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January 15, 2023

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Tamil Mirror

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"Sri Lanka's New Administration Fails to Reverse Damaging Policies of its Predecessor"

The change of presidents of Sri Lanka in 2022 did not lead to any improvement in the country's human rights record, Human Rights Watch said on January 12, 2023 in its World Report 2023.

During 2022, thousands of Sri Lankans took to the streets after years of misrule, impunity, and corruption undermined the rule of law and contributed to a severe economic crisis that threatened millions. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, long implicated in grave rights violations, stepped down in July.

However, the new president, Ranil Wickremesinghe, cracked down on largely peaceful protests, imprisoned activists, and disregarded calls for justice for past violations. "President Ranil Wickremesinghe responded to calls for reform and accountability with repression," said Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "The foreign partners that Sri Lanka needs to help address its economic crisis should insist on fundamental human rights reforms and respect for the rule of law." In the 712-page World Report 2023, its 33rd edition, Human Rights Watch reviews human rights practices in close to 100 countries. In her introductory essay, acting Executive Director Tirana Hassan says that in a world in which power has shifted, it is no longer possible to rely on a small group of mostly Global North governments to defend human rights. The world's mobilization around Russia's war in Ukraine reminds us of the extraordinary potential when governments realize their human rights obligations on a global scale. The responsibility is on individual countries, big and small, to apply a human rights framework to their policies, and then work together to protect and promote human rights.

Sri Lanka's economic crisis deepened when the country defaulted on foreign loans in April. On September 1, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced a staff-level agreement to provide a US\$2.9 billion bailout, but the funds cannot be disbursed before Sri Lanka reaches a debt restructuring agreement with international creditors. Food price inflation reached 85 percent in October. The United Nations

restructuring agreement with international creditors. Food price inflation reached 85 percent in October. The United Nations said that 6.3 million people faced food insecurity and that the poverty rate had doubled.

President Wickremesinghe's government has cracked down on dissent, including by using the notorious Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) to arbitrarily detain student activists. Although superficial amendments were made to the law in March, following years of domestic and international pressure, the government continued to stall on repeated commitments to repeal the law.

The European Union played an important role urging the Sri Lankan government to comply with its human rights obligations under the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+), but pressure needs to be intensified to secure concrete progress, Human Rights Watch said. Calls by the United States and others to respect the right to peaceful protest were largely ignored.

In October, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution expressing concern for the human rights situation and mandating enhanced UN monitoring, as well as renewing a mandate for the UN to collect and analyze evidence of past human rights violations, including attacks on Tamil civilians during and since the civil war, which ended in 2009, for use in future prosecutions. The government has rejected calls for truth telling and accountability, including by the group Mothers of the Disappeared, which passed 2,000 days of continuous activism in August, demanding to know the fate of their missing loved ones.

No action was taken on then-Justice Minister Ali Sabry's call for parliament to legalize abortion, which Sri Lanka has long banned, in rape cases. The government also failed to reform the Muslim Marriage and Divorce Act, which permits child marriage and includes numerous discriminatory provisions. The government uses colonial-era laws to persecute same-sex activity and transgender people.

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Ranil's Promises To Tamil Leaders - Realization and Realities

Thambu Kangasabai LLM (Lond)



It is a well-known fact that most of the past agreements written and/or oral promises including undertakings of the past Sri Lankan governments are mostly complied with breaches, partial and / or complete non-compliances. Some of the notable instances are the Indo-Ceylon Agreement 1987, BC Pact 1958, and Reasonable Use of Tamil Language Act 1958.

However, as the proverbs say "United we stand", "Divided we fall" and "Unity is strength", any open disunity and rivalry will dissipate the strength of the Tamil parties and their political demands while exacerbating the longstanding entrenched grievances of the Tamils.

At the recent meeting with Tamil National Alliance (TNA) on 13 December 2022, Ranil has agreed to take actions on or before January 31, 2023 for the demands of TNA regarding release of political prisoners, devolution of power, proposals for the settlement of ethnic problem and withdrawal of Army from the occupied lands in the North and East.

It is relevant to mention the current campaigns and protests of public including fasting campaigns going on in Batticaloa, Mannar and other North East Districts calling for unity of Tamil parties and leaders.

He has also disclosed his idea to celebrate the February 04 th Independence day in Jaffna on February 11, 2023. According to Sumanthiran MP, Ranil has agreed to find solutions before the end of 2023 for the issues as discussed in the meeting held on 13 December 2022.

Fearing a fallout and backlash some Tamil leaders have made formal and symbolic visits to the fasting campaigners to end their fasting by offering their support with suitable promises.

