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Canadian Tamil Congress Commemorates 13th Annual Thai Pongal gala

by **Harrish Thirukumaran**

The Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) commemorated the 13th annual Thai Pongal gala dinner on January 18, 2020 at the Hilton Toronto/Markham Suites Conference Centre. The night was marked specifically by an assortment of traditional Tamil dances that signified the Tamil holiday of Thai Pongal as well as the Tamil Heritage Month that is commemorated in Canada. This month celebrates the achievements and resilience of the Canadian Tamil community, with this event recapping some of the past achievements of the CTC over the year of 2019.

(Continued on Page 37)



**CTC President
Sivan Ilango**



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**Monsoon Journal
wishes everyone
a Happy
Family Day**
Feb 17, 2020

As part of the efforts to empower women in the war affected North & East of Sri Lanka, CTC organized the Walk for Women Empowerment at its 13th Annual Thai Pongal Dinner. Volunteers of all ages participated in the walk to promote products made by women in Northern & Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. Centerpieces used during the dinner were also produced in Jaffna. The effort was applauded by the guests and the sarees were sold out by the end of the evening.

Kobe Bryant has become a Guardian Spirit to the young minds

By **Thiru K. Thirukumaran**

The inspiration that basketball gives as a life building tool to a tot through their growing up as teen and thereafter had tremendous jolt this past weekend. One of the biggest names in basketball had to pass away tragically in loudly speaking of a certain vacuum the untimely departures leave behind in this world. Name of Kobe Bryant would have spoken millions of times across the globe these days. From the neighborhood hoops to Township recreational, Police Athletic Leagues, clinics of all types, Juniors, Varsity and inter-mural to taking it along beyond there to other courts or even outside to everyday life grew into a whole generation with the superstar abilities of Kobe Bryant, to play and also give back to others.

(Continued on Page 23)



**Kobe Bryant (23 August, 1978 - 26 January, 2020) and
Gigi Bryant (1 May, 2006 - 26 January, 2020)**

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Ontario Government Holds Budget Consultation in Scarborough

Government looking for ideas that will Build Ontario Together



January 31, 2020 6:00 P.M.

Ministry of Finance

SCARBOROUGH — The Ontario Government is asking people in Scarborough for their best advice on how to make life more affordable, invest in critical public services and balance the budget by 2023 through public consultations for the 2020 Budget.

Today, Minister of Finance Rod Phillips, Raymond Sung Joon Cho, Minister of Seniors and Accessibility and MPP for Scarborough North, Christina Mitas, MPP for Scarborough Centre, Aris Babikian, MPP for Scarborough—Agincourt, and Vijay Thanigasalam, MPP for Scarborough—Rouge Park, were in Scarborough to host a public consultation for the 2020 Budget.

The government is looking for ideas that will help build Ontario together by putting jobs, skills and workers front and centre, while continuing to focus on putting more money in people's

pockets, connecting people to places, building healthier and safer communities, and making government smarter.

"The Ontario Budget impacts us all. It is important for us to hear first-hand from everyone across the province about the priorities they feel should be included in our plan to build Ontario together," said Minister Phillips. "Together, we can make this vision a reality and enable a better quality of life and high standard of living for all our citizens."

Minister Phillips and Parliamentary Assistant Stan Cho will be hosting community budget consultations along with MPPs across the province to hear directly from Ontario's hard-working individuals, families and businesses.

Visit Ontario.ca/BudgetIdeas to learn how to attend a consultation, or to submit your ideas by email, mail, or by filling out a survey. Budget consultations will close February 11, 2020.

Via news.ontario.ca

Ontario Confirms Third Case of 2019 Novel Coronavirus

Province Adds New Reporting Category to More Accurately Reflect Current Status

January 31, 2020 2:59 P.M.

Ministry of Health

TORONTO - Today, Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health, confirmed Ontario's third case of 2019 novel coronavirus. The case is located in London, Ontario.

Given the newness of the 2019 novel coronavirus and as part of the continuing cooperative efforts between Public Health Ontario (PHO) and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Ontario has been sharing all test samples with the National Microbiology Lab in Winnipeg. As part of the National Microbiology Lab's efforts to ensure quality control, additional testing was performed on the samples provided. As a result of this additional testing, a case that was previously deemed negative by PHO's lab has now been found to be positive by the National Microbiology Lab, which uses a more sensitive test that can identify the smallest trace presence of the virus. The majority of cases previously considered negative have been confirmed as negative by the National Microbiology Lab.

To provide the public with the greatest certainty, Ontario's reporting will now include a new category that more accurately reflects the province's status: presumptive negative. That said, for any person found presumptively negative by the PHO lab, there is an extremely low risk of transmitting the virus.

The newly confirmed case, a female in her 20s, arrived asymptomatic in Toronto on January 23, 2020 and was transported to London by way of a private vehicle. On January 24, 2020, the individual started to exhibit symptoms and that same day was assessed and tested at London Health Sciences

Centre. She was released with follow up by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. This individual has had limited exposure to other individuals and has otherwise been in isolation since January 24, 2020, with regular contact by the Middlesex-London Health Unit to monitor her condition. She is now re-



covered and is well.

"I want to re-emphasize that the risk to Ontarians remains low," said Dr. Williams. "It is clear that we are learning more and more about the coronavirus each day, and our testing procedures are evolving and getting more and more precise, which is good news for everyone throughout Ontario and Canada. By working hand-in-hand with our partners across the health care system we are in a very good position to contain the virus and better protect the health and wellbeing of individuals and families across the province."

While requiring validation by the National Microbiology Lab, PHO's lab will continue to offer the province's public health system an early indication of a case's status, allowing the province and local public health officials to quickly and effectively implement all necessary protocols to contain and treat any individuals who have 2019 novel coronavirus.

Via news.ontario.ca

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from the publisher's desk

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Pushing Forward Social Justice Meaningfully among Black Canadians with World Day of Social Justice and Black History Month

By Harrish Thirukumaran

Now in the second month of 2020 with February now upon us, it is a timely reminder of Black History Month here in Canada. Not only does it celebrate the achievements of Black Canadian communities throughout history in Canada, but also shines a light on the ongoing struggle of Black Canadians to achieve social justice. In a sense, this motivation, I believe, ties in perfectly with the importance of World Day of Social Justice.

World Day of Social Justice is commemorated annually on February 20 through the United Nations. Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality, or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability.

For the United Nations, the pursuit of social justice for all is at the core of its global mission to promote development and human dignity. The adoption by the International Labour Organization of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization is just one recent example of the UN System's commitment to social justice. The Declaration focuses on guaranteeing fair outcomes for all, through employment, social protection, social dialogue, and fundamental principles and rights at work. On November 26 2007, the General Assembly declared that, starting from the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, 20 February will be celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice.

In terms of the background, the International Labour Organization unanimously adopted the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Glo-

balization on 10 June 2008. This is the third major statement of principles and policies adopted by the International Labour Conference since the ILO's Constitution of 1919. It builds on the Philadelphia Declaration of 1944 and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of 1998. The 2008 Declaration expresses the contemporary vision of the ILO's mandate in the era of globalization.

The General Assembly recognizes that social development and social justice are indispensable for the achievement and maintenance of peace and security within and among nations and that, in turn, social development and social justice cannot be attained in the absence of peace and security, or in the absence of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The theme for this year's commemoration of World Day of Social Justice is "Closing the Inequalities Gap to Achieve Social Justice." Accordingly, 1 in 5 workers still live in moderate or extreme poverty, geographical disparities impede access to decent work, many workers face stagnant wages, gender inequality prevails and people are not benefitting equally from economic growth. Inequalities between and among countries are weakening social cohesion, preventing people from achieving their full potential and burdening economies. It is time to reduce inequalities globally.

I had the opportunity to learn about current issues and policy approaches that include Black communities at the 2019 Toronto Black Policy Conference. I call on the readers of the Monsoon Journal to engage with Black Canadians to address inequalities that still exist for them to push forward social justice meaningfully this Black History Month and World Day of Social Justice.

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Canada Historical Milestones:

Feb 4, 1885

Born on Feb. 4, 1885, Cairine Wilson became the 1st female Canadian senator in 1930. She was appointed 4 months after the "Persons" Case decision, which allowed women to be considered "qualified persons" and able to sit in the Senate.

via: twitter.com/LibraryArchives



Monsoon Journal
 Wishes all Readers, Advertisers
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 & Well-wishers
a Happy Valentine's Day
 February 14, 2020

"Have you ever been hurt and the place tries to heal a bit, and you just pull the scar off of it over and over again" - Rosa Parks (February 4, 1913 - October 24, 2005) American civil rights activist

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

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Statement by the Prime Minister on International Development Week

February 2, 2020

Ottawa, Ontario

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement on International Development Week, which runs from February 2 to 8, 2020:

"Today marks the beginning of the 30th International Development Week – a time to recognize the efforts and sacrifices of international development workers, volunteers, and partners who help make the world a better place for everyone.

"This year's theme – Go for the Goals – challenges us to take action at home and abroad to support the goals set out in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Staying true to our values, Canada will continue to work with partners to achieve these goals, so we can end poverty and inequality, build more prosperous and peaceful societies, and protect the planet.

"To achieve a better and more sus-



tainable future, we need to give everyone an equal chance at success. When women and girls are empowered and their rights are respected, they transform their families and communities for the better. That is why we launched Canada's first Feminist International

Assistance Policy to address inequality and protect the rights of women and girls around the world.

"Canada, along with our development partners, will continue to show leadership in protecting those who are most vulnerable, and working to

improve access to health care, proper nutrition, and education. We are supporting this work with targeted investments, including those to promote sustainable development and help lift more people out of poverty. We are also making inclusive education a priority, and funding projects that will improve access to quality education for women and girls in crisis and conflict situations.

"Together, we can shape a world where no one goes hungry, no one feels unsafe, and no one is left behind. On behalf of the Government of Canada, I encourage all Canadians to celebrate the many people who work hard every day to empower people, uplift communities, and build stronger economies."

Via pm.gc.ca

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Statement by the Prime Minister on International Holocaust Remembrance Day

January 27, 2020

Ottawa, Ontario

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement on International Holocaust Remembrance Day:

"The Holocaust was one of the darkest chapters in human history. Today, we remember and pay tribute to the more than six million Jews who were senselessly murdered during the Holocaust, and the countless other victims of Nazi atrocities.

"We also honour the survivors and share their stories of courage, hope, and perseverance against unspeakable evil, and recognize the heroes who risked their lives to save others.

"Governor General, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, is in Poland today to attend the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and highlight Canada's continued commitment to preserve the memories of the victims and survivors of the Holocaust. Today's visit follows her trip to Jerusalem to attend the Fifth World Holocaust Forum, "Remembering the Holocaust: Fighting Antisemitism."

"Sadly, Jewish communities in Canada and around the world continue to face threats of violence, xenophobia, and rising antisemitism. As a coun-

try, through our words and actions, we need to address the resurgence of antisemitism at home and abroad. That is why we adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism in Canada's Anti-Racism strategy. We have also re-committed to the principles of the Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, and supported the adoption of the 2020 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Ministerial Declaration.

"Canada will always strongly condemn these acts, and is committed to standing against hatred and discrimination in all their forms. We reaffirm our commitment to Holocaust remembrance and education, so that we never forget its painful lessons. Working with our domestic and international partners, we will continue to promote and defend pluralism, inclusion, and human rights here at home and around the world.

"I encourage Canadians to take time today to remember the victims and survivors of the Holocaust. We will honour them by continuing to fight hate, protect the most vulnerable, and make the world a more peaceful and prosperous place for everyone by vowing "Never Again"."

Via pm.gc.ca

Premier Ford Bringing Ontario's Strategic Approach to Trade to Washington, D.C

Premier and Minister Fedeli to Attend the Winter Meeting of the National Governors Association



January 30, 2020 8:40 A.M.

Office of the Premier

TORONTO — Premier Doug Ford and Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, will travel to Washington, D.C. on February 7-9, 2020 and advance the Ontario government's priorities, including promoting investment and job creation, with key U.S. partners.

While in Washington, Premier Ford and Minister Fedeli will look to continue talks with the State of Ohio on removing trade restrictions and making it easier to do business and create jobs on both sides of the border.

"Buy American policies hurt workers on both sides of the border, and that is the message I will be bringing to my colleagues in Washington," said

Ontario Preparing People in Kitchener-Waterloo for Jobs

Government Helping Over 6,000 People Explore Skilled Trades Careers at Conestoga College

January 31, 2020 12:15 P.M.

Ministry of Labour,

Training and Skills Development

KITCHENER-WATERLOO - Ontario is addressing a potential skilled trades shortage by providing new funding to help people in the Kitchener-Waterloo area prepare for good jobs and careers in the trades.

"On any given day, there are more than 18,000 vacant jobs in the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie region," said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. "Those are paycheques waiting to be collected. But the workers aren't there. My mission is to bridge that skills gap in Kitchener-Waterloo and throughout the province. Today's announcement is the next step."

The government is investing \$9.2 million through Conestoga College to provide in-class training to 6,200 apprentices in 21 trades in 2020-21. The increase of \$1 million over last year will help an extra 632 people prepare for jobs. Classroom training complements the on-the-job work that apprentices do. Training will occur in four locations in Kitchener, Waterloo, Guelph, and Cambridge.

In addition, the government is investing almost \$750,000 through Conestoga College to fund three pre-apprenticeship training projects for 60 young people. The funding will allow them to get started in trades such as Industrial Mechanic Millwright, Truck and Coach Technician, and Cabinet-maker.

Minister McNaughton made the funding announcement at Conestoga College today as part of a province-wide listening tour to hear from em-



ployers, skilled tradespeople and others in the sector.

Pre-apprenticeship training promotes careers in the trades for all Ontario residents. The training programs are free, last up to one year, and often combine classroom training with an 8-12 week work placement.

"Ontario is facing a looming problem," said Minister McNaughton. "Our skilled tradespeople are retiring faster than we can replace them. We need to let young people know that careers in the trades are a viable first choice. They're exciting, fulfilling and often very lucrative."

Today's funding announcement follows the unveiling of Ontario's new marketing campaign highlighting the skilled trades as a viable career path. The ads, with the slogan 'Find a Career You Wouldn't Trade,' are currently running online, in movie theatres and on Tim Hortons TV.

"About one in five new jobs in Ontario over the next five years is expected to be in trades-related occupations," said Minister McNaughton. "Exposing people to careers in the skilled trades and getting them the in-class training they need makes good sense: It helps businesses find talent and opens the doors for people who want to work."

Via news.ontario.ca

Premier Ford. "By strengthening economic ties and making it easier for businesses to work together, our government will help create opportunities for Ontario businesses to bring their products and their expertise to markets in the United States."

While in Washington, Premier Ford and Minister Fedeli will meet with key American partners, including state governors. Their discussions will focus on removing trade barriers, strengthening economic ties, and creating jobs. They will also participate in roundtable events with business leaders to showcase Ontario as a top destination for investment.

Premier Ford and Minister Fedeli will also highlight Ontario's leader-

ship in infrastructure procurement. In April, Premier Ford and Laurie Scott, Minister of Infrastructure, will welcome an NGA Infrastructure Study Tour to Toronto, which will study best practices on modernizing infrastructure and explore infrastructure opportunities on both sides of the border.

"Our strong relationship with our neighbours to the south cannot be understated," said Minister Fedeli. "If Ontario were a country, we would be the U.S.'s third largest trading partner. Our government is advocating for Ontario businesses as we work to increase opportunities for trade, making it easier for our job creators to succeed."

Via news.ontario.ca



India: Climate emergency message resonates at world's largest literature festival – UN News special report from Jaipur

29 January 2020

Climate Change

Against the backdrop of India's famed "pink city" of Jaipur, the world's largest literature festival hosted the UN's top representative in the country on Monday, who told audience members attending a special session on the climate emergency, that the Organization is working flat out to slow the pace of damaging climate change.

From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. It is estimated that over 600 million Indians are likely to be impacted adversely by climate change if we don't change course now.

Jaipur is the capital of the picturesque, almost magical Indian state of Rajasthan. It is known as the Pink City due to the colour of the stone used for many of its glorious palaces and historic monuments.

Acclaimed as the 'greatest literary show on Earth', the five-day Jaipur Literature festival attracts more than 400,000 book lovers; around 2,000 speakers addressing more than 200 sessions; and authors from 20 different countries. The books being discussed are penned in more than two dozen languages.

Limits of influence

Questioned over whether the UN is doing enough to resolve the climate crisis, the UN's Resident Coordinator in India, Renata Dessallien, quipped that the Organization could not act as a "global police" force.

"We are also not a global Government, so there are limits, to which the UN is mandated and on what it is able to do."

"In fact", she added, "we are pushing the limits on many fronts. The best way to describe the United Nations is that we are the 'world persuader' – persuading people to do what is fundamentally right."



She lauded the UN's pioneering role in the science relating to the impact of climate change, in the late 1980s, "when a panel was established on climate change by the UN" known as the IPCC, which provides governments at all levels with trusted scientific information they can use to develop climate policies.

"So the science is out there and as an inter-governmental body we bring the nation states together to address the problem that's staring us in the face, validated by the science."

The session heard some startling stories of people living in India's Ladakh region who are gravely affected by Climate crisis.

Solar Energy Innovator, Educationist and Managing Director of Himalayan Institute of Alternatives in Ladakh, Sonam Wangchuk said: "Up in the mountains, across the Himalayas, particularly in Ladakh, our glaciers are melting and while we always had water shortages, now we are seeing droughts in the spring season."

"I know at least two villages where people had to abandon the whole village due to water (shortages). These droughts are now accompanied by flash floods in autumn."

In 2006, while volunteering in one such village that was washed away, leading to many deaths, he had asked villagers when the last flash flooding had occurred, but "they didn't remember. The same village had another flash flood in 2010, then in 2015 and then another one in 2017. So it's now becoming as frequent as that."

'Live simply'

He appealed to the people living in

the plains and the cities to be responsible and "live simply" so that the people of the mountains in turn, can 'simply live'.

