neighbourhood and city and ask for help when we need it. The world would be a better place without wars.

According to this quote, art and literature are antidotes to all this violence. Art and literature, including music and dancing, are beautiful creations of the world. Their intricate and beautiful patterns and styles are mesmerizing, and many people come together to view these amazing pieces of art and literature. In my opinion, this quote displays the idea that art and literature can bring people together, and that by learning about the different art pieces and literature, we can expand our knowledge about the variety of cultures around the world, and we will experience a sense of connection with other people. This will help people stop showing violence towards other people so that everyone in the world can unite and show kindness towards one another, using the power of art and literature to relax and help people enjoy other people's cultures.

I believe that this is an inspiring quote that brings all people together using the power of art and literature. I have connected to this quote because I love art and literature. When people are looking at art or reading literature, or even

making it themselves, I have noticed that they are more relaxed, and they share their thoughts and feelings with their peers, making it feel as if all these people who are of different cultures and religions are uniting together to look at the beautiful pieces of art and literature. I felt very inspired when I read this quote, and I realized that peace around the world is a significant and beautiful creation, like art, dance, music, and books, which are unique ways to prevent the world from starting wars and destruction with all other countries. When reading this quote, it opened a new prospect for me, and I've realized that every community is important, from families to continents, and no matter how big or small these communities are, without the unity or bond they need to understand and connect, we wouldn't be living peacefully in our neighbourhoods today. After seeing how the author describes art and literature as the antidotes to violence, I wonder if other creations bring the world together in the same way as art and literature do. I personally enjoy the phrasing of this quote, as I think the metaphors, such as "Art and literature are antidotes to that," make the quote more entertaining and inspirational to read. I felt relieved and happy that something I love might have such power, as I considered the potential for literature and the arts to end war and bring about world peace. I realized that the world really would be "shrivelled" if there was so much violence, and there would be lots of problems besides the fact that there are wars, such as deaths, fewer resources, and most of all, depression, anger, and fright. Overall, I found this to be a very inspirational phrase, and I have made the decision to keep it in mind since literature and the arts are genuinely wonderful creations, and I think it is incredible that they can transform a community simply by their appearance.

RICHMOND HILL REMINDS YOU TO RIDE E-BIKES AND E-SCOOTERS SAFELY

City Approves New Micromobility Strategy and Micromobility By-law

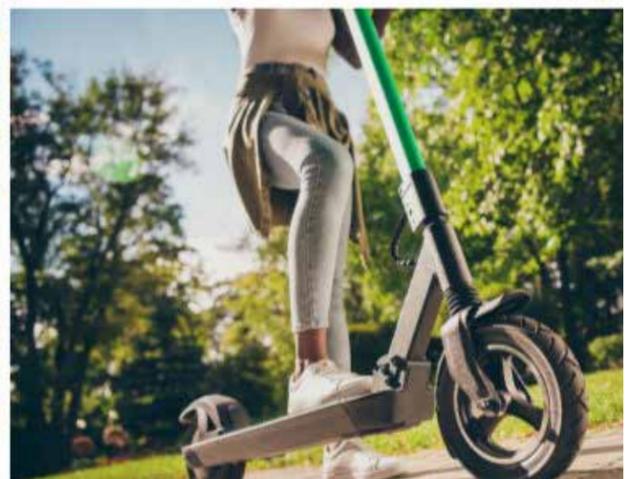
Richmond Hill Council approved the City's Micromobility Strategy to regulate the use of micromobility devices, such as e-bikes and e-scooters. The strategy includes the new Active Transportation and Micromobility By-law that will help enhance connectivity and improve active transportation experiences in Richmond Hill.

Richmond Hill's Micromobility Strategy includes permitting e-scooters on City roads and cycling facilities, such as bicycle lanes, cycle tracks, and multi-use paths, introducing rules and regulations for the use of micromobility devices, promoting compliance through public education and enforcement and exploring shared micromobility opportunities in future.

With the new Micromobility By-law, e-scooters are now allowed on roads with a speed limit of 50 km/h or less and on cycling facilities, such as bicycle lanes, cycle tracks, and multi-use paths. E-bikes and e-scooters are not allowed on sidewalks, with the exception of cyclists (riding traditional bicycles) 14 years and under.

The City's Micromobility Strategy regulates the use of micromobility devices while considering road safety, community mobility needs and preferences, accessibility and provincial requirements.

For a detailed list of permitted devices and regulations, visit [RichmondHill.ca/Micromobility](https://richmondhill.ca/Micromobility).