- Issues of disappeared persons
- Release of political prisoners
- Land appropriations by security forces in the North and East

All in all, it appears that Ranil is playing the role of a President to the liking of the International Community, so also the Tamil leaders are trying to strengthen their leaderships while nursing and nurturing their parties and personality rivalries.

Another matter discussed was as to how to enforce the devolution of power prescribed in the law and in the constitution and also about how to conduct the District Councils' elections. It is to be noted that no discussion or decision was made as to the issue of missing persons at the meeting.

To sum up, there is denying of the fact that Sri Lanka's ethnic problem has remained as a fruitful source of fodder for the last 60 years to the power thirsty Sri Lankan politicians and for sustenance while exploiting them to cling on to win parliamentary and local elections.

At the meeting, TNA requested Ranil to exercise his conferred presidential powers for the release of political prisoners, withdrawal of Army and the release of appropriated lands in the North and East.



Now, Ranil has to prove his sincerity to fulfill the promises he made by implementing firstly his presidential powers forthwith in the following matters, namely the release of political prisoners and the withdrawal of army in the occupied lands. It is hoped that he will live up to his promises and commitments before January 31, 2023.

Other matters like devolution of powers and disappeared persons would be discussed at an all party meeting before January 31, 2023 as he indicated. It has to be stated that any further postponement or dilly-dallying tactics will erode confidence on him and dent his credibility locally and internationally. It is also hoped that at the proposed all party meeting, Ranil has to take a clear stand on the nagging ethnic issue and layout his political settlement proposals. However, it has to be stated that Ranil has and knows his own limitations as the President like the following:

- He has no mandate from the people.
- He is not an elected MP.
- His party has no representation in the Parliament.
- He does not have the backing of his party.
- He is sitting as the President at the mercy and support of Podu Jana Peramuna and he could be defeated in a no confidence motion in parliament with two third majority.
- He has to shed his recent image and posturing as a racial minded Buddhism promoting president.
- He should not exploit and be swayed by the party and personality rivalries existing among the Tamil parties and leaders and use the customary disunity among the Tamil leaders and Parties who are however united to fight for the lost rights of the Tamils but in separate ways and means.



By: Thambu Kanagasabai,
LLM [London] Former Lecturer in Law,
University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. &
President, Tamil Canadian Elders for
Human Rights Organization.

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GTA Housing market experienced a marked adjustment in 2022.

The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) housing market experienced a marked adjustment in 2022 compared to record levels in 2021. Existing affordability issues brought about by a lack of housing supply were exacerbated by sustained interest rate hikes by the Bank of Canada.

Following a very strong start to the year, home sales trended lower in the spring and summer of 2022, as aggressive Bank of Canada interest rate hikes further hampered housing affordability. With no relief from the Office of Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) mortgage stress test or other mortgage lending guidelines including amortization periods, home selling prices adjusted downward to mitigate the impact of higher mortgage rates. However, home prices started levelling off in the late summer, suggesting the aggressive early market adjustment may be coming to an end, said new Toronto Regional Real Estate Board (TRREB) President Paul Baron.

There were 75,140 sales reported through TRREB's MLS® System in 2022 down 38.2 per cent compared to the 2021 record of 121,639. The number of new listings amounted to 152,873 down 8.2 per cent compared to 166,600 new listings in 2021. Seasonally adjusted monthly data for sales and price data show a marked flattening of the sales and price trends since the late summer.

While home sales and prices dominated the headlines in 2022, the supply of new listings continued to be an issue as well. The number of homes listed for sale in 2022 was down in comparison to 2021. This helps explain why selling prices have found some support in recent months. Lack of supply has also impacted the rental market. As renting has become more popular in this higher interest rate environment, tighter rental market conditions have translated into double-digit average rent increases, said TRREB Chief Market Analyst Jason Mercer.

The average selling price for 2022 was \$1,189,850 up 8.6 per cent compared to \$1,095,333 in 2021. This growth was based on a strong start to the year, in terms of year-over-year price growth. The pace of growth moderated from the spring of 2022 onwards.



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(NC) Moving into a new home or renovating your current one can be an exciting time with many decisions – from renovations and upgrades, to landscaping and furniture selection. But in tough economic times it can feel risky.

And while these decisions are important, a key consideration is how to help ensure you can keep your home for the long run.

As a homebuyer, you probably already know about home insurance, but you may not know that there are optional coverage choices which may help protect your ability to remain in your home in case of a covered health event.

Optional mortgage critical illness and life insurance, like TD Mortgage Protection, can pay down or pay off the remainder of your mortgage balance in case of certain health events, so it may be worth considering.