Managing Editor of online journal PARI, Namita Waikar, who is chronicling the stories of how vulnerable populations across India are being most affected by climate change for the upcoming UNDP Human Development Report, chimed in with other first-hand accounts of how life is being adversely affected in the coastal cities.

"In the rural areas, there are communities in Tamil Nadu where seaweed farmers are forced to change livelihoods due to fast disappearing seaweeds."

"Similarly, in places like Delhi, inland fishing communities are catching dead fish. What they told me was heart breaking." Fisherman told her that if they lay the net at night, all they catch are the "freshest of the dead fish" in the morning. Keeping sewage and industrial waste out of rivers and coastal areas in an urgent priority, she said "Another fisherwoman said that some of the fish they caught earlier are now only seen on the Discovery channel."

That clearly explains the gravity of the situation."

Writer, educator and filmmaker, Shubhangi Swarup, who is exploring ecology in her fiction, explained how she is integrating climate change themes into her work.

"Our stories have become human-centric, self-obsessed and obnoxious. We don't have appreciation of nature and universe in our stories."

"So, I tried to write a novel where a geological fault line is the thread of the narrative. It begins with the Andaman (islands), goes to Myanmar, then Nepal and ends in Ladakh."

While telling the story, I realised how ridiculous the political borders are when we are talking about solving local problems", she said.

Profit or progress?

Civil Society Activist, Apoorva Oza,

reiterated the need to take profit considerations out of the climate change debate: "There's this excessive focus on measuring everything in economic terms. When I write a proposal they ask me whether I'll double the farmers' income. All I can tell you is that they will protect nature, they'll sustain the environment, they'll not over-exploit groundwater. But I can't guarantee that I can double their incomes. I can only guarantee their progress."

The session took a sombre turn when the famous Bollywood Actress and UN Advocate for Sustainable Development, Dia Mirza reached out to the audience and asked, "Do you have time? We just have a decade. Listen to women, listen to mothers, listen to children. And if you don't understand science, just watch nature."

The message was clear: everyone is responsible for creating a more environmentally sustainable world – And the arts and cultural sector is no exception.

As Moderator, Sameer Saran aptly concluded: "Since this festival is attended by the literati, stories come out of such places. If climate change becomes a part of these stories, we'll be inspired to take better steps in mitigating climate change. Stories we tell about ourselves define our actions. And if our stories are green, then probably our future will also be green and prosperous."

Festival attractions

The 13th year of the Jaipur Literature Festival saw a host of literary big-hitters in attendance, including Nobel Laureate Abhijit Banerjee, Pulitzer Prize Awardee Forrest Gander, Journalist Christina Lamb, the New Yorker journalist Dexter Filkins, Man Booker Prize winner Howard Jacobson, Elizabeth Gilbert and popular Indian writers like Shashi Tharoor and Javed Akhtar engaging in ideas, debate and dialogue.

Via news.un.org

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Aro und the World

Myanmar: Departing UN rights expert still hopeful for democratic transition

23 January 2020

Human Rights

An independent human rights expert said she has not given up hope for a democratic transition in Myanmar even though the country has yet to address “grave allegations” of international crimes, including possible genocide.

Yanghee Lee was speaking in Bangladesh on Thursday at the end of her last official visit to the region as the UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar.

“I have lost my optimism”, she said. “How could I be optimistic with ongoing credible allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity and possibly genocide having been committed in Myanmar, and with justice and accountability still not yet within reach?”

“But I still hold out hope that the promised democratic transition will proceed, as it is not too late for the Government to change the course it is currently set to. The Myanmar Government must face up to its responsibilities, obligations and duties.”

Entry denied

Ms. Lee was appointed by the UN Human Rights Council in 2014 and will deliver her final report in March.

Her mandate falls under what is known as the Council’s Special Procedures, an independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanism to address specific country situations or thematic issues.

Special Rapporteurs are not UN staff, serve in their own capacity, and are not paid for their work.

She had conducted biannual visits to Myanmar until being denied entry from December 2017 onwards.

As she was again barred from entering for her final visit, Ms. Lee travelled to Thailand and Bangladesh to gather information about the situation in Myanmar.

The end of her mission coincided with a decision by the UN’s top court, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), ordering Myanmar to protect its Rohingya population from genocide.

More than 700,000 members of the mainly Muslim minority group fled Rakhine state in northern Myanmar nearly three years ago following a reported crackdown by the military, known as the Tatmadaw, in response to deadly attacks against police and security posts carried out by separatists known as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army.

Ms. Lee has welcomed the ICJ decision.

Refugees want to return

During her final mission, the rights expert met with scores of refugees in



UN PHOTO/JEAN-MARC FERRE
Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar Yanghee Lee. UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

“I am also very worried about both sides engaging in disturbing tactics including abductions and mass arrests, and how this is instilling fear in the civilian population”, she added.

Hopes for free and fair elections

Ms. Lee observed that while the Myanmar authorities have taken steps towards international justice and accountability in recent years, more action is still needed.

With elections slated for this year, she called on the Government to ensure the vote is peaceful, credible, free and fair, and that all people can participate in the process.



IOM/MOHAMMED - Rohingya refugees fleeing conflict and persecution in Myanmar.



© UNICEF/BASHIR SUJAN - The Kutupalong-Balukhali camp in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh, is home to more than 600,000 stateless Rohingya refugees.

Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh, who spoke of the horrors they had suffered.

“I met with male survivors of sexual violence. They told me of the rape and gang rape that they endured at the hands of the Myanmar military and security forces in Rakhine”, said Ms. Lee. “I also met Rohingya Christians who told me they were persecuted by the Myanmar Government due to their religion.

“Refugees I spoke to were firm about their deep desire to return home. However, I was informed of ongoing

violence, continuing restrictions on movement, forced imposition of National Verification Cards, and people being killed and injured by landmines in northern Rakhine. Conditions remain unsuitable for their return.”

Intensifying conflict between the separatist Arakan Army in Rakhine and national armed forces is having a devastating impact, she said, which has been worsened by Government restrictions that include internet shutdown and blocking aid in some townships.

“Some people told me they are worried that polling may not be allowed in parts of Rakhine and Shan for security reasons”, she said.

“If that occurs, distrust towards the next government and community grievances and marginalization that already exist are only going to grow stronger, and this will further hamper efforts to move forward in the democratic transition and peace process”.

Via news.un.org



India Evacuates Nationals From Wuhan, China



Indian Muslims wear masks and pray for the prevention of coronavirus during a special prayer after Friday prayers at a mosque in Ahmadabad, India, Jan. 31, 2020.

By Anjana Pasricha

February 01, 2020 07:19 AM

NEW DELHI - India has evacuated 324 of its nationals from Wuhan, the epicenter of the deadly coronavirus outbreak in China, where hundreds of Indians are studying in universities.

After landing in New Delhi Saturday they were taken to two quarantine facilities set up by the army, where they will be kept under observation for two weeks.

India confirmed its first case of coronavirus Thursday in the southern state of Kerala, in a student who had returned from Wuhan. The focus in the world's second most populous country now has turned to preparedness.

More than 200 of the people who landed in New Delhi Saturday are students – over 20,000 Indians study in China, mostly in medical colleges.

A second flight is scheduled to bring back more nationals from Wuhan and nearby areas that are under lockdown to prevent the spread of the virus.

Authorities have been screening all people arriving from China and Hong Kong at seven of India's major airports and have adopted quarantine procedures for anyone suspected of carrying

the virus. About 40 people have been put in isolation across eight states.

Health experts have stressed that surveillance will be crucial to prevent its spread in the country's crowded cities.

"We are taking all precautions against it," Health minister Harsh Vardhan said earlier this week.

India on Friday also banned the export of personal protective clothing and masks amid a surge in demand from China.

Two of the country's major airlines have temporarily suspended most flights to China and authorities have asked Indians to "refrain" from traveling to the country.

Besides India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are also evacuating their citizens from China – Sri Lanka brought back 33 students on Saturday. Sri Lanka reported its first case of the coronavirus in a 43-year-old Chinese tourist from Hubei Province.

The World Health Organization has declared the coronavirus outbreak an international public health emergency. The decision was announced after cases of human-to-human transmissions were confirmed outside China.

Via voanews.com

Malaysia's Palm Oil Sector Pays for Prime Minister's Tough Talk on India

By Zsombor Peter

January 31, 2020 05:31 AM

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA -

India's boycott of Malaysian palm oil over Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's rebuke of New Delhi's handling of Kashmir and Muslim migrants may deal a heavy blow to Malaysia's economy this year, the more so if it expands to other key commodities.

But some economists say the nominally punitive move may have as much to do with India's growing fixation with correcting its bilateral trade deficits in an Asian echo of U.S. President Donald Trump's "America First" push.

India is by far the largest importer of palm oil from Malaysia, the world's second largest producer after Indonesia. The versatile fruit extract is used in everything from pizza dough to soap and biofuels.

In October India's top vegetable oil trade body, the Solvent Extractors Association, urged its members to stop buying Malaysian palm oil over Mahathir's "unprovoked pronouncement" and "in solidarity with our nation." To New Delhi's consternation, the prime minister of Muslim-majority Malaysia had reproached India for stripping statehood from its portion of Kashmir, which also has a Muslim majority, and later over legislative amendments that appear to deny Indian citizenship to Muslim migrants from some countries.

Earlier this month, Mahathir's media adviser, A. Kadir Jasin, said Malaysia should respond with its own boycott of Indian exports and by tightening restrictions on Indian migrants. But Mahathir soon dismissed the idea, conceding that Malaysia was too small to retaliate against India, a country of 1.35 billion people to Malaysia's 31.5 million.

Yu Leng Khor, a political economist and principal of Segi Enam Advisors, a consulting firm that studies the region's trade in palm oil and other commodities, said Malaysia needed India far more than vice versa and would wield little leverage in a reciprocal



FILE - Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad speaks during the signing ceremony for Bandar Malaysia in Putrajaya, Malaysia, Dec. 17, 2019. Though Mahathir has stood by his rankling remarks, Khor said he will want to contain the damage.

trade war.

Malaysia exported about \$8.53 billion worth of goods to India between January and November of last year while importing only \$5.35 billion from the country over the same period, according to the latest figures from the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, a state enterprise.

Malaysia's palm oil industry, a pillar of the national economy, has tied its fortunes to India in particular in recent years. Nearly 1 in every 4 tons of palm oil Malaysia exported in 2019 landed in India.

"In the last couple of years, it is the biggest market for Malaysia, and it delivered a huge increase in volume and traded value in 2019, and this [boycott] is a big slap-down now," Khor said.

Though New Delhi publicly denies reports by Reuters news agency that it has told Indian importers to shun Malaysian palm oil, it has moved refined palm oil imports to the "restricted" list, forcing traders to jump through cumbersome new hoops. Khor said that alone could cost Malaysia up to \$1.4 billion, though it could try to make up some of the loss by selling India more crude palm oil and moving quickly to boost refined palm oil exports to other countries.

Contd. on page 10...

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Pakistan Delays Decision on Movie That Offended Islamists

By Associated Press

February 03, 2020 08:17 AM

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN - Pakistan's government on Monday postponed its decision on whether to lift a ban on a movie that had offended hard-line Islamists in this Muslim-majority country, after asking a high council of clerics to weigh in on the film.

The Islamists had raised allegations of blasphemy over the film, "Zindagi Tamasha," or "Circus of Life," by Pakistani director Sarmad Khosat, which was to be released in late January. Its debut was scrapped by the Punjab provincial government's information office, following objections from the Tehreek-e-Labbaik party and its followers.

Their claims drew attention again to Pakistan's controversial blasphemy law, which carries an automatic death sentence for a conviction of insulting Islam. There have been widespread complaints that the law is used to settle scores and intimidate religious minorities.

The party's supporters argued the movie contains blasphemous content and could spread hatred against people of faith. Party leader Khadim Rizvi threatened to hold nationwide protests on Jan. 24, the day the film was originally set to open in local cinemas.

Raja Jehangir Anwar, the Punjab government spokesman, said a special government committee postponed a meeting scheduled for Monday to examine the ban. The fate of the movie was referred to the country's Council of Islamic Ideology, a constitutional body that advises the government and legislature. It was unclear when the council would deliver its opinion.



Cinema-goers buy tickets to watch a film at a local cinema in Karachi, Pakistan, Feb. 1, 2020.

The film's director, Khosat, has denied the allegations against the movie. He was asked by authorities to appear before the special government committee, which includes officials from the Central Board of Film Censors and a representative of Tehreek-e-Labbaik, to answer questions about his movie.

The film's storyline focuses on a conservative, devout Muslim businessman, Mohammad Rahat Khawaj, whose life unravels after a video of him watching a woman dance at a wedding is posted online and goes viral. His family is ashamed of him and he faces taunts from radical Islamists wherever he goes.

The controversy over the film also underscores the deepening divisions in Pakistani society in which Islamist parties have become more vocal in recent years.

In 2018, tens of thousands of Islamists blocked highways around the capital, Islamabad, to protest the acquittal of a Christian woman, Aasia Bibi, of blasphemy charges. She was eventually forced to leave Pakistan last year. Those rallies were organized by the Tehreek-e-Labbaik.

Some observers point out that both proponents and critics of the film in Pakistan had based their opinions solely on a two-minute promotional trailer showing a bearded student, similar to those attending religious schools or madrassas, having a heated argument with the main character, Khawaj, before beating him.

Tehreek-e-Labbaik was also angered by a scene in the movie of an angry mob chanting its popular slogan, used at party rallies to defend blasphemy laws. The party says the film was

also an attempt to tarnish its image.

The director declined to comment to The Associated Press, saying he had said everything he wanted to say in letters to Pakistani President Arif Alvi, Khan and army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa, which he shared on Twitter in January.

"I did not make (the movie) to hurt, offend or malign anyone," Khosat tweeted, adding that, "as an artist, the last thing I'd ever want to achieve through my artistic expression is anarchy or hatred. No! That's not what an artist does. Or at least I don't."

"There is nothing offensive or malicious in the film," he said in the letter to the president. "The space for rational and artistic thinking and expression must not be annexed by a few troublemakers for their political end but I fear this is what will happen if we buckle under this time."

Khosat had received Pakistan's prestigious President's Award for Pride of Performance in 2017 in recognition of his work as an artist. He directed an earlier film, "Manto," and played a key role in the movie "Motorcycle Girl." He has also done television work.

Last year, ahead of its debut at home, "Zindagi Tamasha" won the coveted Kim Ji-seok Award at the Busan International Film Festival in South Korea, drawing praise from the film community in Pakistan.

Pakistan's film industry has seen a decades-long decline, mainly blamed on poor scripts and lack of technological advances used by film producers, compared to neighboring India.

Via voanews.com

contd. from page 9...

And if chatter in India's press of expanding the boycott to electronics and other Malaysian import comes true, she added, the impact on Malaysia's economy could be "quite major."

Shankaran Nambiar, a senior fellow at the Malaysia Institute of Economic Research, agreed.

"It would be Malaysia's turn to retaliate. But it appears that Malaysia is making reconciliatory moves, which implies that Malaysia doesn't want relations to deteriorate. So at worst we have a standoff," he said.

Last week Malaysia's top sugar refiner, MSM Malaysia Holdings Berhad, an arm of state-owned palm oil producer FGV Holdings, announced a hefty hike in its raw sugar imports from India in what many see as a move to placate New Delhi.

That would suggest that the row is about more than pummeled pride.

Nambiar said India's trade deficit with Malaysia may have been the tinder to which Mahathir's reproof was the spark.



FILE - A worker unloads palm oil fruits from a truck inside a palm oil factory in Salak Tinggi, outside Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Aug. 4, 2014

He noted that India's new restrictions on refined palm oil imports apply to all countries, "Malaysia among them, although it ... seems that vessels carrying refined palm oil from Malaysia have been stuck at ports."

Khor likened India's moves to Trump's own take on America's trade

deficits with other countries.

"I think it's part of this overall thing that we're seeing globally, right? That there's this pullback and big questioning of trade relationships. ... Should there be an imbalance? Shouldn't we all have a more equal trade balance?"



FILE - Kashmiri Muslims offer prayer inside Jamia Masjid in Srinagar, Indian controlled Kashmir, Dec. 18, 2019.

she said.

"And I think in a global trade environment where trade relationships [are] being really looked at very carefully now — and with ... geopolitical and political sensitivities — I think, sadly, Malaysia played straight into it."