QUICK FACTS

- Micromobility means small, lightweight vehicles people can use to get around, usually electric. In Ontario, the most common types are electric bikes (e-bikes) and stand-up electric scooters (e-scooters).
- Micromobility can help reduce traffic, make it easier to connect to transit, support climate goals, and more.
- In Richmond Hill, mobility device users such as wheelchairs and mobility scooters are treated as pedestrians and allowed on sidewalks

QUOTE

“Getting around on an e-bike or e-scooter is now a visible and routine part of daily travel in Richmond Hill. Riding an e-bike or e-scooter is not only sustainable for the environment but also allows riders to take in the beauty of our connected city and can be a fun activity to keep active! As the technology continues to improve, we anticipate the number of riders to increase. And so, it is even more important that we focus on the safety of riders and pedestrians whether they ride, walk or jog along our trails, sidewalks and roads.”

– Mayor David West



ONTARIO HONDA DEALERS INDY MOVES TO CITY OF MARKHAM UNDER A MULTI-YEAR AGREEMENT

Green Savoree Toronto ULC, the City of Markham and INDYCAR announced today that the Ontario Honda Dealers Indy will have a new home in 2026 under a multi-year agreement. Led by the organizer and promoter Green Savoree Toronto ULC, the NTT INDYCAR SERIES will race on an exciting new street circuit built in the City of Markham on August 14-16, 2026.

Markham, Ontario is adjacent to Toronto's northeastern municipal boundary and in York Region, which is experiencing significant growth at a population of already more than 1.25 million residents. The race will be held in Markham Centre, the city's dynamic downtown core, and home to many Canadian corporate headquarters, the York University Markham Campus, and the acclaimed Markham Pan Am Centre — a key venue during the 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Am Games.

"We are excited to welcome the exhilarating experience of INDYCAR SERIES racing hitting our streets in 2026," said Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti. "We are proud to welcome this world-class event to our community. I want to thank Green Savoree Toronto, Penske Entertainment Corp., NTT INDYCAR SERIES, the Ontario Honda Dealers Association and the Province of Ontario for their trust in our city. Markham is ready to build on its strong sports legacy and offer a new home where this celebrated summer tradition can thrive. I am extremely proud of our team at the City of Markham for bringing this initiative across the finish line in just a matter of months."

With excellent regional access via two major 400-series highways, Unionville GO Station, and the VIVA Rapid Transit system, the new Markham circuit is ideally situated to welcome fans from across Southern Ontario and beyond. Ontario Honda Dealers Indy at Markham will be the largest sports and cultural celebration in York Region's history. The event is expected to draw more than 140,000 attendees over the three-day weekend and generate tens of millions in economic activity through sport tourism, hospitality and event services.

"The Indy is one of North America's premier motorsport events and has been a cornerstone of Ontario's events calendar for nearly forty years," said Neil Lumsden, Minister of Sport. "Sport tourism is a major economic driver for our province, and I am thrilled that this iconic event will continue to call Ontario home; thank you to the City of Markham for opening your doors to help start this new chapter. This event will continue to drive tourism, boost our economy, and strengthen Ontario's reputation as a premier destination for world-class sporting events." The temporary track will be built in the eastern precinct of



Markham's downtown, between Kennedy Road, Enterprise Boulevard, Unionville GO tracks and Highway 407. Renowned track designer Tony Cotman of NZR Consulting has led the design process of the temporary circuit which features a 12-turn, 3.52-kilometre (2.19-mile) layout including a double-sided pit lane, thrilling straightaways and technically challenging sectors. The City of Markham has begun early works on the track and festival site in coordination with Metrolinx and other area partners.

"Green Savoree Toronto is announcing today a multi-year agreement with the City of Markham to be the new home of this Ontario motorsports tradition. We look forward to a long and successful partnership with Mayor Frank Scarpitti, his team at the City of Markham and INDYCAR," said Jeff Atkinson, president of the Ontario Honda Dealers Indy at Markham. "The inaugural Ontario Honda Dealers Indy at Markham will build on the legacy of this great Ontario event which started in 1986. We look forward to welcoming all our fans, the drivers and race teams out to this terrific new venue in Markham Centre next August."

The NTT INDYCAR SERIES is North America's premier open-wheel racing competition, featuring stars from across the globe competing at speeds faster than 370 kph (230 mph). Along with hosting the world-famous Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge, the series boasts a mix of oval, temporary street circuit and permanent road course races across North America. The NTT INDYCAR SERIES is sanctioned by INDYCAR, the governing body for North America's premier open-wheel racing series and part of the Penske Entertainment family.