According to a 2022 TD survey, almost half of Canadian respondents reported their homes as the most important asset they have. And just over 30 per cent of respondents said they would be willing to cash out their investment assets to save their home in the event something unexpected happens, including a covered critical illness.

But what if they didn't have to worry about that? Find more information at td.com/mortgageprotection.



Real Estate page compiled by Charles Devasagayam

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Tamil Heritage Month

By: Sabeta Selvarajah Kokulan



January 1 is not only the new year, it is also the beginning of Tamil Heritage Month. Every January, Tamils all over Canada come together to celebrate Tamil Heritage Month. Tamil is not just a language, it is also a culture. It is a well known fact in Tamil culture that women wear sarees and men wear veti. However, why is Tamil Heritage Month so important to Tamils? What celebrations occur during Tamil Heritage Month?

Since the 1940s, Tamil people have been immigrating to Canada. Since then, Tamils had to face, and still have to face, many obstacles. Obstacles such as learning new languages, facing cultural differences, being financially stable, changes in diet, going through a different education system, and understanding the government system. These are just a few obstacles that Tamils had to face, however, there are many more obstacles. By overcoming each obstacle, a strong Tamil community had been developed throughout Canada, instilling themselves as a major contributor to Canada and its identity. Today, there are many successful Tamils throughout Canada. Whether it's running a business, being an accountant working at a big financial firm, being a teacher, being a doctor, being a nurse, being a school board trustee, or being member of provincial parliament or Canadian parliament; no matter what field it is, there will always be a Tamil in that field. In 2016, Bill C-471 was passed, declaring that January is Tamil Heritage Month, where Tamils celebrate the success of their community, acknowledging their contribution to Canada.

During Tamil Heritage Month, Tamils celebrate by putting together various programs where they showcase many talents from the Tamil culture such as, Kootthu, Parai Iysai, Oyl Attam, Mayil Attam, Poy Kaal Kuthurai, Villu Paattu, Kumi, etc. This upcoming January, 14, 2023, is Thai Pongal. Thai Pongal is the harvest festival and Tamil New Year. Tamils all over the

world wake up at sunrise and boil and cook rice, which is known as pongal. Tamils all over the world do this to show their appreciation of nature, which allows Tamils to harvest every year.

Thai Pongal has no religion. No matter what religious background a Tamil has, Thai Pongal brings all Tamils together to celebrate the union of one community, the Tamil community.