Via voanews.com

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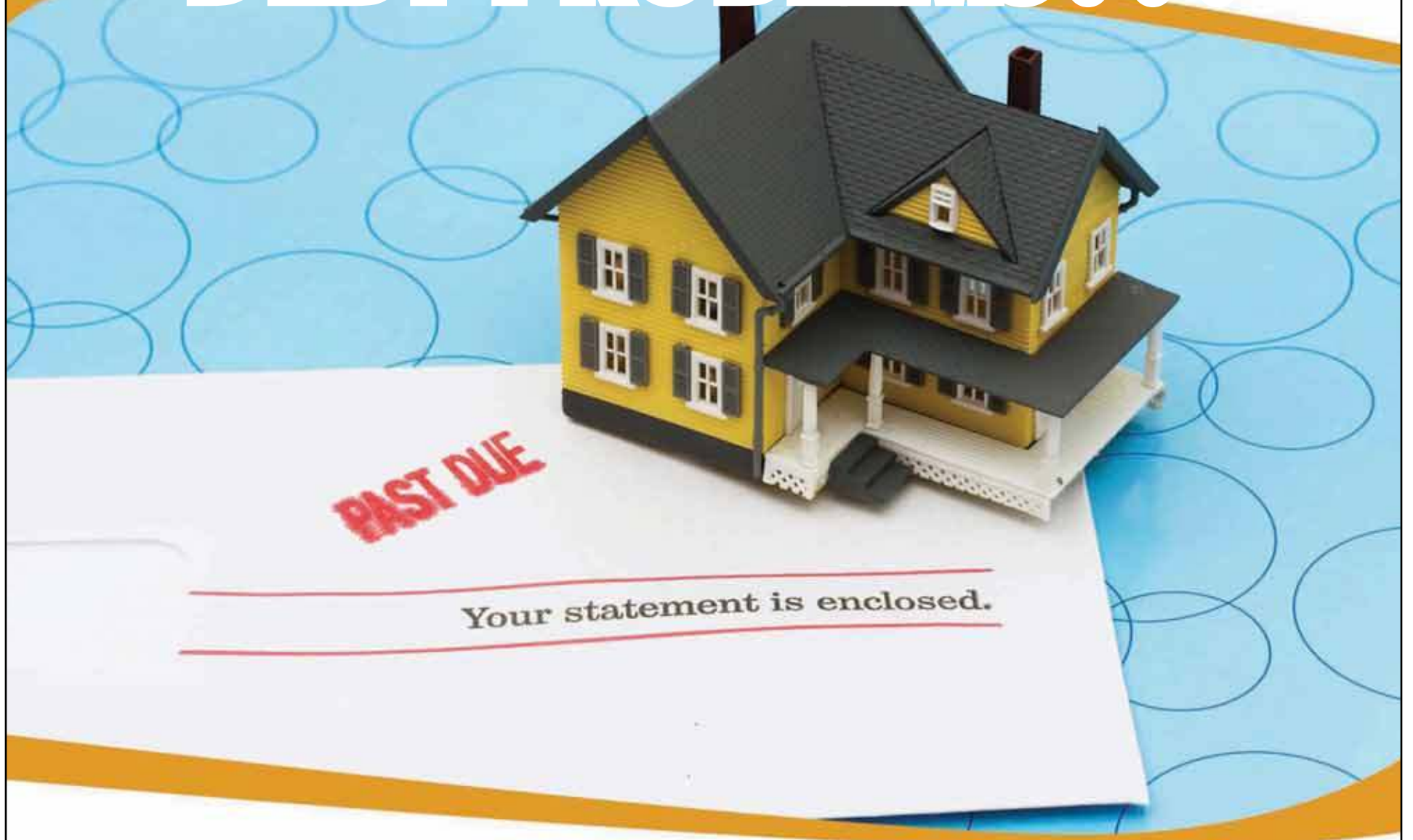
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Coronavirus Update from City of Toronto Public Health Office: 'The risk to Toronto residents remains low.'

**Situation - As of
February 3, 2020**

Toronto Public Health is monitoring two confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Toronto. The individuals recently travelled to Wuhan together. One individual has been discharged home from the hospital and the other has been in self-isolation since returning to Toronto. Toronto Public Health continues to monitor the situation and provide updates. The risk to Toronto residents remains low.

On December 31, 2019, cases of undiagnosed viral pneumonia were first reported by health authorities in Wuhan, China. The cause has now been confirmed as a new coronavirus, known as 2019-nCoV, which has not previously been identified in humans.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that circulate in animals including humans and may cause illness in them. Human coronaviruses are common and can range from mild illnesses such as the common cold, to severe illnesses such as Severe Acute

Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (SARS CoV) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS CoV).

How to Protect Yourself

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Prevention measures include:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid close contact with people who are ill.

Stay home when you are ill.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash your hands.

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I take this opportunity to convey my sincere thanks to all my clientele for the trust and confidence that you had in me and it has indeed been my pleasure to represent your interests.

I thank the community, the media and the community organizations for your support during the growing phase of the community. I am privileged to have been part of it.

Best Wishes to all for the New Year and the years ahead.

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என்மீது நம்பிக்கை வைத்து சட்டரீதியான சேவை வழங்க சந்தர்ப்பம் அளித்த அனைவருக்கும் எனது மனம் நிறைந்த நன்றியை இவ்வேளையில் தெரிவிக்க விரும்புகிறேன்.

சமூகம் வளர்ச்சியடைந்து வந்த வேளையில் அதற்குப் பங்களிக்க எனக்கு ஆதரவு வழங்கிய சமூகம், ஊடகங்கள், சமூக அமைப்புகள் அனைத்துக்கும் இச்சந்தர்ப்பத்தில் நன்றி கூறுவது எனது கடமையாகும்.

இந்தப் புத்தாண்டிலும் எதிர்வரும் ஆண்டுகளிலும் அனைவர் வாழ்வும் சிறந்தோங்க எனது நல்வாழ்த்துகள்.



அன்புடன்

யசோ சின்னத்துரை, வழக்கறிஞர்



CELEBRATING THE LARGEST SINGLE GIFT IN SHN HISTORY

Scarborough Health Network Foundation is thrilled to announce and celebrate the largest single gift in its 63-year history – a transformative multi-million dollar donation from the Lal family. The contribution will improve emergency and cardiac care in each of our hospitals. In recognition of the family, the Emergency Department at SHN's General hospital has been re-named the Deepa & Nardiner Lal Emergency. SHN celebrated the new name and extraordinary gift at the General hospital on December 4 with the Lal family, SHN staff, physicians and guests.

The Lals wanted to give back to the Scarborough community because it had been a part of their lives for over 30 years. They migrated to Canada in the early 1970s with \$48 in their pockets and started a business in their family

basement. Their company, Metro Label became one of the largest label manufacturers in North America and it all started in Scarborough.

"Our business Metro Label was located in Scarborough for 33 years. We wanted to support care in Scarborough, where we grew our business and many of our employees lived. We know our investment in SHN will help care for them and their families," says Deepa and Nardiner Lal.

Thanks to the Lals, patients at SHN's emergency will benefit from less waiting, improved patient care, and the advanced technology all patients expect and deserve. The transformative gift will allow SHN to purchase new equipment and technology and will enable our community to benefit from the most advanced diagnostic and treatment tools.

The gift will also support the Arrhythmia Program at the Centenary hospital, known for its expertise in implanting pacemaker

devices, electrophysiology, and complex ablations to treat people with heart conditions.



SHN'S NEW STROKE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE COMING APRIL 2020

Scarborough is just settling into winter, but we're already looking forward to spring. It's the season of new beginnings — trees budding, flowers blooming, birds singing, and hospital stroke centres opening.

That's right. Work on Scarborough Health Network's (SHN) Stroke Centre of Excellence is quickly moving forward, with plans to launch the new service at our Birchmount hospital in April 2020. As plans take shape, we are pleased to share more details.

The Stroke Centre of Excellence will be located on the 4th floor at Birchmount, and will include the following...

Integrated Stroke Unit

The Stroke Centre will be built around a new Integrated Stroke Unit. This is best practice for treating stroke patients who have been hospitalized, providing them with the specialized medical care they need and being able to transition them into rehabilitation — all within the same space.

Patients get coordinated care from a dedicated team, without having to move from unit to unit. This means faster service, less time spent in the hospital, and better recovery and quality of life when patients return home.



Features

- 22 beds for specialized, acute stroke care and rehabilitation services
- A gym for occupational and physical therapy
- An enhanced lounge to support patients in becoming more mobile and getting back to daily activities

Stroke Prevention Clinic

The Stroke Centre at Birchmount will also include an outpatient Stroke Prevention Clinic that will help to support patients in managing their risk factors for stroke.

Features

For patients who have had a "mini" or "warning" stroke known as a

transient ischemic attack (TIA), or have symptoms of TIA

Open five days a week

Provide consultations and partners with SHN's emergency departments and family physicians in the community

Dedicated Stroke Care Team

Stroke care at the Centre will be delivered through a coordinated, interprofessional approach. The stroke care team will include:

Nurses, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Rehab Assistants, Speech Language Therapists, Nurse Practitioners, Social Workers, Pharmacists, Dietitians, and Spiritual Care
Physicians specialists in Internal Medicine, Neurology, and Psychiatry

Next Steps

SHN is continuing to finalize our implementation plan for putting the new Stroke Centre of Excellence in place at our Birchmount hospital. This work is being led by Task Force teams for Clinical Services, Capital Planning, and Human Resources.

Throughout November, SHN held several community engagement

sessions where we discussed how we are planning the delivery of services across our health network. This was an opportunity to speak about the Stroke Centre of Excellence, which is an exciting example of how planning clinical services can make a positive difference for Scarborough.

We will continue to engage our community and provide updates on the development of the new Stroke Centre as we progress towards our April 2020 launch date.

Accessing Stroke Care Today

To create our new Stroke Centre of Excellence, in the coming months, SHN will be moving stroke services from inpatient units currently at our Centenary and General hospitals to our Birchmount hospital.

Until we open the Stroke Centre of Excellence in April, we still continue to deliver stroke care through our current units and services at Centenary and General.

What to do in an emergency

If you think that you or someone you're with is having a stroke, call 911 immediately for emergency services. The ambulance will get you to the hospital for care the fastest. Signs of stroke include drooping in your face, difficulty raising your arms, and slurring of your speech.

Free Group Therapy Sessions for Those Affected by Flight 752 Crash

The Ukrainian flight PS752 crash on January 8 caused 57 Canadians to lose their lives, leaving behind devastated family and friends. A casualty of this magnitude can have a severe impact on the mental health of those who knew the victims.

To support and honour the victims and their families and friends, Scarborough Health Network invites families and friends of victims to a free group therapy workshop. Group therapy has been shown to be an effective approach in supporting those coping with loss to overcome sadness and accelerate the recovery process.

The sessions will be held in Farsi and led by Dr. Arian Behzadi, consulting psychiatrist at Scarborough Health Network.

If you are interested in attending these free group therapy sessions, please send your name and contact information to mentalhealth@shn.ca and kindly indicate "Grief Group Therapy Workshop" as the email subject. Please note that this workshop is designed for adults.

Space is limited and registration is required.

Location: 1225 Kennedy Road, Unit J, Scarborough **Time:** 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Session Date	Session Topic
Monday, February 3, 2020	Reviewing session policies, confidentiality and preliminary psychoeducation about normal grief processes vs. complicated grief and trauma.
Monday, February 10, 2020	Reviewing the early stages of grief, denial, numbness and helplessness.
Monday, February 24, 2020	Reviewing the late stages of grief, anger, avoidance, mourning, guilt and sleep disturbances.
Monday, March 2, 2020	Psychodynamics of immigration and reviewing the symptoms of PTSD and major depression with a reflection on symptoms of normal grief.
Monday, March 9, 2020	Indications for seeing more advanced mental health workers and psychiatrists, reflections on the previous sessions and conclusion.

SHN's Child and Adolescent program is here to offer any mental health support required. Our Crisis Service is 24/7, but also available as a resource is the Shoniker Clinic. To coordinate services for a child/youth please contact 416-284-8131- ext. 5301.

NEW APPROACH TO DIALYSIS CARE PUTS PATIENTS IN CONTROL

A new program at Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is encouraging patients to take an active lead in their care. For nephrology patient Joseph Munroe, that means a newfound sense of pride in taking a first-hand role in managing his kidney disease.

SHN's Scarborough Regional Nephrology Program introduced the new Shared Care approach, adopted from the Shared Hemodialysis Care initiative in the United Kingdom, on January 17. It's a care philosophy that offers patients the opportunity to learn from highly skilled nephrology staff on how to manage different aspects of their treatment and care.

"Shared Care is really about working in partnership with the Shared Care team – my care coaches. They enable me to do as much in my care as I am able and interested in," shared Joseph.

"The team provides such exceptional care, but being able to support my own treatment and conduct aspects of my own care tasks fills me with a sense of pride that I am taking a first-hand role in managing my disease."

Working directly with nurses and other members of the Shared Care team, patients learn the tasks they feel most comfortable handling. The care team works closely with the patients to teach and coach them through the tasks, and are available any time a patient decides they would like additional support or traditional care. The tasks include:

- Hand hygiene
- Conducting their observations (blood pressure, weight and temperature)
- Understanding laboratory results/diet management

- Managing their symptoms
- Medication administration/management
- Managing their vascular access
- Preparing their pack/supplies for dialysis
- Lining their machine
- Priming their machine
- Programming their machine
- Starting their dialysis treatment
- Self-care during dialysis
- Discontinuing their dialysis
- Complete after-care of machine

"We know that being diagnosed with chronic kidney disease is life-changing for our patients; we also know that engaging with our patients and families and enabling them to take control of their care can have incredible benefits," noted Dr.

Tam, Chief of Nephrology at Scarborough Health Network.

"In some cases, they feel a sense of accomplishment or independence. In other cases, it can even mean pain relief; as gentle and experienced as our team is, a patient knows their body best and Shared Care gives them greater control over delicate tasks, like inserting their own dialysis needles into their vascular access. And for some, it might mean the difference between coming to the hospital three times a week for dialysis, and learning to become fully independent to manage their dialysis at home."

With the SHN's Regional Nephrology Program as the largest in Ontario, making dialysis care practices best in class, through initiatives like Shared Care, was a natural step towards



Join us for the second annual Caribbean Winter Carnival



The Caribbean Philanthropic Council is thrilled to host the second annual Caribbean Winter Carnival on Friday, March 6, 2020. The event is an island-style carnival with food inspired from the islands, opportunity to shop from local vendors, support the 50/50 raffle, bid on a wide selection of auction items, and more!

The council brings together individuals of diverse talents and backgrounds who share the desire to help the SHN Foundation bring the best health care to our community. Its mandate is to raise funds for vital pieces of medical equipment and the highest priority needs of the Scarborough Health Network. This event acts as a vehicle to create change through commitment and philanthropic spirit.

Date: Friday, March 6, 2020

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: JC's Banquet Hall, 1686 Ellesmere Road, Scarborough

Tickets: \$20

Purchase your tickets today at SHNfoundation.ca. Contact Abhi Shah, Community Development Officer, for more information at ashah@shn.ca or 416-281-7265.

TRANSFORMING CARE EXPO

Your first look at the future of care.

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is transforming care and we want you to be part of this next step in our exciting journey.

About this Event

Join us at our Transforming Care Expo to learn how we are shaping the future of care for Scarborough.

Monday, February 10, 6 - 8 p.m. | Scarborough Civic Centre - Rotunda (150 Borough Drive, Scarborough)

We have been meeting with our physicians, professional staff, and health-care teams, and engaging with our partners and community members to find the best way to deliver services across our health network.

Now we are ready to share a first look at our recommendations for these 12 clinical programs, as well as key support programs:

Critical Care | Emergency Department | Cancer Care | Palliative Care | Surgery & Anesthesiology | Medicine & Rehabilitation | Family Medicine | Nephrology & Diabetes | Cardiology & Stroke | Paediatrics | Seniors Health | Mental Health | Pharmacy, Diagnostics Imaging and Lab

We will have booths for each of the clinical and support programs we're reviewing. Drop by to...

- Check out early plans for transforming these clinical services.
- Speak with leaders and physicians for each program.
- Share your thoughts.

Learn more about clinical services planning at SHN at transformingcare.ca.



Wuhan: They shutdown the City

A DISPATCH FROM QUARANTINED WUHAN DURING THE CORONAVIRUS EPIDEMIC

— by Xiaoyu Lu, translated by Allen Young



- Wuhan city

On January 17, I went to pick up a friend at the Hankou train station in my hometown Wuhan. She was the only one wearing a face mask. At the time, the official line was that everything was under control, that the spread could be prevented. “The Huanan Seafood Market is only two blocks away,” I said to her, teasingly. In an all-night restaurant, the glass tanks were swimming with life. We ate noodles with crab legs. The streets were as packed as ever, with drunk revelers trying to call cabs after their year-end company parties. A man doubled over to vomit, while a young woman patted him on the back and said, “Ready for another round, honey?”

A week ago the panic was still confined to health-conscious retirees, who always worry about seasonal illnesses. It didn’t prompt them to wear face masks or use hand sanitizer more regularly, it just gave them a new reason to get on young people’s case: don’t go out, drink plenty of water. There were also the perennial conspiracy theorists, who doubted official news yet didn’t provide more reliable information. To most of us, not wearing a mask seemed reasonable and logical. After all, who wanted to be associated with paranoid old folks and crackpots?

Wuhan is not a city of fear. I can’t think of a time when it has ever been gripped by panic. Perhaps that is due to the city’s revolutionary past, as the site of the Wuchang uprising in 1911 that overthrew the Qing dynasty. If a revolution couldn’t faze us, a natural disaster or illness won’t. In 1998, when I was a child growing up here, a flood burst the dams on the Yangtze, leaving whole neighborhoods head-deep in water and halting all public transit. Since the ground level was submerged, us kids would play together on the second floor of our buildings, firing BB guns at the dead animals floating in the water. I remember how the adults kept going to work, while we had a watery vacation. Wuhan residents have a perverse competitive streak: the more extreme a challenge, the more we throw ourselves against it.

When the time came for my friend to leave, on January 19, the atmosphere had become more tense, and events took a nasty turn.

First came the official reports from other provinces, confirming that the virus wasn’t just in Wuhan, and that it could be passed between human carriers. Supermarkets were still packed with locals stocking up for the Chinese New Year celebrations. Criticism of Wuhan’s disease control became a national pastime. I was only back in town for the holidays, but I wrote an email to my university in Australia about extending my leave.

On January 20, I came down with cold-like symptoms and immediately went to a community clinic. People were streaming in and out. Only the doctor wore a face mask, and he indiscriminately prescribed antibiotics, fever reducers, and a traditional honeysuckle medicine. As I waited, I read a regulation posted on the wall that medical personnel have a legal responsibility to report Category A infectious diseases within two hours, and Category B and C diseases within 24 hours. Atypical pneumonia is classified as Category B but follows the reporting timeline of Category A.

When it was my turn to be seen, the doctor told me I didn’t have a fever. He wrote down my name and age, then told the crowd that the clinic had run out of face masks. Go take a look in the pharmacy next door, he suggested. “What can we do to prevent getting sick?” asked someone. The doctor lowered his mask and replied, “Try positive thinking.” Everyone laughed.

When I went to the pharmacy, crowds were lining up to buy face masks. The shelves displayed all kinds, and people were asking which was most effective. I hesitated, and the face masks were going fast so I randomly bought a few. Then another customer came in and tried to buy the rest of the stock, carrying a bulky bag. More than one person consoled themselves saying: “everyone else is wearing one, so I’ll be safe even if I don’t.” In Shanghai and Beijing, masks were already selling out, and in Wuhan they are now almost impossible to find. From that day on, face masks became ubiquitous in public, and the streets were a collage of white patches, like pear-blossoms budding out of season.