"We could not be more pleased to see the rich history of NTT INDYCAR SERIES racing continue in Ontario," Penske Entertainment President and CEO Mark Miles said. "Markham is a growing, diverse and dynamic city and will provide a terrific showcase for our exhilarating wheel-to-wheel racing. I would like to thank Mayor Frank Scarpitti for this thrilling new partnership and Jeff Atkinson and the team at Green Savoree Toronto for their leadership. It is crucial for INDYCAR to continue to reach our

fans in Canada and we simply cannot wait for this new chapter to begin next year."

Ongoing event updates and ticket pricing when available will be available at hondaindy.com.

Additional Quotes

"When Markham was presented to the dealer group by Jeff (Atkinson) and the Green Savoree Toronto team as the race's new home, the response from the Ontario Honda Dealers was overwhelmingly positive to renew as title sponsor. We look forward to continuing to participate in the growth of this motorsports tradition and bringing Your Ontario Honda Dealers Present Free Fan Friday now to Markham!"

- Chris Gauthier,
President of the Ontario Honda Dealers Association

"Markham was my first home and where my racing dreams took root. So, it's extra special to know the NTT INDYCAR SERIES will be there starting with the 2026 season. Ontario has some incredibly passionate open-wheel racing fans and I can't wait to see them lining the streets for an epic event."

- James Hinchcliffe,
FOX Sports commentator,
former INDYCAR driver and Markham native

About Markham:

Markham, an award-winning municipality with over 370,000 residents and the largest of nine communities in York Region, is home to over 650 corporate head offices and more than 1,500 high tech and life science companies. Markham is a leader in attracting foreign direct investment with more than 234 foreign companies located in the City. Founded in the 1790s, today Markham is Canada's most diverse community and enjoys a rich heritage, outstanding community planning and services, and a vibrant local economy.

Stay Connected:

Visit our Newsroom or subscribe to MarkhamNOW for the latest information on City programs, services and events



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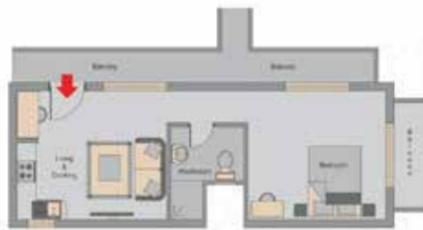


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COMMUNITY WATCH



Durham Tamils Association Celebrating 25 Years Of Serving Our Tamil Community

The Durham Tamil Association has proudly served the community for 25 years and remains dedicated to supporting our members, youth, and seniors. We continue to offer a variety of activities almost every day, providing something for everyone, from children to seniors. This milestone would not have been possible without our amazing volunteers, who selflessly give their time and energy to serve the community. DTA is truly grateful for your ongoing support. Additionally, the DTA Tamil School continues its mission by offering Tamil language classes to our students, fostering a connection to our cultural heritage for the next generation.

HOPE FOR HOMELAND GALA NIGHT

The Durham Tamil Association (DTA) is pleased to announce its upcoming Fundraising Gala Night – Hope for Homeland, an initiative dedicated to supporting community projects and the entrepreneurial needs of families in the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka. This special evening will feature live entertainment, dancing, and a gourmet buffet dinner, bringing together community members, friends, and supporters for a noble cause.

Event Details

- **Date:** Saturday, October 11, 2025
- **Time:** 5:00 PM
- **Venue:** Pickering Event Centre (Banquet Hall)

1755 Pickering Parkway, Unit C4, Pickering, Ontario L1V 6K5

Tickets

- Regular Admission: \$75
- VIP Admission: \$100

Tickets may be purchased through the DTA website <https://www.durhamtamils.org/gala-night-2025.html> or by calling 905-428-7007.

Payments can also be made via -Transfer to dtafinancecommittee@gmail.com.

Please indicate your name and “Gala Night” in the message field.

Sponsorship Opportunities

We invite businesses and individuals to partner with us through sponsorships:

- **Table Sponsor: \$1,000**
- **Presenting Sponsor: \$2,500**
- **Annual Sponsor: \$5,000**

For sponsorship inquiries, please contact 905-428-7007. This is an excellent opportunity to support a meaningful cause while gaining visibility within the community.

We look forward to your presence at the Hope for Homeland Gala Night and thank you for your continued support. Together, we can make a lasting impact.



Durham Tamil Association

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(3 months fees must be paid in advance)

📞 905 -428 - 7007

Register online:
www.durhamtamils.org

DTA'S HOMELAND PROJECTS

DTA's Homeland Projects DTA is proud to announce that we have completed over 100 homeland projects as of June 30, 2025. 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.

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.

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Contact Number:

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

For More Information Visit Our Website:

dtaseniorsinhomesupport.ca

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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

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- Volunteer Travel Expense \$0.58/km
- Join us to make a positive impact on seniors lives while gaining valuable skills and experiences.

Contact US

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Volunteers Needed!