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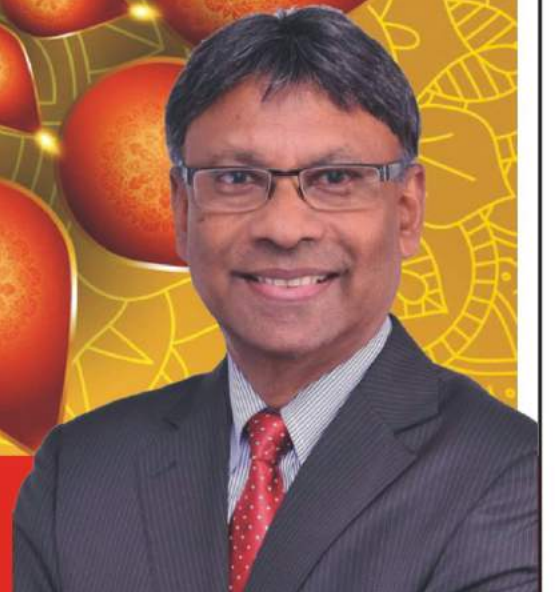
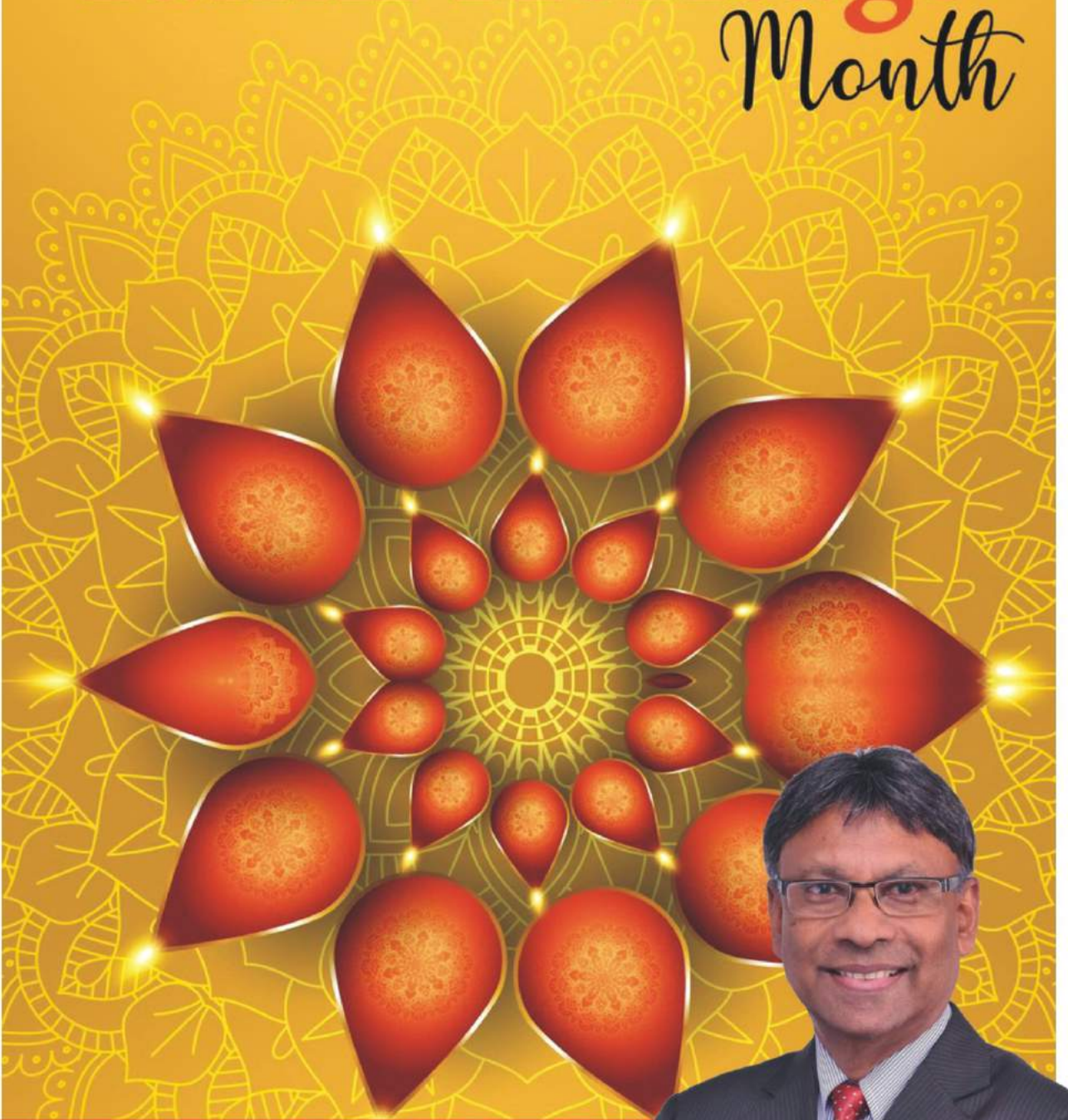
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Connecting GTA is an above average business group. The members are extremely supportive and welcoming. Their events are fun and educational. In my 20 years of business I have experienced many business groups. This one is different. I highly recommend it. *-Angela Balkois*

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Suresh is passionate about delivering value in every connection that he makes. As a Specialist Business Strategist & Coach, he revels in efficiently maximizing potential and fostering professional relationships within organizations. And as the Founder and CEO of Connecting GTA, he is dedicated to help propel your business forward.

Connecting GTA began as a meeting place for businesses of diverse backgrounds to connect, collaborate and promote individual businesses in the GTA.

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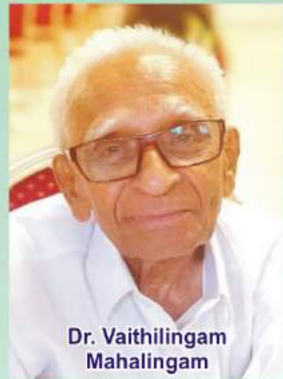
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Dr. Vaithilingam Mahalingam: A leader in Sri Lankan Library Science Education

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



Dr. Vaithilingam Mahalingam



If you look at the history of library science education in Sri Lanka – then Ceylon – the late Dr. Vaithilingam Mahalingam would be clearly seen as a leader of it. He was born on July 8th of 1931 in the northern Malaysian city of Sungai Petani. He started his early education in the same city.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Vaithilingam, were from Urumpirai, Sri Lanka. Upon returning to Sri Lanka, Mahalingam continued his intermediate and higher education at Urumpirai Hindu College. He then went to Calcutta, India to continue his university education. After graduating, Mahalingam returned to Sri Lanka and started teaching at Hartley College in Point Pedro.

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

In the meantime, librarians who had worked in the fields of science, technologies and other sectors in Sri Lanka united to revitalize library science education in Sri Lanka.