On January 21, I met some friends for lunch in the city center. I’ve got a bit of a

cold, I said. Perfect timing, they replied. Come over and drink down the virus. A lot of people were coming down with colds — some real, some in their heads. None of us suggested cancelling lunch. Companies had called off their parties and restaurants had more space available. Everyone ate quickly, and by the time we had finished drinking, we were the only ones left. Outside, as we walked across Liberation Park, we took off our masks. I didn’t see a soul. I’ve never seen this central park so quiet. “It’s because it’s raining today,” my friend said, flipping up his collar. On the drive home, the taxi driver wore a mask.

“Not leaving town?” he asked.
“Today everyone’s going to the train stations.”

“Where would I go?” I replied.
“The sick flee when there’s no truth around,” he said.

His words reminded me of Amartya Sen’s theory about democracy preventing famine. Freedom of speech is usually a cheesy topic: too pious, too self-righteous. Only in a crisis does it take on real meaning. Whether or not you can speak up is one thing, and whether the truth will prevail is another. I desperately grasped at news from any source, none of which I could verify, filling me with bottomless anxiety. I wanted neither to be blindly optimistic, nor to think the worst. When I got home, the TV was showing an interview with the pulmonologist Zhong Nanshan, savior of the 2003 SARS crisis. My family decided to shop for supplies tomorrow, and not leave the house after that. My relatives cancelled their plans to come to Wuhan for the new year.

On January 22, an icy rain fell all day long. Wearing a face mask outside was now seen as a matter of common decency. The crisis had become a test case for arguing the merits or flaws of the government. On social media, neither side changed its position, but now they had a new example to point to, a new argument for praising or criticizing state agencies. Now that I was directly affected, I lost any desire to take part. I didn’t want to write a word; Wuhan

wasn’t an argument for me to brandish in a debate. People in an epidemic-stricken area don’t care about scoring points about who’s right and who’s wrong.

On January 23, the day before Chinese new year’s eve, Wuhan locked down. Nobody was allowed out. Concerned messages flooded my phone. I tossed a few effervescent vitamin tablets into a glass of water and started the day with a fizz. My family cancelled plans to visit our buried ancestors in the cemetery. The living can’t see the dead, said my grandmother, playing on a Chinese proverb that the dead can’t see the living. My parents went shopping, though they didn’t see any of the profiteering we had heard about. As soon as goods made it onto the shelves, they were snatched up. The supermarket gave up and closed in the morning, to reopen at an undetermined date. At the door a security guard touched every customer’s head with a thermometer, as if giving them a blessing.

It is the eve of the new year. My neighborhood is nearly deserted. Even the dogs have ceased barking — if only the cat in heat next door would shut up, too. I sleep unusually well. I read old books and make long-term plans. Neighbors remind us to stock up on food, and tell us of those with high fevers who are being sent to the hospital. They’re afraid they might be taken too. The news is infuriating: it’s either about New Year’s celebrations, or about the selfless doctors and nurses on the front line. Their tragic heroism is an obsession, and the crisis is turning into an excuse to venerate them. No one should need to prove themselves through heroic acts. Tears well up at their sacrifice, not at why sacrifice is necessary in the first place. In time of disaster, we look for the divine in humanity.

They say they’re going to build a hospital in six days. During SARS it took them a whole week.

Xiaoyu Lu is a research student, a travel writer and a frequent contributor to Chinese media.

-This article was first published on the Los Angeles Review of Books China Channel. (chinachannel.org)



Markham Stouffville Hospital opens new wellness clinic in the community

Markham, ON (January 28, 2020) – Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) is proud to have opened the MSH Wellness Clinic, which provides mental health programs and services outside of the hospital setting, making care more accessible for patients.

The 3,000 square foot clinic is located on Wooten Way North in Markham. It features two bright and spacious rooms equipped with large screens for group therapy sessions, four offices where one-on-one client care can take place and a welcoming reception area.

“The MSH Wellness Clinic brings the hospital vision of providing care beyond our walls and connecting with the community to life,” said Jo-anne Marr, President and CEO at MSH.

“The new clinic allows us to provide recovery and support services to mental health patients, when and where they need it most, right in the community.”

An interprofessional team of occupational therapists and social service workers staff the MSH Wellness Clinic. The team uses a holistic approach that focuses on strategies to reintegrate patients back into the community. The new space has proven to be very effective in patients’ recovery since they can receive easily accessible care in their own community. Programs running in the MSH Wellness Clinic include the BRIDGE program and the Women’s Wellness Clinic.

The BRIDGE program is an adult day treatment program that offers group therapy five days a week for 12 consecutive weeks. Group therapy sessions include topics such as coping strategies, recovery, stress management, yoga and art therapy, goal setting, and more.

“The new home for the BRIDGE program has enhanced accessibility for patients and broken down barriers. It is a literal ‘bridge’ back into the community for them – they no longer have to make a long walk to get to a group class or be interrupted by a jarring code call mid-session,” said Teresa Wong, Patient Care Manager, Outpatient Mental Health at MSH. “The clients love the new space and location; they feel like it’s their own.”

Walls of the new clinic are adorned with art created by patients in the art therapy group, which is part of the women’s wellness services offered. Using different methods, the Women’s Wellness Clinic aims to improve women’s sense of personal wellbeing, strengthen focus and mental flexibility, manage difficult emotions, promote self-awareness and distinguish healthy



from unhealthy coping.

“The long-term plan for therapeutic services at the hospital has always included an offsite clinic to improve access to mental health care,” said Allan Bell, Vice President, Community Relations and Corporate Partnerships at MSH Foundation. “And thanks to the continuous support from generous donors and sponsors, the hospital is able to meet the growing needs of the community through this new clinic.”

The MSH Wellness Clinic is made possible by the generous support of Shoppers Drug Mart and TD Bank Group. In honour of their generosity, the hospital has named the Shoppers Drug Mart Wellness Rooms and the TD Bank Group Reception within the MSH Wellness Clinic.

“At TD, we’re committed to enriching the communities where we live and work,” said Rachael Wong, District Vice President for Branch Banking, Markham, TD. “We’re thrilled to be able to support Markham Stouffville Hospital and their new Wellness Clinic in the Markham community with the donation of this space.”

Shoppers Drug Mart has been supporting MSH through the Run for Women since 2015. The Run for Women, brought by the LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart program, is Canada’s first and only women’s and girls’ running race series, benefiting women’s mental health initiatives across the country and has raised over \$8.4 million dollars for local mental health programming since 2013.



“Every dollar raised by the Run for Women supports mothers, daughters, and friends in the community to take the next step to recovery,” said Adriana Palazzo, Vice-President Operations, Shoppers Drug Mart. “We put women first and our partnership with vital organizations like Markham Stouffville Hospital enables us, together, to put women’s health first.”

About Markham Stouffville Hospital:

Markham Stouffville Hospital is a leading community hospital with 329 beds. The hospital provides diagnostic and emergency services and delivers clinical programs in acute care medicine and surgery, addictions and mental health, and childbirth and children’s services. Our Markham and Uxbridge sites and the Reactivation Care Centre (RCC) provide high quality, patient-centred, care to over 412,000 patients each year. Partnering with other specialist providers, the hospital’s 500 physicians, 23 midwives, over 2,300 staff and nearly 1,300 volunteers make it the centre of community care for the residents of the City of Markham, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and the Township of Uxbridge.

For more information:

visit www.msh.on.ca.

About Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation:

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation exists to enable the growth of Markham Stouffville Hospital by raising funds and awareness for its ongoing priorities and needs. Donations from the community fund life-saving medical equipment that helps to ensure the delivery of first-class health care at MSH.

For more information:

visit www.mshf.on.ca.



Take it or Leave it



Know Your Strength

Who you are is much bigger than the sum of your problems.

One day, there was a man who had never seen an elephant; he had never seen an elephant. So, he decided that he wanted to go see an elephant; so he inquired. And he was told that there is a village in Africa where they have big elephants. So the man made his journey to Africa. He went, and he saw a very big elephant.

And never having seen the elephants, he was really surprised. And then he looked, and he saw that the elephants were tied with a very small thin rope around their feet—and that was it. So, he was surprised. Such a big elephant, only being held in place by a small little rope? So he went to the chief, and he said, “Chief, these elephants, they’re

A story about a man who goes on a journey to see elephants for the first time and ends up learning much more..

strong, aren’t they?”

And the chief said, “Oh, yes. They’re very, very strong.” He said, “Chief, I have a question. How can such a big animal, so strong, so powerful, be held back with just this tiny little rope?” And the chief said, “Oh-ho! Let me explain. When they were babies, we used to tie them with this rope. And they tried to move, but they couldn’t move! And we kept them like that.

“And now that they have grown big and strong, they stopped trying. And they think that this tiny rope

should still hold them in place. Of course, if they tried, this rope cannot hold back such a powerful animal. But the elephants have given up trying.”

So, why did I tell this story? Because in a way, this is what is happening. Who we are, who you are is much bigger than the sum of your problems. But these problems come, and they’re holding you back. And you do not realize your own power. You don’t realize your own strength!—that as a human being, you have the strength in you to go beyond these barriers.

Prem Rawat

www.timelesstoday.com



Taxing in Sangam literature



By: Kumar Punithavel

South India was traditionally ruled by three great Tamil dynasties called Pandean, Chola and Chera. This time period is referred to as the 'Sangam era' which is from BCE200 to CE300. Today this land is fragmented as different states and speaks different languages other than Tamil. These languages like Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam and Tulungu were evolved from ancient Tamil language.

Once upon a time the Pandean kingdom was ruled by a great emperor called Arivudai Nambi. In this kingdom lived a great poet called Pisiranthaiar. Anthaiar was his birth name, and adding his birth village Pisir, he was called as Pisiranthaiar. During this time Chola kingdom was ruled by Kooperum Cholan with Uraiyoor as capitol. The friendship between Pisiranthaiar and Kooperum Cholan is legendary which we will read at some other time.

Taxing is the responsibility of the rulers, and when they do it responsibly the country thrives well. In those times in Tamil kingdoms, not only the ministers counselled the emperors, but also the learned took it to be their responsibility to council the king when they felt he rules

with unfairness and fellow citizens suffered. In the case of Arivudai Nambi the emperor of Pandean kingdom, the minsters were like the reeds in flowing water, tilting in the direction of the flow and the confederates of the emperor joined him in the wrong doing and plunder the citizens with heavy levies. All his actions made his subjects to suffer more and more. The king kept on burdening them with more and more taxes. Having no one to help them the people approached Pisiranthaiar and requested him to save them from their suffering. Our learned poet studied the situation and found the Emperor was surrounded with cronies who further encouraged him to increase the tax. The Emperor was more interested in fun and having a good time than ruling the country justly.

Pisiranthaiar realized it was his duty towards his mother land to advice the king, and correct his ways. When he went to the palace the emperor received with respect as he was aware of the learned poet and respect he commanded by other kings of Tamil Nadu. The learned poet addressed the king with much respect and presented him a song, which to this day will be an beacon to all rulers' of a country. The meaning of the song goes as follows:

If one harvest the paddy from the field and feed an elephant in bolus it would last for many days. Instead if allowed the elephant to graze on its own, it will trample the crop by its legs and will destroy more paddy than what goes through its mouth. Similarly if the king levies taxes heeding to the need and ability of his citizenry will prosper and he will gain fame.

But if he surrounds himself with worthless cronies and tax his people without compassion, the nation will soon be like the paddy field trampled by the grazing elephant. No one will benefit and the nation too will suffer he said.

Listening to the poem, the king realized his folly and thanked Pisiranthaiar profusely and checked his actions. He became loved by his people. The lesson in this poem which is more than two thousand years still resonates with the needs of this world. Hopefully our leaders will head to the advice of Pisiranthaiar.

If harvested and fed in bolus
Even less than an acre will last many days

Even hundred acres if elephant enter to graze

More than consumed will ruin by its legs

Informed king if follows the rule

and collect

Millions it will yield and nation prosper

Ignorant king surrounded by cronies

Heartlessly if amass levy on citizen,

Like field trampled by elephant
Shall not benefit and destroy the nation

- Purananuru 184

காய்நெல் அறுத்துக் கவளங் கொளினே,
மாநிறைவு இல்லதும், பன்நாட்டு ஆகும்
நூறுசெறு ஆயினும், தமிழ்த்துப்புக்கு
உணினே,

வாய்ப்பு வதனினும் கால்பெரிது கெடுக்கும்
அறிவுடை வேந்தன் நெறியறிந்து
கொளினே,

கோடி யாத்து, நாடுபெரிது நந்தும்
மெல்லியன் கிழவன் ஆகி, வைகலும்
வரிசை அறியாக் கல்லென் சுற்றமொடு,
பரிவுதப எடுக்கும் பிண்டம் நச்சின்,
யானை புக்க புலம்போலத்,
தானும் உண்ணான், உலகமும் கெடுமே.

- புறநானூறு 184

It will do well for the rulers of this day take heed to the advice given by Pisiranthaiar and make the world a better place to live in.



BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

HUMANS OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA

"Humans of Northern Sri Lanka" is a Facebook Community page by Thulasi Muttulingam, a journalist based in the North of Sri Lanka. To follow the updates, "Like" the page at: www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka

A PIC OF ME HECKLING SWASTHIKA ARULINGAM TO GIVE ME A QUOTE FOR HUMANS OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA



Madame Arulingam, after travelling down to the North regularly from Colombo where she is a hot shot lawyer to do pro bono legal work for marginalised peoples living here, claimed she couldn't be typecast as a Human Rights Lawyer (too pretentious she said/ she didn't fit the bill she said) that she didn't have any stories to tell anyway - and she just wasn't an interesting person overall.

Hah, I beg to differ.

Since she was in a hurry to get to courts, I managed to wrangle only a few quotes out of her on her latest activities:

"A group of nearly 50 of us, mostly Sinhalese but also Tamils and Muslims got together to register a protest by singing the National Anthem in Tamil because of the Government's stand that it could be sung only in Sinhala.

We put out a video of it on the internet where we got a wide cross section of comments. It appears most people, whether Tamils or Sinhalese, don't have a stand on this issue either way. It's a non-issue for them.

At the same time, it is to be noted, a number of Sinhalese cared enough about the issue to show up to record the song in Tamil when the call went out.

The only people calling for a Tamil Anthem boycott are the Nationalists at both ends. The Sinhalese Nationalists because they don't want any rights conceded to the Tamils and the Tamil Nationalists because they don't want to recognize we can

all live in one country.

We'll be going live with this rendition on Independence Day.

I reserve the right to sing the anthem in the language I want to.

I always did.

I went to a school where Tamils were in the minority but while the rest of the students sang the anthem at assembly in Sinhala, I always sang it in Tamil."

Interviewer: And how did the other students react to that?



"Oh they always looked at me in admiration as if I were doing something cool. They thought it cool that a Tamil was singing the anthem in her own language.

Like I said, most lay people have no problem with it.

It's just the nationalists at both ends causing trouble."

— Swasthika Arulingam

"There is a lot of debt issues in the North, financed mainly by unsolicited micro-credit - targeting mainly women

I appreciate that there is talk now of taking the predatory micro-credit companies to task, as it is leading to even suicide - but I also maintain that we women should be more vigilant as to what we go into debt for. Men are using us to go into debt and leaving us with the bills.

Once upon a time the people of the North were very responsible about never going into debt they could not afford. Now it has become a way of life - used to finance unsustainable lifestyles."

"Just for an example, many male youths here as soon as they finish their A'Levels demand a huge motorcycle.

I know many mothers who go into debt to get them those motorbikes as they would throw a tantrum otherwise.

I made it clear to both my sons I would never be getting them those useless huge gents' motorcycles they use as a status symbol around here. All those bikes are good for is to carry a girl around on the back seat - they conveniently slide downwards so that the girl riding pillion would slide snugly to fit against the boy. If they want that bike, they can finance it themselves when they earn. I am not obliged to buy it for them.

The gents' bike by contrast is huge and



showy but has no storage area - it is also two to four times as expensive as a lady's bike.

So no - I am not financing a lifestyle around here - especially an unsustainable one for unemployed, entitled youth.

Unsustainable lifestyles financed by debt is a big problem here and I am not going to be contributing to it.

Predation starts from companies, yes, - but responsibility starts at home." - Rajany Rajeshwary founder of Jaffna women's rights group Vallamai

"Hi there!

We are trying to introduce rainwater harvesting and conservation techniques in the North of Sri Lanka (along with the rest of the SAARC region).

As you know, access to water is a massive problem over there in the North. But people are reluctant to put in the initial costs needed to outfit their houses for such valuable water conservation.

Perhaps we should tell our Tamil and Muslim parents that their daughters dowries would increase several times in value if they equipped the dower houses with these systems?

Water and water conservation is an integral part of our way forward, especially with the added challenges of climate



change, but it is had to get people to adapt easily.

Sometimes you have to pitch things to people in the way they are ready to spend money on. If "invest to save water for your life" doesn't

work, I am thinking "invest to improve your daughter's dowries" will work as a better pitch." - Dilshy Banu, SAARC Regional coordinator, Lanka Rainwater Harvesting Forum.

Overheard in Jaffna:

"I thought it better to be prepared - so I went and asked the pharmacy for face masks. They said too late, sir, we have run out!"

"They said they are expecting new stocks soon though. And that the price of one mask would be Rs.500."

"Be careful. Those masks are likely imported from China."





Tribute |

Kobe Bryant: The World is less fortunate Today

By *Harrish Thirukumaran*

As with millions of fans, Kobe Bryant was an inspiration to numerous friends, my brother and I growing up in and around Quincy Circle in South Brunswick, New Jersey. I have been a fan of the Los Angeles Lakers because of him and it was him who got me interested in watching and play-

ing basketball. He was truly one of the greatest basketball players ever who I got to watch in action. It was utterly devastating to hear of both his and daughter Gianna's passing. They will not be forgotten. Their legacy will live on.