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

Volunteer Gala : Twice a Year!

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

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COMMUNITY WATCH



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.

DTA'S TAMIL SCHOOL REGISTRATION OPEN

Please see the flyer below for complete details regarding Tamil school registration, including important dates, registration process, and contact information.

Durham Tamil Association TAMIL CLASS

<p>Durham Tamil Association offers Tamil classes for children and adults who are interested in learning the language in an innovative and effective way.</p>	<p>Tamil Class Registration for the 2025-2026 School Year is Now Open! Available in Two Locations: Ajax and Oshawa</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JK & SK • Grade 1-8 • Grade 9-12 (Credit Course) <p>REGISTER ONLINE: durhamtamils.org</p>	<p>புதுமைபுரை மற்றும் பசுரூரை வகையில் சென்றிசைக்க கற்க ஆர்வமுள்ள குழந்தைகள் மற்றும் பெரியவர்களுக்கு குறும் தமிழ் ஒன்றியம் தமிழ் வகுப்புகளை வழங்குகிறது.</p>

YOUNG LEARNERS
Kindergarten to Grade 8 students can register for Tamil classes here

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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

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Website: durhamtamils.org | Location: DTA Center 66 Harwood Ave S Ajax | Phone: 905-428-7007

DTA SENIOR'S JULY MONTHLY MEETING

DTA Senior's June monthly meeting will be held on Sunday Aug 31, 2025 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.

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.

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City of Brampton partners with Jays Care Foundation to host baseball skill development workshops for youth

Free workshops aim to keep Brampton youth active and engaged through sport



Young athletes in Brampton sharpened their baseball skills with former Blue Jays pitcher Ricky Romero at Baseball Day in Brampton. *Credit: City of Brampton*

Today, in partnership with Jays Care Foundation and the Blue Jays Baseball Academy, the City of Brampton hosted free baseball skill development workshops designed to inspire and empower youth in Brampton.

Approximately 200 children and youth aged five to 16 had a chance to hone their baseball skills, learning core moves including hitting, throwing and catching, while also building teamwork skills, confidence and resilience. The event featured a special appearance from former Toronto Blue Jays pitcher Ricky Romero, as well as games, a live DJ and local food vendors.

Each participant received a complimentary baseball glove and other giveaways, made possible through the Mayor's Sports Fund. The Fund, supported by proceeds from Brampton's annual Charity Golf Tournament, raised more than \$300,000 this year. These funds help provide free equipment for workshop participants and expand opportunities for Brampton youth to stay active.

Brampton is home to more than 153,000 youth, making it one of Canada's youngest cities. This partnership underscores the City's commitment to helping young people stay healthy and active by creating opportunities to learn from professionals and take part in sport at the grassroots level.

For more information about the recreation opportunities for youth in Brampton, visit brampton.ca/registerforprograms

Baseball in Brampton Highlights

- 90 baseball diamonds across the city, including lit, tournament-ready fields.

- "Field of Dreams" at Terry Miller Recreation Centre offers an upgraded, fully accessible baseball diamond, developed in partnership with Peel District School Board and Jays Care Foundation.

- The City offers Batting Cages at Brampton Fairgrounds and Flower City Community Campus.

- Recreation offers baseball summer camp and skills and drills programs, welcoming over 500 youth participants.

- Home to the Brampton Minor Baseball Inc., one of Ontario's largest organized baseball leagues.

- In 2024, approximately 37,537 hours of field time were booked across 107 bookings, 90 tournaments, 58 seasonal groups and two affiliated youth groups.

Quotes

"Brampton is proud to partner with Jays Care Foundation and welcome Ricky Romero to our city for this one-of-a-kind opportunity. These workshops are about more than just baseball; they're about building healthy habits, confidence and community. This event reflects our ongoing commitment to keeping youth active and inspired. We're also proud to provide baseball gloves and other giveaways through the Mayor's Sports Fund, which raised over \$300,000 this year at my annual golf tournament in support of local charities."

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



Former Blue Jays pitcher Ricky Romero signs autographs for workshop participants at Baseball Day in Brampton.

Credit: City of Brampton

"Jays Care Foundation is dedicated to creating opportunities for children and youth to thrive through sport. We're excited to partner with the City of Brampton to deliver these clinics and help young athletes build important life skills that extend far beyond the diamond."