The Free Education Bill brought by then-Minister of Education Dr. C.W.W. Kannangara in 1944 was one of the primary impulses which encouraged those librarians including Dr. Mahalingam to revitalize library science in Sri Lanka.

The Free Education Bill made free education possible for all in the nation from the grade one to university level. It increased attendance in schools. Schools also worked hard to excel in education. Good education required good libraries and good libraries needed well qualified librarians.

It was during this time when nine librarians worked together to form the Ceylon Library Association in August of 1960. Included in that list of librarians were: Margaret Gooneratna, Ishvari Corea, Vaithilingam Mahalingam, Manil Silva, S. C.

Block, W. B. Dorakumbura, Wilfred Gunasekara, Nai Goonetilleke, and Cloudah Nethsinghe..

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

Sri Lankan library science education was forwarded on two fronts. The first was a diploma level education of library science in the country's universities. The second was part-time education for those who worked at the libraries.

A comprehensive examination for library science students was carried out in 1961 under Mahalingam's leadership.

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

The technical facilities which were in the hands of CISIR also helped Mahalingam to further enhance library science education.

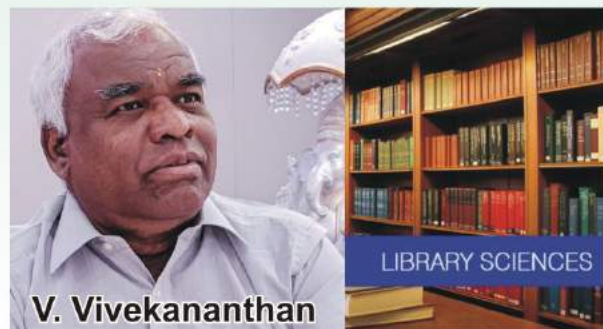
In 1960, with the support of the Education Department, Mahalingam held a library science seminar. With financial support from Asia Foundation, Mahalingam printed and distributed the Dewey Decimal Classification booklet to all those librarians who participated in this seminar. The Dewey Decimal Classification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

To have more librarians and library assistance for public sector, schools, technical and teachers training college libraries, Mahalingam developed a curriculum for training. His curriculum contained beginner, intermediate, and advanced level training.

Passing of GCE O/L was set to be the entry requirement for the beginner level training. The first beginner level training in English language took place in Colombo in 1961 by the Ceylon Library Association. In 1963, the same training was carried out in Kandy and Jaffna in English. At the end of 1965, the Library Association had already trained and certified 75 librarians.

In 1972, the beginner level training in Tamil language was carried out in Jaffna. In 1965, Mahalingam was awarded a Fulbright scholarship and went to pursue his doctoral study in library science at Columbia University in New York. In 1968, after completing his doctoral studies, he then settled in Canada. The same year, in June, he became the Bracken Health Sciences library at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario as the Head Librarian. There he headed the Cataloguing Division and the Document Unit.

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



V. Vivekananthan

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

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

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

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

12 th ANNUAL MARKHAM THAI PONGAL VIZHA



January 8, 2023.

Centre for Tamil Heritage and Culture hosted the Markham Thai Pongal Vizha on January 8, 2023 at Markham Flato Theatre, Markham.

“When we arrived here, this country never asked us to leave behind our identity, heritage and culture, because here in Canada we embrace our cultural diversity,” Said Logan Kanapathi, M.P.P.

He further said that, “I am proud that during my time as councilor, Markham was the first government to recognize Thai Pongal and Tamil Heritage Month in North America. I am proud to say that we are here in Markham celebrating Tamil Heritage Month and our rich culture for the 12 consecutive years.”

Stephen Lecce, Ontario’s Minister of Education along with Michael Chan, Deputy Mayor of Markham addressed the crowd. Chief Guest, Prof. Balasundaram Elayathamby gave a speech on the topic of “ Who are we? We are the kin of Kumari Kandam (Lemuria Continent) Tamils.” There were as usual lots of cultural programs and Pongal also given to all attendees.



Write up & photos by Charles Devasagayam, M.A.





is honored to present the
Lifetime Achievement Award 2022
to
Dr Fr. A. Joseph Chandrakanthan



For his countless academic and pragmatic contributions to the community and society for many decades in the areas of Theology, Ethics, Human rights, Spirituality, Religion, Politics and to the growing needs of Mental health and Palliative Care.

November 6, 2022

Professor Fr. Amuthu Joseph Chandrakanthan who was born in Jaffna and had his early schooling at St. Henry's College at Ilavalai, and later at St. Patrick's College in Jaffna.