However, the world is less fortunate today than 24 hours ago. During this new chapter in his life following his

NBA retirement, he was running a charity that sought to tackle youth homelessness. On top of that, he was heavily involved with Gianna's pursuit of basketball while advocating women empowerment in sports.

There was also his Mamba Sports Academy that provided basketball camps to up and coming players. He was going to help make the world a bet-

ter place, but it will no longer benefit with his untimely death. His presence will be sorely missed.

7 others also passed away in that Los Angeles area helicopter crash on June 26th, along the Bryants, they are John, Keri and Alyssa Altobelli, Christina Mauser, Ara Zobayan, Sarah and Payton Chester.



Kobe Bryant (23 August, 1978 - 26 January, 2020) and Gigi Bryant (1 May, 2006 - 26 January, 2020)

Kobe Bryant has become a Guardian Spirit to the young minds

By *Thiru K Thirukumaran*

The inspiration that basketball gives as a life building tool to a tot through their growing up as teen and thereafter had tremendous jolt this past weekend. One of the biggest names in basketball had to pass away tragically in loudly speaking of a certain vacuum the untimely departures leave behind in this world. Name of Kobe Bryant would have spoken millions of times across the globe these days. From the neighborhood hoops to

Township recreational, Police Athletic Leagues, clinics of all types, Juniors, Varsity and inter-mural to taking it along beyond there to other courts or even outside to everyday life grew into a whole generation with the superstar abilities of Kobe Bryant, to play and also give back to others.

What Kobe Bryant did in real life he has done while departing also in this hustling world though it is not a solace to his family, fans and

everyone concerned. He made us to look back or live of present moments like a rapture that erupts in every game for everyone on the court or watching regardless of winning or losing and in plotting the future reminding basketball has given all the tools to build a life bottom up.

Having a Kobe in our house passwords, taking turns in getting donuts for the teams and asking and giving rides to teammates are true memorabilia I would take and that also feels like a jolt of a different kind that comes to light at Kobe Bryant's passing.

Adulthood has come to stay with the young lads.

The times of having to wake up early in the six a clock hour on cold but refreshing mornings like the Sunday of January 26, I am too grateful

to Kobe Bryant and his basketball abilities that has been studding the social media landscapes unexpectedly in the past few days with emojis of crying and sadness along with children playing basketball.

Often I'd go to a game and would stay out in the hallway as the hustling sport makes me tensed and fearing that loved ones are playing in aggressive ways to physically get hurt. Would only peak to check the score. Though this jolt came outside of the courts it feels though that Kobe Bryant has become a Guardian Spirit to the young minds who are forever inspired by basketball and the humanism it instill with the likes of kind deeds from one of the greatest in the sporting world.

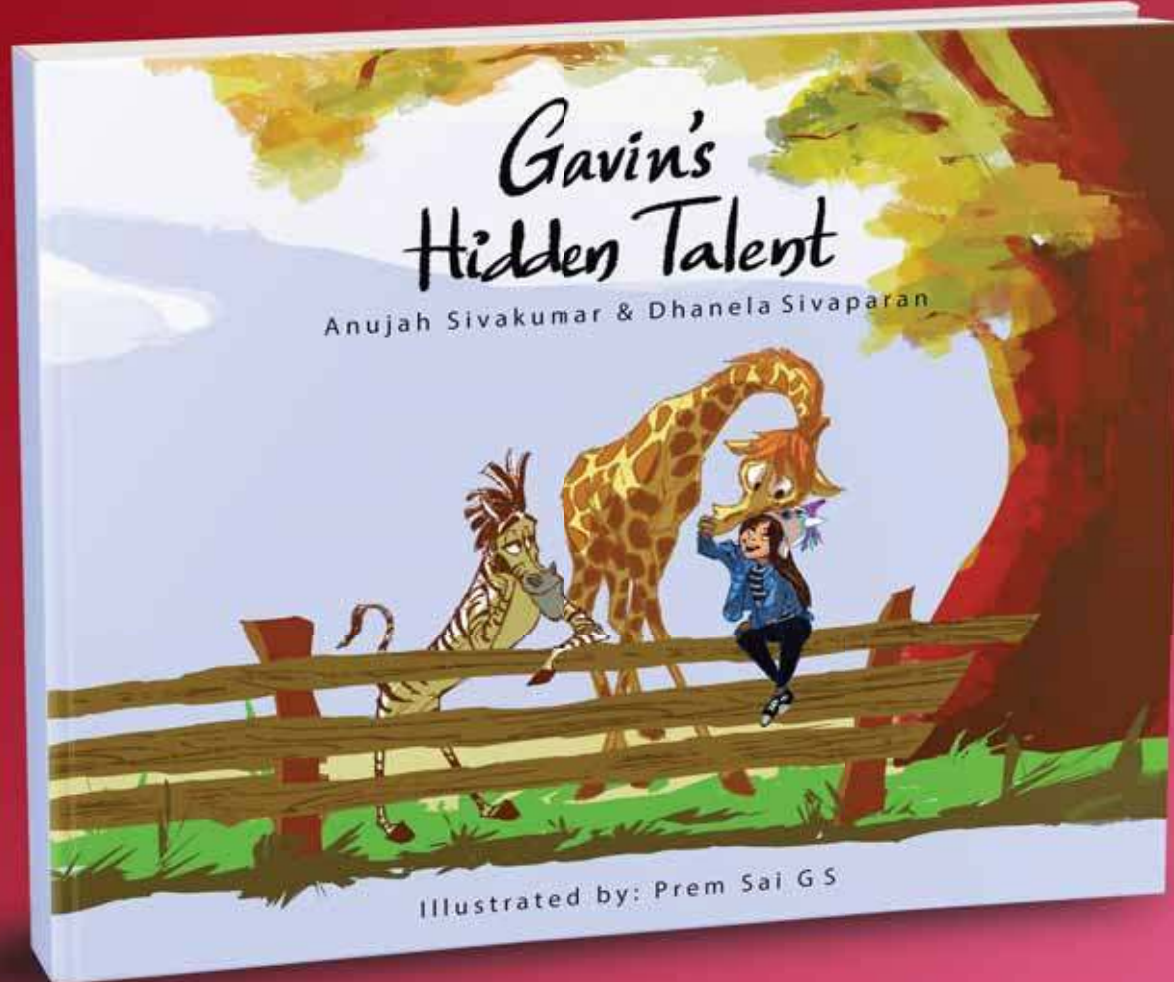
Thank you from the bottom of heart.



Special Feature

Gavin's Hidden Talent:

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This entertaining story is accompanied by colorful and imaginative illustrations and touches upon universal concepts such as learning, individual self-worth, friendship and kindness. The power of the story is the deeper implicit message about the joy and importance of sharing. Readers will fall in love with Alex's spirit- actively taking initiative to build friendships. The book incorporates very catchy and entertaining modern technology that makes the story timely and appealing to today's young readers.

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ROHIT

Joined as an international student and took a position as a Senior IT Consultant. He is now a DevOps Engineer. **Earns a 6 figure income.**



EMMANUEL

Worked on multiple projects with IBM and CIBC at the same time immediately after graduation. **Earns a 6 figure income.**



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THAIPUSAM FESTIVAL CELEBRATED IN MURUGAN TEMPLES

(A crowd - puller at Inuvil Kanthasamy temple)



The Manjam at the Temple



Periya Sanniyasiyar



Kavadi Procession



Thookku Kavady

C. Kamalaharan

Thaipusam an important festival of the Hindus or rather the Saivites falls on the month of 'Thai' (Jan-Feb) according to the Tamil calendar. This year it falls on the 8th of February. The word Thaipusam is derived by joining the word 'Thai' (month) and the word Pusam ('Natchathiram'). Thaipusam falling on a 'Pourami' (full moon day) when the moon traverses through the zodiac sign Katakam (cancer) is considered auspicious as any activity undertaken on this day will bear fruits. According to Hindu scriptures it is believed that on this day Goddess Parvati presented the divine 'Vel' (spear) to Lord Murugan to help him vanquish the demonic army of Soorapadman and combat their evil deeds. Therefore Thaipusam is a celebration to commemorate the slaying of the demon which means victory of good over evil. There is also a reference to the cosmic dance of Lord Shiva that took place on this day.

Thaipusam is celebrated in all Murugan temples but the one celebrated at Inuvil Kanthasamy temple is of special significance. It's a spectacular event particularly the drawing of the gorgeous Manjam (chariot) considered the largest and the oldest one not to be seen the like of it anywhere. The Manjam was built more than 100 of years ago with the blessings of Lord Murugan. During that time there dwelt a noble saint named Periya Sannasiyar who was in the habit of meditating under the shade of a tree or spending his time lonely in the cremation grounds. He had cured incurable diseases of those who had sought his help. With only a piece of cloth wrapped around his waist and 'viputhi' (holy ash) spread all over his body he moved about the place. Once Lord Murugan appeared in his dream and said, "Take me seated in a Manjam along the streets." The

saint in response requested the people to bring forth certain varieties of trees and heap them. To comply with his request the people brought and mounted heaps of trees at a particular site. Daily he went along the streets proclaiming, "Murugan will come in a Manjam (chariot)." As proclaimed by the saint many experienced sculptors arrived at the beach in a 'Kattumaram' (wooden vessel) from India. They were received by the saint and taken to the site where the Manjam was to be built. The work which began in 1902 took a few years to complete. The site where the Manjam was built was named Manjathady. Later the Manjam was drawn along the widened road from Manjathady in Inuvil East to the Kanthasamy temple in Inuvil West. The inaugural draw of the Manjam around the temple took place in 1906 on Thaipusam day. It was mentioned that those days the Manjam was drawn by horses. Since then it is drawn annually on Thaipusam day and on the 12th day of the temple's annual festival.

It was really unfortunate that the Manjam after serving for many years had to be parked in its shed for several years as the main axle of the wheels had been broken. Later due to the efforts taken by the leading businessman and philanthropist the late 'Kalki' Sinnathurai a new axle was brought from London and fixed to the Manjam machinery. In 1978 the overhauled and renovated Manjam was parked in the newly built tall shed from where it is drawn around the temple every year on both the two occasions.

The Manjam drawn in the night presents such a breathtaking view that devotees from neighbouring villages and from far off places make a beeline for the temple to be part of the Thaipusam celebrations. On Thaipusam day early in the morning the colourful procession of more than one hundred 'Kavady' dancers and women in much

more numbers carrying 'Paal Kudams' (vessels containing milk) commences from the Pallappa Vairavar temple Maruthanamadam. With the loud chanting of 'Arohara' singing of devotional songs clanging of cymbals beating of drums and other percussion instruments the procession arrives at Kanthasamy temple. To permit the free flow of traffic along the busy K.K.S road the police officers are on duty.

On arrival at the temple the 'Paal kudams' are handed to the priest who showers the milk on the idols during the special 'Abhishekam.' The 'Kavady' dancers after removing the 'Vel' and hooks that pierced their flesh prostrate in the temple and pray in earnest. Such self punishments are done as penance for the sins and wrongdoing they had committed. But nowadays enthusiastic youths do not do it as penance but as a demonstration of their total faith in Murugan.

Meanwhile women folks in large numbers prepare 'Pongal' outside the temple. The entire area will be busy with women and also men preparing 'Pongal'. The whole area will be clouded with dense smoke. The prepared 'pongal' is first served to the Lord and then shared.

It is during the night the spectacular sight of the drawing of the gorgeous Manjam through a surging crowd commences. The Manjam colourfully decorated and brilliantly illuminated with the tinkling of 1008 small bells fixed all around it accompanied by the soulful Natharswara music beating of drums clanging of cymbals and chorus singing by the devotees is an enchanting sight as it inches its way around the temple. The days programme ends with the distribution of 'Prasadam' after which the devotees leave the temple spiritually elevated and fully satisfied.



Niceties of Naaladiar*

- Secret of Happiness



- Thayumanavar

J A Rajah

“Arivathu arinthu, adangi, anjuvathu anji,
Uruvathu ulagu uvappach cheythu peruvathal,
Inputtu vazhlum iyalpudaiyar engnanrum,
Thunputtu vazhlthal arithu”

Acquiring knowledge based on books and worldly experience, living according to whatever that is learned, fearing whatever that has to be dreaded, doing whatever one could do, though such deeds may not bring much rewards but still make others happy and derive pleasure from such deeds and live happily with such frame of mind - will never face unhappiness in their lives.

The poet highlights the basic sources of knowledge- namely

books and experience gained by interacting with fellowmen and the learned. One should also be vigilant about the fears and dangers that may confront them. It is the duty of every human being to whatever best they can for the betterment of others. It is from these philanthropic deeds that one can attain true happiness. Such a person will never confront worries or misfortune.

Similar idea was expressed by Valluvar in the couplet: 'Arathan varuvathe inpam, mattellam purathe, puharlum illa'.

Thayumanavar went further and said that, "Ellorum inputtirupathuve allathu veronrum ariyen paraparam".

(Oh! God! I do not know anything other than wishing that all should abide happily.)- Naaladiyar: 74.

Naaladiyar has four lined verses. They have the same effect like Kural and written by Jainist saints who were reputed to be authors of righteous literary works belonging to the late Sanga period of Tamil literature.



Cannabis-Medicine *or* Mad-sense?

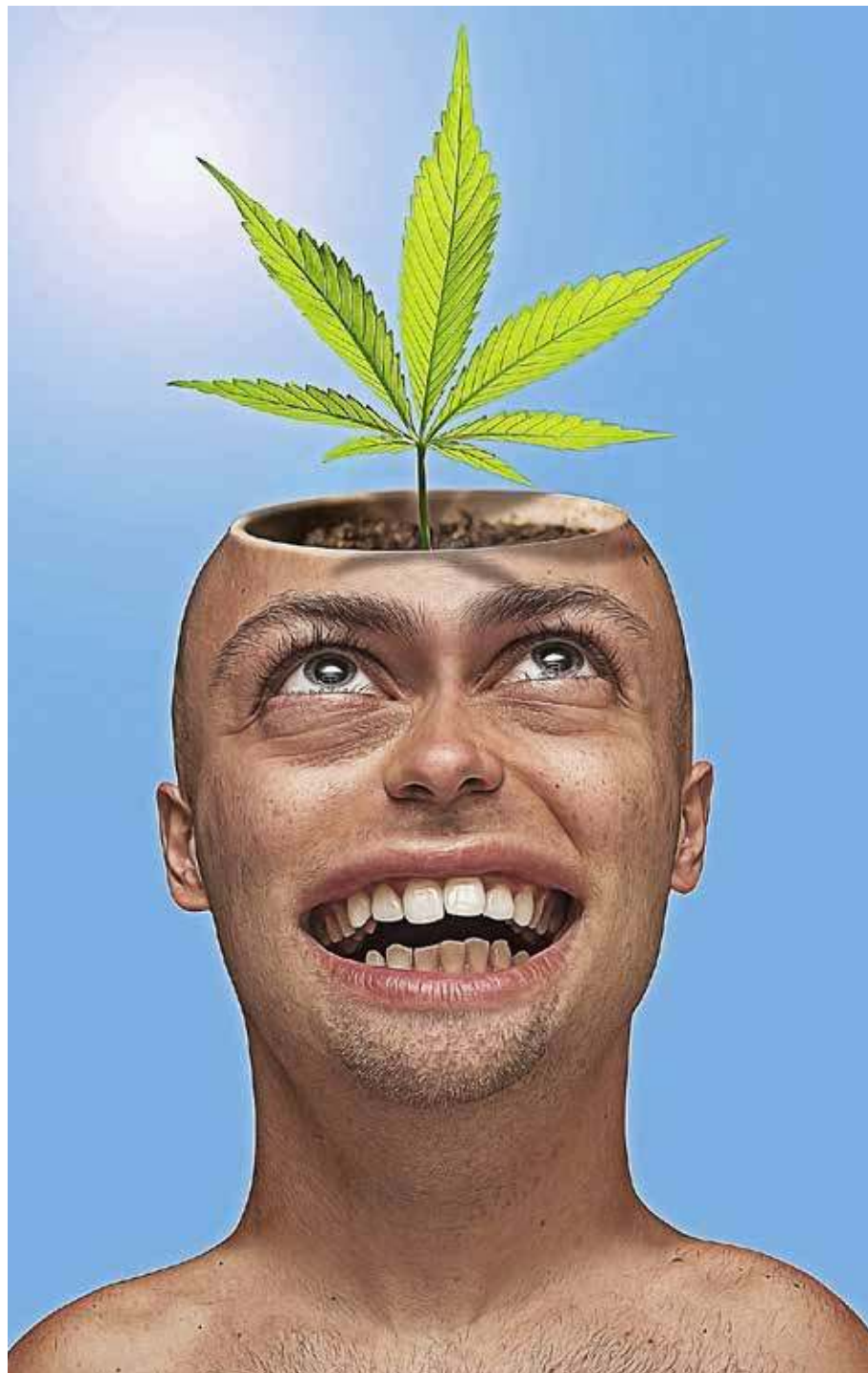
J A Rajah

A. The Nature of Cannabis:

Cannabis is now considered useful for medical purposes. The CBD Gummies are advertised to be useful for anxiety, stress, diabetes, epilepsy, rheumatic arthritis, sleep disorders, inflammation, alcoholism and several other human ailments. The Canadian government has now legalized the use of marijuana for various medical uses. The utilities of Cannabis are now controversial. Though it highly claimed to be medically useful, the ingredients used to produce it have tremendous intoxicating substances. They are delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD). THC is the intoxicating, hallucinogenic ingredient, while CBD alone has no such effects. CBD comes from the cannabis plant. People refer to cannabis plants as either hemp or marijuana, depending on the level of THC. Hemp plants that are legal under the Farm Bill must contain less than 0.3 THC. Over the years marijuana farmers have selectively bred their plants to contain high levels of THC and other compounds. However, hemp farmers have rarely modified the plant. These hemp plants are used to create CBD oil. Those who want to propagate the use of Cannabis are trying to over-emphasize the character of the hemp plants and downplay the intoxicating effects of marijuana. Promoters of the product use such subtle phrases as: 'studies indicate that CBD may help,' studies indicate that CBD may help reduce symptoms,' 'CBD shows promise'.