- **Peter King**,

Executive Director, Jays Care Foundation

About Brampton:

As one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada, Brampton is home to nearly 800,000 people and more than 110,000 businesses. People are at the heart of everything we do. We are energized by our diverse communities, we attract investment and we are embarking on a journey to lead technological and environmental innovation. We partner for progress to build a healthy city that is safe, sustainable and successful. Connect with us on X, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. Learn more at www.brampton.ca



Lakeview Innovation District

Creating a complete community

The Innovation District is part of the 177-acre Lakeview Village, an ambitious, historic reimagining of the former coal burning Lakeview Generating Station. Specifically, the plans for the District are to leverage the site's rich historic legacy and bolster local industry strengths by:

- Supporting a mix of flexible office, institutional, educational and innovation uses
- Accommodating over 1.5 million sq. ft. of employment space across 12 to 14 buildings
- Creating up to 9,000 highly-skilled jobs in research and the development of innovative solutions

Industry focus

Information and Communications Technology – companies involved in computing, broadcasting activities, telecommunications and related professional and support services.

Clean Technology – any process,



product, or service that reduces environmental impacts through environmental protection activities and resource management activities that result in a more efficient use of natural resources.

Life Sciences – the study of all living organisms. These companies use technology to deliver commercially-viable products and services and those that directly support these activities along the entire commercial value chain.

The Innovation District will ensure that Lakeview Village is a genuine complete community that balances employment and population through the creation of high quality, knowledge-intensive jobs.

Expanding Mississauga's innovation ecosystem

The creation of the Innovation District will be an opportunity to expand Mississauga's entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem within its innovation identity - IDEA Mississauga. Leveraging the Lakeview Innovation District will position Mississauga as a global leader in scaling and commercialization, and to become a centre of excellence for entrepreneurship and innovation within the region.

The vision to develop the Innovation District into an innovation campus translates to a development opportunity of employment space comprising primarily of office, flex-office, and lab uses. Under current conditions there is a development gap in the Lakeview market for the type of uses envisioned for the site and therefore intervention is required to achieve the vision. To address this, Council directed to staff prepare a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the Innovation District.

A CIP is a tool under section 28 of the Planning Act that enables the City to provide time-limited incentives to encourage and direct development without contravening the Municipal Act's bonusing rules. The establishment of a CIP will allow the City to provide financial and non-financial incentive tools, for a set length of time, to encourage desired development and facilitate partnerships.





SPECIAL FEATURE

BRAHMA TEMPLE IN PUSHKAR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA

Compiled by Kidambi Raj

INTRODUCTION

Brahma Temple, Pushkar (also known as **Jagatpita Brahma Mandir**) is a Hindu Temple located near the Pushkar Lake in Ajmer district of Rajasthan, It is one of the most visited Brahma Temples in India. This is one of the very few existing temples dedicated to the Hindu Creator-God, Brahma in India and remain the most prominent among them. This temple is described in the scriptures as the only Brahma temple in the world, as a result of the curse of **Savitri** (Saraswati), and as the **King of the sacred places for the Hindus**.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THIS TEMPLE

Pushkar is said to have over 500 temples (80 are large and reminder small). Of these many are ancient ones that were destroyed or desecrated by Muslim depredations, during **Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's** rule (1658-1707) and were rebuilt subsequently. The most important of Pushkar's temples is the **Brahma temple**, which dates back to the 14th century. The temple is said to have been built by the **Sage Viswamitra** after Lord Brahma's Yagna (ritual). It is also believed that Lord Brahma Himself chose the location for this temple. The 8th century Saint and philosopher, **Sri Adi Sankara** renovated this temple, and repairs, though the original design was retained.

Although, the Pushkar temple is no longer the only temple to Lord Brahma, it is still one of very few existing temples dedicated to Lord Brahma in India and is the most prominent among them. In an article in the **International Business Times**, Pushkar Lake and the Brahma temple were identified as one of the ten most religious sites in the world and noted this, as one of the five sacred pilgrimage places for Hindus in India.

ARCHITECTURE

The temple structure dates back to the 14th century CE, with later partial rebuilding. The temple is made of marble and stone slabs. It has a distinct red **Shikhara** (pinnacle) and a **Hamsa** (Swan) bird motif. The temple sanctum sanctorum holds the image of **four-headed Brahma** and **His Consort Gayatri** (goddess of Vedas). The temple, which is set on a high plinth, is approached through a number of marble steps leading to an entrance gate archway decorated with pillared canopies. The entry from the gate leads to a pillared outdoor hall (mandapa) and then the sanctum sanctorum (Garbhagriha). The temple is built with stone slabs and blocks joined together with molten lead. The red Shikhara (spire) of the temple and symbol of a Hamsa (a swan) – the mount of Brahma – are distinctive features of this temple. The shikara is about 70 ft. in height. The Hamsa motif decorates the main entry gate. The marble floor (in black and white checks) and walls inside the temple have been inlaid with hundreds of silver coins by devotees (with their names inscribed), as a mark of their offering to Lord Brahma. There is a **silver turtle** in the mandap that is dis-

played on the floor of the temple facing the Garbhagriha, which is also built, in marble. The marble floor has been replaced from time to time