He completed Master's Degrees in Theology with First Class Honours (1974-79) at Gnana Deepa University in Pune, India and was the one and only Sri Lankan to have received these honours. He also received a Master's Degree in Indian Philosophy at the same University.

In 1981 he accepted the appointment of a tenured Lectureship in Christian and Islamic Civilizations at the Faculty of Arts in the University of Jaffna and a Membership in them University Senate.

He received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Ottawa in Canada (1987) and completed a Doctor of Theology degree from St. Paul University in Ottawa (1988).

Returning to Sri Lanka in 1988 he was appointed Senior Lecturer and Founding Head of the Department of Christian, Islamic and Arabic Civilizations at the University of Jaffna. He was elected as President of the University Teachers' Union consisting of all four Faculties for three consecutive terms.

In 1995, Dr. Chandrakanthan was awarded a post-Doctoral Research Fellowship at the International Alert's Department of Peace and Conflict Prevention based in London, England.

In October 2022, Fr. Chandrakanthan was Presented with the coveted Peace Ambassador award by the Universal Peace Foundation, A General Consultative body of the United Nations.

Moving to Canada in 1996, he was appointed Professor of Theology and Ethics at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada from 1996-1999. In January 1999 he received an appointment as Consultant in Bioethics at the Centre for Clinical Ethics and the University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics and cross appointment as Associate Professor in the Centre for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto and at University of St. Michael's College. He also

teaches at the Toronto Graduate School of Theology of the University of Toronto.

Chandrakanthan has published over 10 books and more than 50 articles on issues related Christian Theology, Ethics, Human Rights and Inter-Religious Spirituality, Religion, and Politics.

Together with the Late Professor Alfred Jeyaratnam he co-authored a book entitled, The Origin and Development of Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism published in 2001 by the University of British Columbia and is used as a Text book on Nationalism in Many Universities in Europe and North America.

In the past 25 years he has also accepted several invitations and had given Public lectures, Seminars and Conference papers at several Asian, European and American Universities including Ateneo di Manila University in the Philippines, University of New York, De Paul University in Chicago and California State University in the USA; Oxford University, and University of London in the UK; Uppsala University in Sweden, and Nijmegen University in Holland.

Over a decade he serves as President of the International Association of Tamil Academics.

As a strong advocate of Mental Health and Palliative care he has been a Speaker at the International Palliative Care Congress at five biennial Conferences from 2006 to 2014 and also at many of the International Conferences on Law and Mental Health.

Chandrakanthan was instrumental in establishing the Tamil care-giver Project and the Tamil Spiritual Care Project with the help of McConnell Family Foundation at the Providence Centre in Scarborough and was also the Founding President of the Vasantham - Tamil Seniors' Wellness Centre at St. James town in Toronto.

Perceiving the growing concern for Mental Health issues related to the Tamil community in Toronto, Chandrakanthan is currently working on registering a Canadian Tamil Association for Mental Health to provide support and education for Tamil families in that grapple with psycho-social and mental health issues of their family members.



is honored to present the
'Guardian of Tamil Culture and Language Award'
 to
Sivan Ilangko



For his leadership and outstanding contribution to establish the Chair in Tamil Studies at the University of Toronto, the first of its kind in Canada.

November 6, 2022

Sivan Ilangko has extensive experience in providing Assurance services to financial institutions. In recognition of outstanding impact in the world of business and in communities, Ilangko was named a CPA Ontario 2021 Fellow, the highest distinction bestowed upon a CPA in the accounting profession.

In addition to his successful professional career, Ilangko has been active in the community in various capacities.

Ilangko has been a key member of the Canadian Tamil Congress for over a decade. He has been serving on the Board for the last 6 years, including 4 years as the President. Ilangko plays a significant role in hosting the annual Tamil Canadian Walk in Canadian charities and humanitarian efforts across Sri Lanka.

Ilangko plays a key role in coordinating and managing programs for the Tamil Fest, the largest Tamil Street festival outside the Indian subcontinent. Through the Canadian Tamil Congress and beyond, Ilangko has made significant philanthropic contributions to the community over the years.

Ilangko is also the Joint Secretary of the Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FeTNA), an umbrella organization of several Tamil associations in North America, an entity that cultivates, promotes, fosters, and develops the advancement of knowledge in the Tamil language, literature, and culture.

Ilangko initiated and led the historical campaign to establish the Chair in Tamil Studies at the University of Toronto Scarborough, the first of its kind in Canada. From a single conversation with the University, Ilangko took the initiative to a global scale and rallied thousands of Tamils to support this noble cause.

Despite the perils of the COVID-19 pandemic, the campaign prevailed under Ilangko's leadership and surpassed its campaign goals in less than the target time frame.