B. It's Alleged Medical Care Claims:-

The medical marijuana has been largely promoted over the last decade and the number of ailments it helps or cures is astounding. They are namely aids, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, epilepsy, glaucoma, inflammatory bowel disease, Parkinson's disease, post-traumatic disorder, sickle-cell anemia, spinal cord disorder, traumatic brain injury, and ulcerative colitis. Many doctors feel that there is no adequate evidence to justify such assertions. Some of the users are



said to face serious consequences. Marijuana contains Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which could cause paranoia that is injurious to health. However, there are active promoters who champion the use of these drugs. They claim that it is harmless. They claim that it is natural and safe unlike chemical pharmaceuticals. Many people become pawns in the hands of individuals who are actively campaigning to legalize recreational marijuana. They claim that it has medical uses. Numerous medicines are derived from plants. Opioids come from poppies and are welcome relief to patients suffering from excruciating pain. However, between 2016 and 2017 alone, opioid overdoses killed more Americans than the Vietnam War.

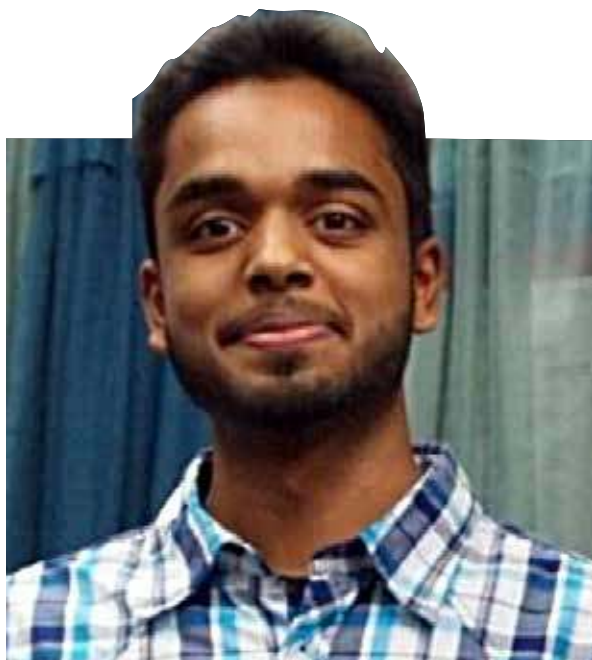
C. It's Threat to Human Lives

Medicines have short-term and long-term effects, and this includes CBD as well as THC. Televisions promote the latest medical drugs and also follow it with ads for law firms planning to sue the drug companies for their previous miracle drug. Drug helps some individuals, but kills others. Under the pretext of legalizing medical marijuana, they are trying to canvass for the legalization of recreational marijuana. The most attractive factor in the growing use of marijuana is the vast amount of money that it helps to make. Entrepreneurs, growers, distributors and governments are cashing in. An investment advi-

sor recently asserted" By 2020, cannabis is going to be bigger than chocolate...bigger than organic food...bigger than wine." This must have prompted Canada to legalize the use of marijuana. It has become a major supplier both domestically and internationally exporting cannabis products to Australia, Brazil, Chile, Cayman Islands, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, New-Zealand and South Africa. Twenty-one marijuana product companies were publicly traded in Canada at the beginning of 2019. Nine companies are hauling in billions of dollars, with two boasting more than \$10 billion annually. In Canada, today we can see the increasing number of accidents, violent murders and shootings- which are steadily on the increase. Though the causes may be varied, there is no doubt that it may also be caused by the aggravated use of marijuana. The most affected are the members of the younger generation. Indiscriminate use of drug destroys life. Most of the drug users feel nice when they get high. They forget about all the ill-effects for a moment of high feeling that they are on top of Mt. Everest without realizing that they are on the way to 'ever rest'. Many fail to understand that a huge cannabis lobby is at work with millions of dollars. Propagandists have promoted the idea that the war on drugs is a waste of resources and that it ruins ordinary people's lives by making them criminals for enjoying a supposedly harmless pleasure. People are made to believe that marijuana is medically useful and the intoxicating quality of it is mostly ignored. Recently it was observed that over two million Americans with heart diseases used marijuana, despite evidence that it might be harmful to them. "We have reached an epidemic shift", said Dr. Muthiah Vaduganathan, "For the first time there are more marijuana users than cigarette users in the US. He also added acute marijuana use increases blood pressure and heart-rate that could be problematic for people who have heart disease. It is the hectic inconsiderateness of money-minded propaganda of business entrepreneurs that has led to this unrealized onslaught on humanity in recent times. The government must exercise some kind of restraint in the excessive use of these kinds of drugs in order to ensure the quality of life of its peopling.

The Impact of Overpopulation

(on a Global Scale)



Name: Vaishnavan Srikumaraguru

Grade: 12 **Prize:** 1st Place - *Senior*

Therefore, overpopulation will cause an imbalance between the number of people worldwide and the limited availability of the finite resources.

Currently there are ongoing conflicts around the world over terrorism, oil, water, and land. However, as these disagreements take place, the regions in which they occur are also destroyed. Mainly, the never-ending war between multinational corporations


and the general public have been progressing in favour of profit creation and not what is morally sound. In regions where populations are high and resources are low, the presence of MNC is overwhelming. For instance, in remote regions of Northern Africa, Coca Cola has launched several marketing schemes to attract the general population. The price of a bottle of coke is only seventy cents. Although the general population cannot afford the marker-up Water, governments and the companies maintain their price quotas. Since coke is cheaper than water, the general public has no choice but to consume the unhealthy beverage. When the topic of resource distribution comes into context, MNCs play a major role in third world countries. Given that there already is a greater demand than supply, prices are increased and profits are accumulated. But the societies that are subjected to suffer must endure the unfortunate consequences. With population that is growing daily, the level of economic disparity is also becoming overwhelmingly evident. In scenarios where people cannot afford to live, they resort to alternative methods of satisfying their essential needs. Where people cannot afford to live, slums and struggles are the unfortunate result. In major cities such as Mumbai and Rio, slums have become an evident reality. In Mumbai, the Dharavi slums are a series of establishments which encompass huts and temporary settlements. Also, in Rio De Janeiro, the favelas house over five thousand people. As a result of poor living conditions, these overcrowded areas have very high crime rates. However, the settlements have come as a consequence of overpopulation. Thus, the distribution of resources has resulted in a growth of economic disparity, but overpopulation has been the underlying culprit behind this global issue.

Demographers as well as scientists have all agreed that the earth has a finite amount of resources which can only sustain a specific number of people. This concept is described as the carrying capacity of earth and it is restricted to a certain degree. For every square kilometer of this planet, there is a set number of people it can provide for. However, with an overpopulated planet, the amount of space and availability of

resources also are subject to fluctuation. Thus, the carrying capacity of the planet must also be re-evaluated. But, as the human population grows continuously, we fail to recognize that this cannot be done. During World War II, much of Europe was in combat and many lives were lost. In order to replenish the population, a population explosion; or the "Baby Boomers" era was initiated. This era was composed of large families and large scale agricultural innovation. However, the strain put on the earth was not as impactful because of the many deceased during the war. In modern population growth, what society has done is accurately described by the cotton ideology of population growth. This ideology states that the human population is operating in a Malthusian lifestyle while depleting the earth. Consequently, the result is a phantom carrying capacity. The concept means that there is a false sense of security generated through a misleading carrying capacity. Inevitably, the result of overpopulation is an imbalance be-

tween humans and nature. The social imbalance occurs through the creation of a false carrying capacity which fails to provide for everyone. Unfortunately, the limited number of people and land will cause a clash among society and cause concerns globally.


Inevitably population growth will have to be addressed, so that major issues of disparity can be avoided. However, as demographers and idealists have described it, overpopulation is the unfortunate consequence of societal progression. As medical, social, and environmental advancements take flight, a greater population cannot be avoided. Through the growth of the human population, the earth will be put to the test and be subject to compliance. Unfortunately, the depletion of vital resources, increase in economic disparity and change in social imbalances will become a new reality. Therefore, if overpopulation is not addressed soon enough, the worst has yet to come for planet Earth. A state of insecurity, social unrest and threat of political sovereignty among nations will become the advances going forth. Thus, the overwhelming impact of overpopulation is a concern that must not be ignored.



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The Benefits and Impacts of Outdoor LED Lighting

Everything You Need to Understand About LED Retrofits

By: *Uthayan Thurairajah*

Lighting emitting diode (LED) lighting system dominating the current lighting industry. If you are thinking about an LED retrofit for your facility, here is an introduction to preparing your facility up to date with modern lighting. Retrofitting means that you're adding something new that your facility didn't previously have. The word "retrofit" is very much an equivalent to the term conversion. The major energy-saving retrofits that are happening today are LED lighting retrofits. LED light sources are replacing traditional lighting technology across a broad spectrum of lighting applications. They are useful for all interior and exterior lighting applications.

Benefit of LED Retrofit



There are three main ways to get a benefit for the LED retrofit: 1. energy efficiency improvements, 2. reduction in recurring maintenance costs, 3. improved lighting quality. There are also business opportunities and financing options to complete an LED retrofit or conversion. Examples include partnering with Energy Savings Companies or applying for Federal or State rebates. LEDs work differently than most traditional lighting solutions. A few things you need to know when retrofitting your facilities with LED lighting system include the following:

Luminaires and fixtures are two different items. If you like to keep your existing fixtures, you can change the compatible source conversion options. If you're replacing both the source and the fixture, then you'll be able to choose from



everything on the market. In either case, most LEDs are made to be compatible with standard fixtures. The hardware for dimming LED lights is generally not compatible with traditional lighting solutions. You will need an LED dimmer to go along with the source.

HID Lighting (metal halide / high-pressure sodium) has been the primary light source for outdoor applications. LED is now a choice for retrofit or new construction. Each lighting project situation is unique. Therefore, it is essential to understand the project scope and needs. If the fixtures are in decent condition and your main goal is to save energy and reduce maintenance costs, then retrofit the source is the best bet. HID lamp will operate for approximately 15,000 to 20,000 hours before burning out. In contrast,

the new LED lights are expected, on average, to last for 60,000 to 100,000 hours. If the fixtures are in rough shape or damage and not providing you with adequate lighting, then a new luminaire is best. Here is an overview of things to consider for each option.

Retrofit HID luminaires with LED

There are several choices available for retrofitting HID fixtures to LED. It is often challenging to find the right LED retrofit, which provides comparable light levels while being able to fit into the existing HID Luminaire. Therefore, the first step is to determine the currently installed luminaires and to measure how much room there in the existing HID luminaire.

Another item to factor in is the voltage. The outdoor lighting can range from 120 to 347/600 volt. Therefore, select the appropriate luminaires rated for the voltage. The last item to consider is color temperature. High-Pressure Sodium lamps provide a yellow/orange color, and the Metal Halide lamp provides a whiter color. There are whiter LED retrofit options than yellow for outdoor LED retrofits. Therefore, knowing upfront on what color you want is crucial. Once you have all these factors analyzed, you can determine what options are available for your application. Depending on the situation, you can get a payback of fewer than four years on retrofitting HID outdoor light fixtures to LED retrofits.



New LED Luminaires

Going with new LED luminaires is the best option as they last longer, run more efficiently, and provide more light than retrofit options. The reason for this, the LED luminaire is built for LED versus a retrofit LED light source is installed in a fixture that was built for an HID light source. There are several options available for new LED luminaire than LED retrofits, from LED Wall-packs to LED Canopy Fixtures and LED Pole Lights. So, there is no concern with what you currently have. What is more important is how the current luminaire is mounted and, more importantly, how many light needs for the application based on the current standard. The mounting details help make sure how to install the new luminaire, and it is a simple process to run a photometric report for the new luminaire to ensure you get adequate light levels and the required uniformity. Depending on the situation, we often see paybacks of less than five years on replacing HID outdoor luminaire to LED luminaire. The best long-term solution is a new LED luminaire.



Uthayan Thurairajah, Ph.D., RSE, LC, P.Eng., FEC, is a Project Manager at WSP with over twenty years of experience in Electrical Engineering and Lighting field, and he also holds a Lecturer position at Ryerson University & professor at Centennial. Uthayan is a member of several Canadian and international professional association including Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) and Association for Prevention Teaching and Research (APTR). He has worked on multi-disciplinary lighting and electrical projects for various clients. He researches the subject of light and lighting and taken part in several projects. He also has extensive research experience in the value of lighting design in the mental, emotional, and social well-being of a person. He is a frequent presenter and author of lighting design & health. He is passionate about integrating science and health into the lighting design.

Lighting and Healthier Environments

Lighting plays a crucial role in outdoor environments. The primary consideration when evaluating a lighting upgrade include:

- define the required lighting system to maximize visibility and visual comfort for users;

- direct the right amount of light where needed and when it is needed—adding controls to a lighting system can help reach these goals;

- avoid lighting solutions creating glare, sky glow, and trespass;



- select fixtures with the right color correlated color temperature (CCT) a high color rendering index (CRI); and
- simplify scenes and controls for ease of use, but ample controllability.

The source, ballasts, and controls should be standardized when possible. Using the same sources, ballasts, and controls help minimize the need for purchasing multiple types of items.

It can reduce coordination in luminaires installation for maintenance and even when ordering more products to stock the items. Luminaire locations and access, cleaning requirements, and re-lamping efforts should also be considered for easier maintenance.

In a lighting retrofit, it is essential to consider

not only the energy and cost savings but also the impact on the users. Visually appealing over 4000K color temperature LED light to release a blue-rich light. The higher color temperature LEDs to simulates daylight and has the potential to upset humans' circadian rhythm. Many cities in North America, including Montreal and Toronto, are concerned with associated health risks and considering selecting warmer LED streetlights (less than 3000K). Furthermore, research conducted by the Integrated Health and Social Services Centers in Montreal found that installing 4,000 °K streetlights would not increase the amount of blue light exposure significantly when compared to the exposure levels commonly found in homes.

Retrofit Typical Checklist

A retrofit lighting system costs need to be established for the new construction, including equipment installation and maintenance. En-

ergy savings are not the only benchmark but also other benefits such as better quality of light, increased productivity, reduced maintenance, as well as glare, sky glow, and trespass lighting.

The preparation of a complete lifecycle report, which includes the following considerations:

- initial cost;
- lifecycle in years;
- electricity rate in dollar/Kw/h;
- hours the lighting is used;
- installation labor rates/hour;
- Driver and source replacement costs;
- cleaning/maintenance costs;
- local taxes and depreciation rates; and
- incentives from utilities and government.

A lighting upgrade process includes the existing system's age and its ability to work with control changes, the quality of light, and the type of environment. Industry tools are available to compare the costs of multiple lighting systems. These tools allow specifiers to look at both financial and operational aspects to help determine the return on investment (ROI).

The LED lighting is a great way to improve the look of home or business. LED landscape lighting can highlight features of you are business or home, guide guests along the pathways, and create excellent mood lighting for outdoor entertaining. The LED technologies deliver a better quality of light and measurable energy savings while creating attractive spaces and happier, healthier, more productive occupants. LED luminaires and controls system is an easy upgrade solution to the current lighting system. Likewise, they are beneficial upgrades in terms of enhancing the quality of lighting, saving energy, and achieving sustainability goals. New LED options include smart



technology, such as integrated lighting and control systems. The LED light is a high-quality, cost-effective solution providing illumination and spatial brightness. As LED technology evolves, specifiers can also expect to benefit from rebate and incentive programs tied to LED and control use.





MANAGING YOUR MONEY

Why the RRSP may be our most important Tax planning tool

David Joseph, M.A.(Economics), CFP®, CLU

Most people know the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) as the must-use retirement savings account. But did you know that the RRSP is a powerful tax planning tool, too? With the February deadline for RRSP contributions fast approaching, now is a good time to look at the RRSP from a tax planning perspective.

When you contribute to an RRSP, that money is tax exempted for as long as you keep it in the plan and, even better, your contributions will reduce your overall tax burden each year.

A spousal RRSP is another potential tax-planning tool for higher income Canadians. These accounts are in one spouse's name—often a lower income earner—but the other, higher earning spouse, can contribute and receive the tax deduction on his or her taxes. This

short order. I can show you a number of strategies to consider that can help accelerate your plan using assets you have readily available and key tax planning benefits.

If you have made less than your maximum annual RRSP contribution in the past, a lump sum contribution could allow you to catch up. You are allowed to make up for unused contribution room that you have accumulated from past years—which can also generate a significant tax refund.

It may be to your benefit to move money you currently have in savings accounts or other investments into your RRSP sooner than later. Moving these dollars into your RRSP will not only result in a reduction of your annual tax bill—but it also allows you to maximize growth inside your RRSP.

into your RRSP eligible investments. When you PAC, you are simply setting up a regular payment plan—usually an automatic withdrawal from your bank account—in an amount you can afford. A regular PAC becomes part of your budget as a monthly cash outflow that you probably won't miss and removes the temptation to spend those available dollars for personal consumption.

should start early with a savings strategy that will make it possible for you to accumulate the most wealth for use (and enjoyment!) through all your retirement years. The best retirement savings strategy for most Canadians is a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) because your contributions and all the income that accumulates in your plan are tax deferred until you start using that money in retirement. Add in the fact that your contributions can be used to reduce taxes and the magic of compounding that enhances RRSP growth over time, and it's easy to see why a registered plan makes such good financial sense. When retirement time rolls around, your RRSP may be a significant source of your retirement income.

Year after year, many Canadians leave a key financial opportunity on the table by not contributing the maximum allowable amount into their RRSP. People come up with many excuses for not contributing an RRSP. Often we hear comment that “What is the point of putting money into RRSP if when you take the money out you have to pay tax on it?” When you contribute to RRSP, you get a tax deduction and for many of you, you receive a tax refund. If you did something constructive with the tax refund like paying down debts, then the fact that you have to pay tax on your RRSP withdrawals becomes irrelevant. By having the benefit of deferring that tax, you end up with significant more money in your retirement savings.