Brahma's main icon (murti) is made of marble and was deified (made a God of) in the garbhagriha in 718 CE by Adi Sankara. The icon depicts Lord Brahma seated in a crossed leg position in the aspect of creation of the universe (**the Vishwakarma form**). The central image is called the **chaumurti** (four-faced idol). It is of life size with four hands and four faces, each oriented in a cardinal direction. The four arms hold the **akshamala** (rosary), the **pusthaka** (book), the **kurka** (kusha grass) and the **kamandala** (water pot). Lord Brahma is riding on His mount, the Hamsa. The four symbols held by Lord Brahma in His arms (the rosary, the book, the sacrificial implement kusha grass and the kamandala, represent time, the causal waters from which the universe emerged, knowledge, and the system of sacrifices to be adopted for sustenance of various life forms in the universe. Gayatri's image sits along with Brahma's in centre to His left. Saraswati sits to the right of Brahma, along with other deities of the Hindu pantheon. Images of the peacock, Saraswati's mount, also decorate the temple walls. Images of the preserver, Lord Vishnu, life-sized dwarpalakas (gate-keepers) and a gilded Garuda (Eagle-man, the mount of Lord Vishnu) are also seen in the temple. The temple is governed by the Sanyasis (ascetic) sect priesthood.

LEGEND

According to the Hindu scripture **Padma Purana**, Brahma saw the demon **Vajranabha** (Vajranash in another version) trying to kill his children and harassing people. He immediately slayed the demon with His weapon, the **lotus-flower**. In the process, the lotus petals fell on the ground at three places, creating three lakes: the Pushkar Lake or **Jyeshtha Pushkar** (greatest or first Pushkar) Lake, the **Madhya Pushkar** (middle Pushkar) Lake and **Kanishtha Pushkar** (lowest or youngest Pushkar) lake.

Lord Brahma then decided to perform a yagna (fire-sacrifice) at the main Pushkar Lake. To perform His Yajna peacefully without being attacked by the demons, He created the Hills around Pushkar: **Ratnagiri** in the south, **Nilgiri** in the north, **Sanchoora** in the west and **Suryagiri** in the east and positioned the gods there to protect the yajna performance. However, while performing the yajna, His wife Savitri (Saraswati) could not be present at the designated time to perform the essential part of the Yajna as She was waiting for Her companions, **Godessess Lakshmi, Parvati and Indrani**. So, Lord Brahma married **Abhira girl, Gayatri** and completed the yajna with His new Consort sitting beside Him, holding the pot of amrita (elixir of life) on her head and giving **aahuti** (offering to the sacrificial fire).



- Brahma Temple Pushkar.



- Asotra Brahma Temple Barmer Rajasthan



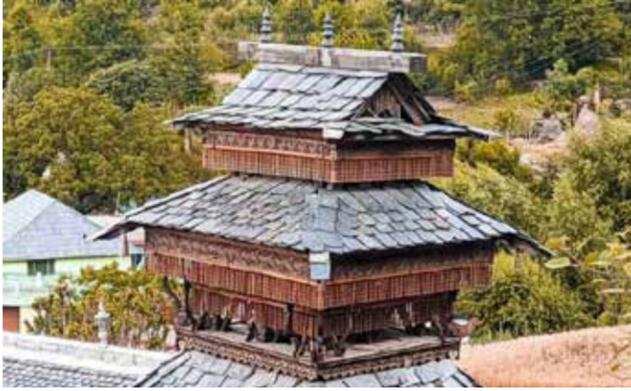
- Brahma Karmali Mandir Panaji Goa

When Savitri finally arrived at the venue, she found Gayatri sitting next to Brahma which was her rightful place. Agitated, she cursed Brahma, that he would never be worshipped, but then reduced the curse, permitting His worship in Pushkar. Savitri also cursed Indra to be easily defeated in battle, Vishnu to suffer the separation from His wife, as a human, the fire-god Agni who was offered the yajna to be all-devouring and the priests officiating in the yajna to be poor.

Today, there are two hills on opposite ends of Pushkar, each with a temple on top. The higher hill is dedicated to Savitri and the smaller one to Gayatri. In Pushkar, they believe that Savitri is still sitting in her shrine, feeling enraged, while Gayatri cowers in fear on the other side of the lake. Whether or not one believes this, it is very pleasant to walk up to the top of either hills in the morning to watch the sunrise over the lovely lake.