Moreover, Ilangko was instrumental in initiating the Tamil Heritage Month celebration at the University of Toronto

Scarborough. He currently serves as a member of the University of Toronto Scarborough Campaign Cabinet.

Ilangko is a Co-Founder, Former Director, and Advisor of the Centre for Leadership and Innovation (CFLI), an organization that fosters leadership skills among youth. CFLI has made significant strides over the last 10 years by laying a strong foundation to develop the leaders of tomorrow. Over 1000 students have enrolled in the program and more than 200 students have graduated from its four-year structured program.

Ilangko is a Founding Director of the Stouffville Multicultural Association and serves as the Director of Tamil Literary Garden and Tamil Chair Inc, an organization that played a pivotal role in forming the Tamil Chair at Harvard University. In recognition of his services, Ilangko received various awards including, Ontario Volunteer Service Award, Queens Platinum Jubilee Pin, a Regional Finalist of EY's 'Better begins with you'.

Ilangko was also recognized as an outstanding Tamil of Eminence by Rise at the international conference held in London, UK in May 2022.

Thus, the 'Guardian of Tamil culture and Language' is Awarded to Mr. Sivan Ilangko, by Tamil Mirror For his leadership and outstanding contribution to establish the Chair in Tamil Studies at the University of Toronto Scarborough, the first of its kind in Canada.



is honored to present the
BEST ENTREPRENEUR AWARD 2022
to
THEVATHAS SHANMUGALINGAM
 On your success in the



Ontarios Structural Steel and Construction Industry and for being an example for the hardworking members of the Tamil community.
November 6, 2022

Mr. Thevathas Shanmugalingam, also known as Thass Shan in Ontarios Structural Steel and Construction Industry, is a young entrepreneur who can be viewed as an example for successful hardworking members of the Tamil community.

He started out with just 4 people and now around 60 workers and sub contractors are working with him.

He received his secondary education at Drieberge College. Owing to the hostile situation then in Srilanka, he went to India and completed his schooling from St. Joseph Higher Secondary school. Soon after, he enrolled in the Bachelors in Civil Engineering degree program at the esteemed Sathyabama Engineering College in Chennai.

In the year 1995, he moved to Canada with an intent to become an established Civil engineer and to create a mark for himself while creating job market to several people. To achieve this objective, he completed equivalent higher secondary education and pursued a Steel Fabrication Work related certification for buildings from Humber college in Canada.

Upon completion of the certification, he worked as a project manager in a private company. He worked tirelessly and established his own company, Times Iron Works Inc., in 2005 at Pickering. With his persistent hard work, he articulated and has been offering a variety of steel work solutions to cater to commercial and industrial sectors.

Mr. Thevathas sheer perseverance aided the company's growth while turning it into an established enterprise. The quality of his work and timely delivery of products, supported by the many success stories from his clients, fetched Times Iron Works Inc. the required recognition and approval from the City of Toronto.

Further, amidst the heavy competition, Thevathas has managed to maintain his company's position and worked on many city-funded projects.

In the year 2012, Thevathas met with an accident at his company. Irrespective of this major physical let-down, his focus on work commitments and mental strength was unmatched.

His passion for work made him achieve his envisioned dream of constructing his own company building in Stouffville.

Although a successful entrepreneur, Thevathas strongly believes in sharing his joy and giving it back to the society. He participates in various philanthropic activities, voluntary services and is a regular contributor of monetary assistance for improvement of quality of life for people in Vanni region, Sri Lanka. In his social and business circle, he is regarded as one of the humblest down-to-earth people around.



is honored to present the
VISIONARY WOMAN AWARD 2022
 to
SASIKALA NARENTHIRA



For inspiring future generations of the diaspora, to uphold and promote Tamil culture and heritage, while reaching new heights in entrepreneurship, showcasing talent, and promoting positivity – for being a pioneer to spearhead and display Tamil women's achievements, leadership, and potential on a global scale.

November 6, 2022

Sasikala Narenthira graduated from Swami Vipulananda School of Dance and Music, and received Diploma in voice and violin and worked as a music teacher in Sri Lanka for over 12 years. She also holds Diploma's in Aesthetic Therapy and Cosmetology. She is a licensed hairstylist in Canada and Sri Lanka.

Sasikala was the first person to establish a Beauty Parlour in Canada in 2003 and trained over 500 students in Canada to pass on her knowledge to the younger generation so that they can be self employed.

Since 2005, Sasikala has been the proud founder and the organizer of the beauty contests, Miss Tamil Toronto and Miss Tamil Canada. She began this venture with the interest of sustaining the Tamil culture and heritage among the Tamil youth and community that currently reside in Canada.