Disclaimer:

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will reduce the contribution room of the higher earning spouse, but when the RRSPs are accessed in retirement, there will be two smaller incomes instead of one big income so the couple will save on taxes.

And while you may have every good intention of matching or increasing your contribution from last year—it can be difficult and stressful to come up with a significant amount of cash in

You can also withdraw from a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) to make your RRSP contribution. Any withdrawals from your TFSA are Tax-free and are added to the available TFSA contribution room the following year. The tax refund can be used as TFSA contribution the following year.

A Pre-Authorized Contribution (PAC) program is a great strategy for getting the maximum amount of money

In many cases, borrowing to take full advantage of RRSP contribution room makes sense. Maximizing your RRSP contribution now offers immediate tax savings this year and tax-deferred potential growth for many years to come. This strategy works best when the interest rate is low enough and you repay the loan as quickly as possible, preferably in one year or two at the most. Preparing for retirement

Can the CRA reject a consumer proposal?



CRA does not automatically refuse all consumer proposals, however, if you haven't filed your taxes for 3 or 4 years, if you've been collecting GST and not remitting it, or if CRA has been trying to get you to co-operate with them for an extended period of time and you've either ignored them or given them the run-around then it is not likely they will vote in favor.

For whatever reason, the experts at CRA have decided that filing a proposal is a privilege and if in CRA's opinion your conduct prior to filing has been "questionable" they will deny you the privilege.

Equally important, the high

rate of success for consumer proposal acceptance is due to offering consumer proposals that make sense to creditors and including the terms and conditions they commonly want. Creditors know that if the proposal is not eventually approved, the debtor will probably consider bankruptcy in which case the creditors will likely get less than what is offered in the proposal.

Here are some of the issues the Trustee, acting as Administrator of a consumer proposal, needs to prepare in the proposal and support documents in order to provide sufficient information for creditors to vote acceptance;

A thorough statement of af-

fairs of the debtor describing the debtor's assets with realistic liquidation values, a list of creditors both unsecured and secured with notes advising what asset is held as security by which creditor, and the debtor's personal information such as age, employment, employer, marital status, dependents and causes of financial problem, and disclosure of recent transactions.

An estimated statement of the debtor's household income and living expenses.

The consumer proposal which describes how much the debtor is offering and the terms of payment (usually how much per month and for how long).

An Administrator's report giving the recommendation and justification of the Administrator for why the creditors should accept the proposal. The justification is commonly a comparison between the proposal offer and an estimate of what creditors could expect in a bankruptcy.

The creditors are relying on the Administrator's knowledge, investigation and professional integrity in preparing accurate and fair information for the creditors to consider.

In case of you have credit or debt issues visit www.gtacredit.com or call 416-489-2000.

Contact info for GTA Credit at Page 11



31st Remembrance Day and Tribute

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– Thiruvalluvar Thirukkural 75

– Translation by Rev G.U.Pope

Born in Malaysia, 23 July 1924, Lived in Colombo,
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passed away peacefully on the 12th of January 2020.

Devoted mother of Sumathy, Amirthalingam, Devasenathipathy,
Ponmani, Pathmanathan and Meganathan, mother-in-law of late
C. Rudra, Sandhya, Suganthi, Suriyakumar, Pathma and Shan-
thi, loving grandmother of Subo, Suluckshnee, Saroshi, Danuka,
Bavithra, Branava and Nitheeban, great grandmother of Raman-
an, Maayon, Shreyan and Simaya.

Contact: Pathmanathan (Son) Tel: 647-205-0315

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Welcome to our recipe corner! We sisters will entice you with recipes that we have fallen in love with and teach you a little Tamil along the way, as all the ingredients will have their Tamil names. Both of us love to cook and we have developed very different styles. Niranjini has a very refined palate and cooks more contemporary world cuisine with an Asian touch. Rajini is a seasoned homemaker who loves making traditional dishes for her friends and family. Follow us on Instagram: @ninjaeatsfood and @tamil_food

Eat more, learn more!

Sisters Niranjini Mandalia and Rajini Nathan are both food enthusiasts from England. Niranjini, who lives in London, has a degree in Human Biology and is a trained chef. She makes it her business to know everything about what she eats, from nutritional value to source producers. Follow her food obsession on Instagram @ninjaeatsfood.

Rajini, lives in Toronto and has a background in psychology. Her speciality is in Tamil food from around the world, catch up on her meal ideas on Instagram @tamil_food.

Lentils and mixed beans curry



Ingredients:

✓ 1 can mixed beans in water (drain and wash) – look for beans like red kidney beans, haricot, lima beans, pea navy beans, cannellini beans etc. ✓ 2 tbsp sweetcorn (solam) ✓ 2-3 tbsp sambhar powder (sambhar podi) ✓ Salt-to taste (uppu) ✓ ½ onion, diced (vengaayam) ✓ Pinch of asafoetida (perungaayam/hing) ✓ 2 cloves garlic, minced (ulli/poondu) ✓ 1 tbsp olive oil/ghee (nei) ✓ ½ tsp cumin seeds (seeragam) ✓ ¼ tsp mustard seeds (kadugu) ✓ 2 tsp lemon juice (elumitchai saaru) ✓ ½ cup toor dal (thuvaram paruppu) ✓ ½ tsp turmeric powder (manjal) ✓ 1 ½ tsp cumin powder (seeraga thool) ✓ 1 tbsp coriander powder (kotthamalli thool) ✓ 5-6 curry leaves, roughly ripped (karivepilai)

Optional: ✓ 1 tbsp coconut cream

Method:

In a pot, thoroughly wash the toor dal, add 2 cups of water, salt and turmeric powder and cook until soft. Once cooked, add 1 ½ cups of water, the mixed beans, sweetcorn, sambhar powder, cumin powder, coriander powder and a bit more salt and cook for 15-20 minutes. Once fully cooked, add the lemon juice, mix and turn off the heat. If you are adding coconut cream, add it at this stage and stir well. In a separate frying pan, add the oil/ghee and wait for it to warm up. Temper mustard seeds, cumin seeds and curry leaves and wait for the mustard seeds to sizzle and pop. Add the diced onion and minced garlic and wait for the onions to brown nicely. Once brown, add to the bean mix and stir well. Don't forget to always check your dish for salt and lemon juice.

Try making this recipe this month and

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Canadian Tamil Congress Commemorates 13th Annual Thai Pongal Gala Dinner

By Harrish Thirukumaran

The Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) commemorated the 13th annual Thai Pongal gala dinner on January 18, 2020 at the Hilton Toronto/Markham Suites Conference Centre. The night was marked specifically by an assortment of traditional Tamil dances that signified the Tamil holiday of Thai Pongal as well as the Tamil Heritage Month that is commemorated in Canada. This month celebrates the achievements and resilience of the Canadian Tamil community, with this event recapping some of the past achievements of the CTC over the year of 2019.

Thai Pongal is a harvest festival that is equivalent to Thanksgiving Day and is celebrated by Tamils across the world. It is considered one of the oldest harvest festivals that originated in the pre-Christian era in Tamil Nadu. In the Tamil language, Pongal literally means “boiling over” or “spill over.” The boiling of milk in a clay pot until it spills over is symbolic of the heart’s desire for prosperity and abundance. The Pongal festival falls on the first day of the month of Thai within the Tamil calendar, which is the 14th or 15th of January in the Gregorian calendar.

The CTC president, Sivan Ilanko, noted in one of the opening speeches that the organization will continue to be at the forefront of community advocacy and citizenship for Tamil Canadians throughout the country. Tamil Fest, a street festival that started five years ago in Toronto, Ontario, Canada through the organizational efforts of the CTC, has transformed into one of the largest street festivals for Tamils internationally. Also, Ilanko stated that “since uplifting the Tamil people in Sri Lanka is a core part of the CTC’s mandate, we will put higher emphasis on fostering economic development and progress in the Northern and Eastern provinces through the North and East Economic Development (NEED) Centre and other partnering organizations and supporters.”

The event was attended by many politicians from the local to the national level here in Canada including Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance for Ontario, Logan Kanapathi, Member of Provincial Parliament for Markham-Thornhill, Jack Heath, York Regional Councillor from the City of Markham, Mayor Iain Lovatt for Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Mitzie Hunter, Member of Provincial Parliament for Scarborough-Guildwood. Guests also included senior members of various law enforcement agencies, academics, members of media, business and community leaders from various communities.

Minister Phillips presented greetings from Premier Doug Ford within the Government of Ontario. Accordingly, he immediately highlighted how that Canadians of Tamil descent not only represent the Tamil community but also work to represent Ontarians in general. Tamil Heritage Month and the community make huge contributions from being academics, entrepre-



“Service Excellence” was awarded to Dr. Thangamuthu Sathiyamoorthy



“Leaders for Change” was awarded to Kanimozhi Mathi, Ms. Mathi



neurs, and medical practitioners. The Minister also proudly boasted how Ontario is a significant home for the Tamil population outside of Sri Lanka. The presence of the Tamil community has been an essential part of the fabric of Ontario.

Next, Michael Thompson, deputy mayor and city councillor for Ward 21 Scarborough Centre, delivered greetings on behalf of Mayor John Tory and the city of Toronto. He expressed how he has fostered a 30+ year relationship with the Tamil community in Toronto. It was also noted that they were a small group of people who fled war who dealt with so many issues and have been helped by Canada. In a historic first, Thompson proclaimed that January 2020 would mark Tamil Heritage Month at the City of Toronto.

Although only represented by the presence of Canadian Federal Minister for Small Business and International Trade Minister and Member of Parliament for Markham-Thornhill, Mary Ng at the event, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, in his Thai Pongal message for the CTC dinner, recalled how the Canadian Tamil Congress has served as the voice for Tamil-Canadians. Canada draws on the strength from its diversity, while the positive atmosphere that the Canadian Tamil Congress facilitates is integral towards reinforcing relationships between Tamil-

Canadians and people from all backgrounds.

This year the annual Service Excellence Award was awarded to Dr. Thangamuthu Sathiyamoorthy. He is currently the director of the Teaching Hospital Jaffna District, which is the only tertiary care provider for the Northern Province that serves an entire population of over 600,000.

He and a couple of his colleagues had provided medical care to the injured in the absence of any structured hospital facilities during the final months of the Sri Lankan civil war in May 2009. Dr. Sathiyamoorthy lived up to the finest traditions of the medical profession of providing care to those without any concern for his own wellbeing. The award was presented by Roy Ratnavel, vice president of CF Financial, who expressed that Dr. Sathiyamoorthy personifies everything that is human, descent and civilized.

Afterwards, the Leaders for Change Award was presented to Kanimozhi Mathi. Ms. Mathi is a practicing Attorney at Law at the High Court of Madras, India. One of her greatest contributions to the Tamil diaspora in Canada and elsewhere is her successful legal intervention to protect Keezhadi site. It is a place of huge archaeological relevance which has transformed into a defining discovery of not only Tamil civilizational antiquity, but also one that

would prove beyond doubt that Tamil is the civilizational foundation of the entire Indian subcontinent.

Another noteworthy takeaway from this year’s event was a first in recent memory, which was the Women’s Empowerment Walk. It was an initiative started by the CTC that showcases an exclusive collection of handloom sarees, sarongs, and other fabrics that were brought directly from Tamil weavers in the Northeast parts of Sri Lanka. Mary Ng wore one of these sarees to show her solidarity to the effort, supporting these deserving women in Sri Lanka. These sarees were also sold during the dinner and all the sarees were sold out by the end of the event.

Youth members of the Centre for Leadership and Innovation (CFLI) which is again a successful initiative by the Canadian Tamil Congress to prepare our future leaders, made an outstanding presentation on the need to support women empowerment in war affected North East Sri Lanka.

Overall, the event turned out to be a tremendous success once again and served as an excellent celebration of Tamil Heritage Month in Ontario.

Photo courtesy:
Ravi Atchuthan,
Vision Media-Lucky Exclusive



Canadian Tamil youth **Vithusayni Paramanathan** wins Best Debut International playback singer award



By: Raymond Rajabalan

“Words cannot explain the joy of this huge milestone. A big thank you to A.R. Rahman Sir for blessing me with and giving me my debut Maathare in Thalapathy Vijay’s Bigil”

There is a proverb in Tamil which means “when the month of January is born ‘it brings about many new opportunities in one’s life “. While this saying has a special meaning for the millions of Tamils around the world, it has become significantly important for a very talented Canadian Tamil youth who had recently earned global fame by establishing a great record in Chennai in musical industry.

What follows below is her success story:

Vithu (whose full name is Vithusayni Paramanathan) is the Canadian Tamil youth of Srilankan origin who recently shot into great fame by winning the award for the **“Best International Debut Playback Singer”** at the Edison Awards 2020 in Chennai at the Kalaivaanar Arangam for her song Maathare in the award winning Tamil movie Bigil.

As everyone knows, for a diaspora Tamil to be recognised among the talented youth in Tamil Nadu it is a Herculean task. Yet Vithu has done it. This e multi-talented youth who has been effectively using her years of training in music for a great future was recently lucky enough to receive the attention of A.R.Rahuman, the internationally famous Indian composer, singer and music producer. Being spotted by this famed artist paved the path for success for this Toronto based youth who has successfully managed to excel in music while simultaneously following a degree program in Criminology in the prestigious Western university in Canada, where she is also the President of Tamil students Association.

She had already developed leadership qualities during her High school years and has been the Executive member of Student council for four years in a row, while also being part of the High School choir. During her pre-university studies she took part in several concerts and plays which obviously laid the foundation for her future success, both in academics as well as music industry.

Fund raising for the less fortunate kids

Though living in a well- developed western Nation, Vithu has been always conscious of the hardships faced by the children in the less developed nations her humanitarian qualities were brought to light when she fundraised money doing the **Pencil for Kids** program at her high school; the amount she collected supported the



Vithusayni receiving Edison Awards

education of two girls in Africa.

Interest in sports

Vithu took a great interest in sports too during her school days. She was part of her high school’s football and basketball teams four years in a row. Moreover she was 1/25 amongst 119,000 York Region students and was chosen as the recipient of the All Rounder Student Success award.

Evolution of Vithu’s musical talents

She has been singing since grade 1 in choirs. Over the past years, she has



Vithu and sister with Music Director D. Imman in Toronto

got herself trained in carnatic vocals as well as in carnatic violin. Further she is also certified in carnatic, and Hindustani music from AR Rahman’s KM Conservatory in India.

During the recent years, she has sung with numerous Indian artists including, but not limited to Srinivas, Unnikrishnan, Vijay Prakash, Haricharan and D. Imman. Furthermore

she has also sung in the presence of various other great Indian artists such as AR Rahman, Anirudh, S.P. Balasubrahmanyam, KJ Yesudas, and Deva on numerous international stages.

Entrepreneurial skills

Vithu is the cofounder of **Isai Empire** along with her sister doing concerts collaborating Indian artists as well as one hundred plus Canadian artists in each show; their most recent concert was D Imman Live in Toronto 2018 at the Powerade Centre with an audience of 5000 people. Their next



Vithu with Playback Singer Srinivas

concert is scheduled for 2020

First Tamil Canadian artist to perform live at an AR Rahman concert

She was the first Canadian Tamil artist to perform live at an AR Rahman concert - AR Rahman Live in Chennai 2019.-She has made her debut as a Playback Singer with her

first song Maathare from Bigil for AR Rahman - the first Canadian Tamil to sing for AR Rahman’s film score.

She has also sung for other Indian films, which will be announced in the upcoming months.

Facebook message of gratitude

Immediately after the Edison awards event this enterprising artist with a great future profusely thanked the followers through her Face book page. “Words cannot explain the joy of this huge milestone. A big thank you to A.R. Rahman Sir for blessing me with and giving me my debut



Vithu with Music Director Deva

Maathare in Thalapathy Vijay’s Bigil. I am eternally grateful to my parents, my sister, my gurus, family, friends, and all of you guys for sticking by me throughout my journey.

That was Vithu’s sincere expression of deep gratitude to every one of those who paved the path for her musical journey.



FLIGHT 752: A CANADIAN TRAGEDY

In the aftermath of this great Aviation tragedy - What next?



by Raymond Rajabalan



A plane that crashed in Iran early last month with 176 people on board was trying to return to the airport, Iranian investigators say.

The Ukraine International Airlines Boeing 737-800 went down just minutes after taking off from Tehran's airport on Wednesday January 8th, leaving no survivors. The crash came just hours after Iran carried out missile strikes on two airbases housing US forces in Iraq.

After initially claiming that the crash was due to mechanical failure, Iranian government later admitted that the aircraft was brought down by an unintentional missile attack by the military.

What happened?

The Ukraine International Airlines flight PS752 to Kyiv had 167 passengers and nine Ukrainian crew on board. The majority of passengers were from Iran and Canada.

There was good visibility when the plane went down near Iran's capital, according to the Flightradar24 aviation website. Officials from the airline said the crew were well experienced.

Hon. Justin Trudeau, the Canadian Prime Minister addressing the nation immediately after this great tragedy said a total of 138 passengers on the flight were en route to Canada via Kyiv.

"All people who won't be coming home to their parents, their friends, their colleagues or their family," he said. "All had so much potential, so much life ahead of them", he added.

What went wrong?

Flight data from the Ukrainian Airlines Boeing 737-800 is openly available online. It shows that the plane climbed normally after taking-off from Tehran.

It reached nearly 8,000ft before the aircraft's data suddenly disappears.

Now that this great aviation tragedy has happened one can only hope that based on any information obtained by the investigators, appropriate preven-

tive measures would be taken by the aviation officials to avoid a repetition of such a catastrophe.

PLANE CRASHES THAT CHANGED AVIATION

The following article provides an account of how the information gathered after 12 earlier air crashes has helped the aviation industry to make air travel safer.

Out of these tragedies arose major technological advances in flight safety that keeps air travel routine today.

Generally speaking, flying in a jetliner is extraordinarily safe in the recent times. For example, there have been no fatal crashes on a U.S. scheduled airline in the past 12 years, an astounding record considering that more than 30,000 flights take off every day.

How did flying get so reliable? In part, because previous accidents triggered crucial safety improvements.