Endowed by the powers of yajna, Gayatri diluted Savitri's curse, blessing Pushkar to be the king of pilgrimages, Indra would always retain his heaven, Vishnu would be born as the human Rama and finally unite with His consort and the priests would become scholars and be venerat-

SPECIAL FEATURE



- Adi Brahma Temple Khokhan Himachal Pradesh



- Brahma Temple Kumbakonam Tamil Nadu

ed. Thus, the Pushkar Temple is regarded as the only temple dedicated to Brahma. Savitri thereafter, moved into *Ratnagiri hill* and became part of it by emerging as a spring known as *Savitri Jharna* (stream), a temple in her honour exists here.

Another legend, account for the strange fact that the creator god gets so little real estate. Some of them refer to an incident in which Brahma lied about an accomplishment. He was trying to find the head of a pillar of light, and Vishnu was trying to find the foot. They both grew tired and gave up, but while Vishnu admitted His defeat, Brahma lied. He brought back a flower as evidence of reaching the top, but His lie was discovered by Siva, who cursed Brahma that he would have no temple dedicated to his worship as he was undeserving.

In another story, Brahma created a beautiful female deity, known as *Shatapura*, and immediately became infatuated with her. However, Siva decided this was wrong and punished Brahma by directing that no one on Earth should worship him.

WORSHIP AT PUSHKAR BRAHMA TEMPLE

The temple is visited by pilgrims and by holy men and sages, after taking a ceremonial bath in the Pushkar Lake. It is also a practice, that a visit to Brahma temple is followed by worshipping His Consort, Gayatri, and then visiting other temples. The temple is open for worship from 6:30 am to 8:30 pm during winter and from 6:00 am to 9:00 pm during summer, with an interval in the afternoon between 1:30 pm and 3:00 pm, when the temple will remain closed. *Sandhya aarti* in the evening about 40 minutes after sunset and *Ratri Shayan aarti* (night-sleep aarti) about 5 hours past sunset and *Mangala aarti* in the morning about 2 hours before sunrise.

The priests at the Brahma temple adhere to a strict pattern of religious practices. Hose-holders (married men) are not allowed to enter the sanctum sanctorum to worship the deity, as only ascetics (sanyasis) can do this. Hence, all offerings by pilgrims are given from outer hall of the temple, through a priest who is a sanyasi. The priests of the temple, in general in Pushkar belong to the *Parashar Gotra* (lineage).

Once a year, on Kartik Poornima, the full moon night of the Hindu lunar month of Kartik (Oct –Nov.), a religious festival is held in Lord Brahma's honour. Thousands of pilgrims come to bathe in the Holy Pushkar Lake adjacent to the temple. Various rites are also held at the temple during the fair. The day also marks the famous *Pushkar Camel Fair*, held nearby. Special rites are performed on all *Poornimas* (the full moon days) and *Amavasyas* (new moon days).

OTHER TEMPLES FOR LORD BRAHMA IN INDIA

- **Brahma Temple, Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu:**

It is believed that Brahma was proud of His gift of creation to the extent that He boasted of being better than Lord Siva and Lord Vishnu at the art of creation. This caused Lord Vishnu to create a ghost who went on to scare Brahma. Terrified, he came to Vishnu for help, after having apologized for his immodesty. Vishnu then asked Brahma to observe penance on Earth to redeem himself. It is believed that Brahma chose **Kumbakonam** to meditate. Pleased by Brahma's attempts. Vishnu accepted his apology and reinstated his knowledge and status among the Gods.

- **Brahmapureeswarar Temple, Thirupattur, Tamil Nadu:**

Legend has it that Siva's Consort Parvati, once mistook Brahma to Siva. This angered Siva and he cut off one of Brahma's head and cursed him to be forgotten by his worshippers and stripped him of all his powers. Soon, the pride in Brahma crumbled and he pleaded for forgiveness. However, the angered Siva wasn't ready to accept his apology. To mend everything he had done wrong, Brahma set on a pilgrimage. On his journey, he reached Thirupattur, where he installed 12 Siva Lingas and worshipped Siva there. Moved by his attempts to redeem himself, Siva appeared in front of Brahma, relieved him of the curse and restored all his powers. Siva then blessed Brahma and granted him a shrine at the temple. Since then, Brahma has been the deity of this temple.

- **Asotra Brahma Temple, Barmer, Rajasthan:**

The Asotra temple is located in the Barmer district in Rajasthan, It is yet another temple that is primarily dedicated to Brahma. It was established by the Rajpurohiths of the village and is built with Jaisalmer and Jodhpur stone. However, the idol of the deity is made of marble.