Through showcasing Tamil cultural clothing, arts and lifestyle, this event has not only been praised and appreciated by the Tamil community, but also welcomed by non-Tamils. She played a major role in organizing and running the 'Miss Tamil Universe Canada' pageant in 2019, which was the only Tamil Cultural show throughout the globe with contestants from Canada, Sri Lanka, India and the UK. And this time for the year 2022 the show was hosted in Canada too and it turned out to be a successful event.

In addition to this, she has written and published three books and DVD's about her long- term goals in culinary and beauty. These beauty DVDs and catalogues will help people of all ages better understand the art of beautifying.

She is the Founder and President of 'Jai Shri Shirdi Sai Baba Samasathanam' located in Scarborough as well. Also she has been very interested in womens rights since childhood and aspires to be a beacon for womens rights. She is the founder of the South Asia Womens Organization in March 2013 and that was one of her lifelong dream come true.

Since 2014, she has provided many social services in Sri Lanka and India, she helps many women from poor families with children, some from widowed families, some including disabled families with dry food and livelihood. Some requested to give them the tools to use and create jobs, by buying sewing machines, buying chickens for agricultural work and so on.

In January 2022, she organized Aalumei Pen Awards Ceremony under Vizhithelu Penne in Sri Lanka and a total number of 100 Talented women were brought up to the lightness from darkness. Among them with so many unhidden talents and stories were spoken out.

In May 2018, she was honoured by the "Saiva Tamil Panpattu Kalagam" for her dedication to Miss Tamil Canada. On January 1st, 2019, the World Organization of People of Tamil Descent from the Indian state of Tamil Nadu also recognized Sasikala for her contributions to the Tamil community, also she was honoured with an award from Nandavanam Foundation- India in 2014 as "International Women Record Holder- 'Sarvadesa Saadanei Pen'".

In order to promote goodwill and harmony between cultures, she received 3 awards as SAMASRI VISHVAKALA JOTHI, NATHANA KEERTHI and DESHA ABHIMAANI awards ceremony held on January 17, 2019 in her hometown Batticaloa, presented by all United Nations Community Organizations. And a 'Cultural Enrichment Award' in 2020, 'Tamil's Information Award' in 2020, 'One Heritage Canada' in 2021 were given in Canada, 'Tamil Women Cultural Award' in 2022 was given in Germany and Best Women Personality – 'Sirantha Alumei Pen' was given in UK.

Last but not least, in recognition of women power and pride for the consecutive year, 'Vizhithelu Penne'- 'International Women's Achievers Award' event was held in October 2022, and 45 women and 10 men were honoured.



is honored to present the
COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD 2022
to
SUTHA SHANMUGARAJAH



In recognition of your continuous, relentless and selfless volunteer service to the Tamil Community and the Community at large.

November 6, 2022

Sutha was born and raised in Jaffna, Sri Lanka until the age of 9, when she was forced to leave her birthplace with her family to find a safer place to live, as the war was threatening their safety. She and her family fled and settled in Canada, which she is proud to call home.

She is grateful every day of her life for the freedom and opportunities that Canada has provided her and, till this day, she gives back by volunteering to help at places or events such as food banks, shelters, charity runs, charity walks and many more.

She often reflects on when she was nine and feels compelled to help those who are in that situation in the world today.

She states that volunteering has brought so much joy to her life. Through her volunteering experience, she has been to so many different places and has met so many people from all walks of life. She remarks, "You don't need to be rich to give back or make a difference in someone's life, anybody can make a difference. It doesn't matter how big or small the contribution, every little bit counts. You might not realize that a simple act of kindness, for example, helping someone with buying groceries, spending

some time with someone who needs the company, goes a long way."

Often times when she says to others that she is volunteering her time to plan or help with an event, people often comment that she has a lot of free time on her hands. She remarks, "I really wish I had lots of time. I believe, if you want to make a difference in someone's life, you will find the time, it can be as little as 5 minutes. The joy and gratitude that you get from it, is worth far more than the 5 minutes you put into it."

Sutha has been giving back to the community with her volunteering service for over the past 20 years and there are no plans to stop. "I hope I can inspire others to get involved in causes that mean something to them. It's all about making the world a better place one action at a time."

In recognition of your continuous and selfless volunteer service to the Tamil and Community at large Tamil Mirror present this Community Service award.

Tamil Mirror

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* **Tamil Mirror** *

Thank
you!



*Tamil Mirror In its 15th Year,
Thank you
to all our readers, advertisers and well wishers.
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**Happy 2023
Pongal!**

"May all your
wishes and fears
disappear from your
life and all your
hearts with calm and
healthy thoughts."



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