- **Adi Brahma Temple, Khokhan, Kullu Valley:**

The Adi Brahma Temple is located in the Khokhan area of the Kullu valley. Legend has it that, the temple was worshipped by people from both the *Mandi* and *Kulu* districts. However, as the two kingdoms split, there was a replica built on the other side, at Mandi and devotees had to stick to visiting the temple that belonged within the boundaries of the kingdom.

- **Brahma Karmali Mandir, Panaji, Goa:**

Brahma Karmali temple is located around 7 km. from *Valpoi* and around 60 km. from *Panaji*. Though the temple is not as old, it is believed that the idol dates roughly back to the 11th century. It is definitely the only temple in Goa, dedicated to Brahma. It is said that the black stone statue of Brahma in the temple was brought to *Carambolim*, Goa, only in the 20th century, by a large section of devotees who

escaped the religious intolerance imposed upon them by the Portuguese.

TEMPLE FOR LORD BRAHMA IN BAGKOK, THAILAND

The Erawan Shrine in *Bangkok, Thailand*, is known in *Thai* as *Saan Phra Phrom* or *Saan Thao Maha Phrom*, may be small, but its legacy is big. The tourists love the traditional dance performances often seen there. Locals stop on their way to work to pray or give thanks for blessings. Unlike temples that require more time to visit, the **Erawan Shrine** is located on one of the busiest sidewalks in Bangkok. The sweet smells of flower garlands and burning joss sticks permeate the air.

The statue of Phra Phram, the Thai interpretation of the Hindu God, Brahma, isn't even very old. The original shrine was vandalized beyond repair in 2006 and quickly replaced. Regardless, the Erawan Shrine continues to be popular with Hindus, Buddhists and the Sikh community in Bangkok.



- Erwann Brahma Temple in Bangkok



- Erawan Temple, Bangkok

The History of he Erawan Shrine: An old animist custom in Thailand, spirit houses are erected next to buildings to appease spirits potentially displaced by the construction. The larger the construction, the more extravagant a spirit house should be. Erawan Shrine, began as the large spirit house for the state owned Erawan Hotel built in 1956. The Erawan Hotel was later replaced by the privately owned **Grand Hyatt Erawan Hotel** in 1987. According to the lore, construction of the Erawan Hotel was plagued with mishaps, injuries and even deaths. Professional astrologers determined that the hotel was not constructed in an auspicious way. A Statue of Brahma, the Hindu God of Creation, was needed to make things right. It worked; the Erawan Hotel later prospered.

A shrine to Brahma was placed outside the hotel on November 9, 1956 and it has evolved in beauty and function over the years. Even with humble origins as a troubled hotel's spirit house, the Erawan Shrine has become one of the most visited shrine in the city!

As for the namesake, *Erawan* is the *Thai* name for *Airavata*, the three-headed elephant that Brahma is said to have ridden.



OLD FRIENDS, NEW MEMORIES, SAME BLACK AND GOLD SPIRIT

**Homecoming 2025 celebrated community,
old friendships and the return of a beloved event**

By Meg Vander Woude, *Office of Advancement*



The University of Waterloo community showed off its school spirit on Saturday, September 20, as alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends gathered for Homecoming 2025.

The day kicked off with the return of a beloved event: the Faculty of Health Fun Run. Participants ran, walked and danced their way around Ring Road for the first time in more than five years.

Those looking for a more serene experience gathered in the Field House for yoga and facility tours, hosted by Athletics and Recreation. Others joined an outdoor spin class.

Before the football game, fans

enjoyed a parking lot party featuring live music, games, food truck fare and a chance to reconnect with old friends. Staff from Waterloo's Special Collections and Archives joined the party with a historical display, featuring memorabilia and photos that sparked fond memories from alumni of all ages. Guests were invited to share what they love about Waterloo in an interactive display that showcased diverse perspectives from students, alumni and friends.



The highlight of the day was the football game. Fans packed into the Manulife Warriors Fan Zone and Alumni VIP Tent to enjoy the game and good company. Despite a hard loss

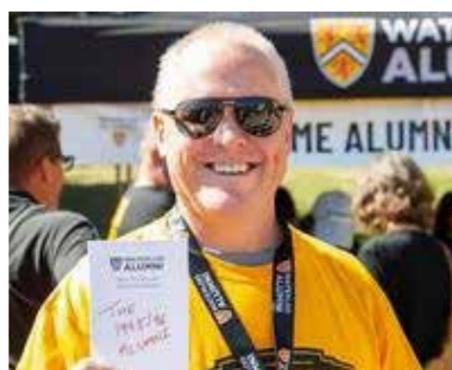


COMMUNITY WATCH



against the Queens Golden Gaels, fans celebrated the Warriors with their black and gold gear and plenty of noise.

Whether you were reliving memories, or making new ones, Homecoming 2025 was a reminder of what makes our community so special.



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