Here are 12 accidents whose influence is felt each time you step on a plane.

GRAND CANYON | TWA Flight 2 and United Airlines Flight 718

Upgrade: Collision avoidance and a better ATC



The accident spurred a \$250 million upgrade of the air traffic control (ATC) system—serious money in those days. (It worked: There hasn't been a collision between two airliners in the United States in 47 years.) The crash also triggered the creation in 1958 of the Federal Aviation Agency (now Administration) to oversee air safety.

However, further improvements would be implemented after a small private plane wandered into the Los Angeles terminal control area on Aug. 31, 1986, striking an Aeromexico DC-9 and killing 86 people. The FAA subsequently required small aircraft entering control areas to use transponders—electronic devices that broadcast

position and altitude to controllers. Additionally, airliners were required to have TCAS II collision-avoidance systems, which detect potential collisions with other transponder-equipped aircraft and advise pilots to climb or dive in response. Since then, no small plane has collided with an airliner in flight in the United States.

PORTLAND | United Airlines Flight 173

Upgrade: Cockpit teamwork



United Flight 173, a DC-8 approaching Portland, Ore., with 181 passengers, circled near the airport for an hour as the crew tried in vain to sort out a landing gear problem. Although gently warned of the rapidly diminishing fuel supply by the flight engineer on board, the captain—later described by one investigator as "an arrogant S.O.B."—waited too long to begin his final approach. The DC-8 ran out of fuel and crashed in a suburb, killing 10.

In response, United revamped its cockpit training procedures around the then-new concept of Cockpit Resource Management (CRM). Abandoning the traditional "the captain is god" airline hierarchy, CRM emphasized teamwork and communication among the crew, and has since become the industry standard. "It's really paid off," says united captain Al Haynes, who in 1989 remarkably managed to crash-land a crippled DC-10 at Sioux City, Iowa, by varying engine thrust. "Without [CRM training], it's a cinch we wouldn't have made it."

CINCINNATI | Air Canada Flight 797

Upgrade: Lav smoke sensors



The first signs of trouble on Air Canada 797, a DC-9 flying at 33,000 ft. en route from Dallas to Toronto, were the wisps of smoke wafting out of the rear lavatory. Soon, thick black smoke started to fill the cabin, and the plane began an emergency descent. Barely able to see the instrument panel because of the smoke, the pilot landed the plane at Cincinnati. But shortly after the doors and emergency exits were opened, the cabin erupted in a flash fire before everyone could get out. Of the 46 people aboard, 23 died.

The FAA subsequently mandated that aircraft lavatories be equipped with smoke detectors and automatic fire extinguishers. Within five years, all jetliners were retrofitted with fire-blocking layers on seat cushions and floor lighting to lead passengers to exits in dense smoke. Planes built after 1988 have more flame-resistant interior materials.

DALLAS/FORT WORTH | Delta Air Lines Flight 191

Upgrade: Downdraft detection



As Delta Flight 191, a Lockheed L-1011, approached for landing at Dallas/Fort Worth airport, a thunderstorm lurked near the runway. Lightning flashed around the plane at 800 ft., and the jetliner encountered a microburst wind shear—a strong downdraft and abrupt shift in the wind that caused the plane to lose 54 knots of airspeed in a few seconds. Sinking rapidly, the L-1011 hit the ground about a mile short of the runway and bounced across a highway, crushing a vehicle and killing the driver. The plane then veered left and crashed into two huge airport water tanks. On board, 134 of 163 people were killed. The crash triggered a seven-year NASA/FAA research effort, which led directly to the on-board forward-looking radar wind-shear detectors that became standard equipment on airliners in the mid-1990s. Only one wind-shear-related accident has occurred since.

Contd. next page ...



Community Watch

SIOUX CITY | UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT 232

Upgrade: Engine safety improvements



United Airlines flight 232 was en route from Denver to Chicago, when the engine in the tail of the DC-10 suffered engine failure, severing the plane's hydraulic lines and rendering the plane virtually uncontrollable. What followed for 296 people aboard was a horrific ordeal as the captain, Alfred Haynes, struggled to land at a nearby airport. As it crash landed, the widebody craft cartwheeled off the runway and caught fire, and it was considered something of a miracle that 185 of those aboard survived.

The NTSB later determined that the accident was caused by a failure by mechanics to detect a crack in the fan disk that ultimately was traced back to the initial manufacture of the titanium alloy material. The accident led the FAA to order modification of the DC-10s hydraulic system (the DC-10 was already being phased out by many airlines) and to require redundant safety systems in all future aircraft, and it changed the way engine inspections are performed.

MAUI | Aloha Airlines Flight 243

Upgrade: Retiring tin



As Aloha Flight 243, a weary, 19-year-old Boeing 737 on a short hop from Hilo, Hawaii, to Honolulu, leveled off at 24,000 ft., a large section of its fuselage blew off, leaving dozens of passengers riding in the open-air breeze. Miraculously, the rest of the plane held together long enough for the pilots to land safely. Only one person, a flight attendant who was swept out of the plane, was killed.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) blamed a combination of corrosion and widespread fatigue damage, the result of repeated pressurization cycles during the plane's 89,000-plus flights. In response, the FAA began the National Aging Aircraft Research Program in 1991, which tightened inspection and maintenance

requirements for high-use and high-cycle aircraft. Post-Aloha, there has been only one American fatigue-related jet accident—the Sioux City DC-10.

PITTSBURGH | US Air Flight 427

SVDMOLEN, CREATIVE COMMONS ATTRIBUTION 2.5 LICENSE

Upgrade: Rudder Rx



SVDMOLEN, CREATIVE COMMONS ATTRIBUTION 2.5 LICENSE

When USAir Flight 427 began its approach to land at Pittsburgh, the Boeing 737 suddenly rolled to the left and plunged 5000 ft. to the ground, killing all 132 on board. The plane's black box revealed that the rudder had abruptly moved to the full-left position, triggering the roll. But why? USAir blamed the plane. Boeing blamed the crew. It took nearly five years for the NTSB to conclude that a jammed valve in the rudder-control system had caused the rudder to reverse: As the pilots frantically pressed on the right rudder pedal, the rudder went left.

As a result, Boeing spent \$500 million to retrofit all 2,800 of the world's most popular jetliner. And, in response to conflicts between the airline and the victims' families, Congress passed the Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act, which transferred survivor services to the NTSB.

MIAMI | ValuJet Flight 592

Upgrade: Fire prevention in the hold



CANDACE BARBOT/MIAMI HERALD/LIAISON AGENCY

Although the FAA took anti-cabin-fire measures after the 1983 Air Canada accident, it did nothing to protect passenger jet cargo compartments—despite NTSB warnings after a 1988 cargo fire in which the plane managed to land safely. It took the horrific crash of ValuJet 592 into the Everglades near Miami to finally spur the agency

to action.

The fire in the DC-9 was caused by chemical oxygen generators that had been illegally packaged by SabreTech, the airline's maintenance contractor. A bump apparently set one off, and the resulting heat started a fire, which was fed by the oxygen being given off. The pilots were unable to land the burning plane in time, and 110 people died. The FAA responded by mandating smoke detectors and automatic fire extinguishers in the cargo holds of all commercial airliners. It also bolstered rules against carrying hazardous cargo on aircraft.

LONG ISLAND | TWA Flight 800

Upgrade: Electrical spark elimination



It was everybody's nightmare: a plane that blew up in midair for no apparent reason. The explosion of TWA Flight 800, a Boeing 747 that had just taken off from JFK bound for Paris, killed all 230 people aboard and stirred great controversy. After painstakingly reassembling the wreckage, the NTSB dismissed the possibility of a terrorist bomb or missile attack and concluded that fumes in the plane's nearly empty center-wing fuel tank had ignited, most likely after a short circuit in a wire bundle led to a spark in the fuel gauge sensor.

The FAA has since mandated changes to reduce sparks from faulty wiring and other sources. Boeing, meanwhile, has developed a fuel-inerting system that injects nitrogen gas into fuel tanks to reduce the chance of explosions. It was decided to install the system in all its newly built planes, starting in 2008.

NOVA SCOTIA | Swissair Flight 111

September.02.1998

Upgrade: Insulation swap-out



About an hour after takeoff, the pilots of Swissair's Flight 111 from New York to Geneva—a McDonnell Douglas MD-11—smelled smoke in the cockpit. Four minutes later, they began an immediate descent toward Halifax, Nova

Scotia, about 65 miles away. But with the fire spreading and cockpit lights and instruments failing, the plane crashed into the Atlantic about 5 miles off the Nova Scotia coast. All 229 people aboard were killed.

Investigators traced the fire to the plane's in-flight entertainment network, whose installation led to arcing in vulnerable Kapton wires above the cockpit. The resulting fire spread rapidly along flammable Mylar fuselage insulation. The FAA ordered the Mylar insulation replaced with fire-resistant materials in about 700 McDonnell Douglas jets.

FROM RIO TO PARIS | AIR FRANCE 447

Upgrade: Manual training to fix over-dependence on automation



Around three hours into its journey from Rio to Paris, Air France Flight 447, an Airbus A330-200, headed into an area of severe thunderstorm activity—it was never heard from again. From an envelope-pushing altitude of 38,000 feet, the aircraft entered an aerodynamic stall before plunging into the depths of the southern Atlantic Ocean, killing all 228 people aboard. Several days later, pieces of the wreckage were spotted floating on the water's surface, but the whereabouts of the rest of the jet remained a mystery for more than two years, when a privately funded search located the bulk of the fuselage, bodies of the victims, and the vital black box recorders.

Investigators had already solved part of the puzzle, relying on automated messages sent from the crippled plane as it went down, revealing that the pitot tubes that track speed had frozen and malfunctioned, and setting off a cascading series of events. With the wreckage now found, the evidence led experts to conclude the crash was caused by the pilots' failure to take corrective action to recover from the stall. The findings cast a harsh light on fly-by-wire technology and its reliance on computers, rather than humans, to make the final call on flight decisions. Boeing and Airbus both use fly by wire, but Boeing gives pilots the ability to override automation. The crash prompted a renewed effort to retrain pilots to manually fly the plane—no matter what the computer is telling them.

Contd. next page...



Exact Location Unknown | Malaysia Airlines 370

Upgrade: Real-time flight tracking



There was no May Day call or sign of trouble when Malaysian Airlines Flight 370, a 777 carrying 239 people en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, dropped off the radar screens on March 8, 2014. More than five years later, it is still aviation's most agonizing mystery. The biggest question: why the plane's transponders were apparently disabled, making the jet almost invisible as it unaccountably changed course and headed south, where some experts believe it flew for up to seven hours on autopilot before running out of fuel and crashing into the Indian Ocean. In the absence of hard evidence—with few clues in the form of some barnacled flotsam found off Africa—many competing theories of what happened have arisen, from hypoxia caused by rapid decompression (also the cause of the Helios Flight 522 crash in Greece), to intentional sabotage from a crew member or passenger.

One thing is clear: the world wouldn't still be looking for the plane if it had been equipped with real-time tracking, which safety experts had been demanding ever since Air France 447. As a result of MH370, the International Civil Aviation Organization has ordered all airlines to install tracking equipment that will keep closer tabs on planes, especially those over the ocean, and aircraft manufacturers are also developing black boxes that would eject and float automatically when a plane hits water.

Development of real-time tracking system

In early 2019, a new real-time tracking system that locates planes anywhere in the world was developed. This joint Canadian-U.S. technology sees aircraft where ground radar can't.

The space-based Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) global air traffic surveillance system was developed by Aireon, a company based in Virginia and partly owned by Nav Canada, which runs Canada's civil air navigation system.

Aireon is hoping controllers around the world will eventually connect to its system, which it says will improve safety and efficiency.

Aviation writer Howard Slutsken, who is not involved with Aireon, says it's a game-changer.

"It's the biggest advance in airline tracking since the advent of radar in

World War 2."

70% of world not covered by ground radar

Consider the current state of air-plane tracking. Using technology developed in the 1930s, ground-based radar stations receive reflected radio signals to detect and identify aircraft, measure their approximate positions and follow their paths via successive signal transmissions.

But 70 per cent of the world — including oceans, mountainous regions and remote areas like the Arctic — is not covered. In those places, we don't know exactly where planes are at any given time.

They report their position every 10-14 minutes, and because of that lack of precision, air traffic controllers keep those planes pretty far apart — as much as 160 kilometres of separation.

That's what Aireon is hoping to change.

Planes equipped with ADS-B capabilities can now stream their exact position, including altitude, twice per second, wherever they are in the world, to a network of 66 satellites.

Nav Canada and NATS, its U.K. equivalent, are the first air navigation service providers to put the system to use. In late March 2019, air traffic controllers in Gander, Newfoundland, and Britain began tracking planes in the North Atlantic — one of the busiest air traffic corridors in the world — using this new stream of data.

Nav Canada estimates 95 per cent of jets currently crossing that corridor are equipped with ADS-B, and says all commercial jetliners being built now are outfitted with the technology. The aim is to have air navigation service providers around the world sign on, at a cost.

With the exact position of the flights constantly updated, controllers can reduce the space between planes to about 25 kilometres and make last-minute adjustments to flight paths. That means more planes can share the air-space at the same time.

Nav Canada says it will also save a little bit of time and fuel on every flight. It might not seem like much — a few minutes for each trans-Atlantic flight and about \$400 in fuel, but it adds up when multiplied by up to 1,500 flights on a busy day. And that's just in the North Atlantic region.

The new technology could also have a big impact when things go wrong.

"If there's an emergency, search-and-rescue teams can get there and know exactly where they're going -- where before they were guessing in many cases," Slutsken says.

Real-time record

When an Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 Max 8 crashed in March 2019, Aireon was able to provide authorities with the plane's exact flight path long before the data was downloaded from the flight recorders. The company said

it was the same information Canadian transportation officials relied on as they assessed whether to ground all Max 8s in Canada.

As significant as this new technology will be for navigation, it probably wouldn't have solved one of the biggest aviation mysteries: the disappearance of MH 370. Just over five years ago, the Malaysian Airlines jet disappeared off radar screens and has never been found.

There was no radio call, and the transponder, which communicates with ground radar, appeared to have been turned off. In that rare instance where someone is trying to avoid detection, the ADS-B could likely be turned off, as well.

But MH 370 remains the rarest of

circumstances.

HOPE FOR SAFER AIR TRAVEL

For thousands of commercial flights each day and even the occasional emergency, Aireon is now keeping a real-time record of where those planes are, every second, everywhere in the world.

Apart from all the above the tragic accidents due to planes being downed to accidental shooting is another danger...With increasing possibility of wars between global powers it has now become an almost immediate requirement to develop new technology to prevent aircrafts from flying in conflict zones and also be able to rapidly take measures to protect them in times of possible danger.

Borrowed Necklace

By: Kingsley

Meena was as beautiful as an Angel:
The class of her birth eclipsed her allure.
She dreamt to have husband, young professional,
But only received a clerk as lover.

She was brooding all day and night,
Saying God has neglected her right
When Her husband was considerate than most
Did everything for her with all his might.

One day her husband came with an invitation
To a grand party; in his workplace.
Said, very rarely a clerk gets an invitation,
So we will go and enjoy the party in solace.

She lamented about what she might wear
He cooled her suggesting dress and jewellery.
Adorning an attractive robe and borrowed necklace
They went for a night of pure solace.

She was the cynosure of the crowd,
Even the chief guest asked her for dance.
She enjoyed fully; and was elated
While her husband admired her fully sated.

When returning home early morning,
She felt for the borrowed necklace
Alas, it wasn't there,
Sent her husband out searching.

They had to return the borrowed necklace,
So they found one exactly the same
For only three thousand dollars
Sacrificing could only buy the same.

They cut down on food and clothing,
Forgetting all pleasures with nonstop working,
Changed every drop of blood to dollars,
Losing her pride and her grace.

Her friend was surprised at her appearance,
Inquired the cause of change in demeanor
I lost your necklace and replaced it
Undergoing immense struggles & hardships

Oh! Mena you paid thirty thousand:
For a real diamond necklace,
But mine is an imitation diamond,
Worth thirty dollars the necklace.

THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA

Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple

Compiled by *Kidambi Raj*

SIGNIFICANCE OF OBSERVING PRADOSHAM



Linga & Nandhi

What is Pradosham:

Pradosham is a bimonthly occasion on the thirteenth day of every fortnight in the Hindu Calendar. It is closely connected with the worship of Lord Siva.

Pradosha Kalam (period of Pradosham) is a period considered very important in many festivals. Pradosha Kalam of Trayodasi Tithi (Thirteenth Lunar Day) in traditional Hindu Panchangam, is considered very auspicious to Lord Siva.

The Pradosham day is believed to be one of the days on which Lord Siva along with Goddess Parvati is extremely happy, delighted and generous. Pradosham means the dusk time. It is the auspicious 3-hour period, 1.5 hours before and after the sunset is one of the optimum times for worship of Lord



Linga

Shiva.

Origin of Pradosham celebration:

As per the legend, during Samudra Manthan (Churning the Milky Ocean), the Venom that came out along with the Amritham was taken by Lord Siva and Goddess Parvati kept Her hand on His neck to prevent the lethal poison to enter His body and that turned the colour of His throat blue after which Lord Siva was called Neelakantan. After that Samudra Manthan event, the Devas and the Asuras got the Amritham along with new life to the universe. All in their happiness and festivity, completely forgot to thank Lord Siva. But on the thirteenth day (Trayodasi), they realized their mistake and asked Lord Siva for His mercy. Lord Siva forgave them, and celebrations continued. It is believed that it was the time of Pradosham. Hence, whoever prays to Lord Siva in that time, He fulfills their wishes and they attain salvation.

As per Siva Purana, Pradosham Vratam is the most beneficial fast in order to attain health, wealth and children. The Pradosha Vratam liberates the devotees from all the

past and present sins. By observing Pradosham with complete devotion and dedication, all the demands are fulfilled by Lord Siva and Goddess Parvati.

It is believed that during the Pradosha Kaalam (time), Lord Siva with Goddess Parvati performed a Holy Dance on Mount Kailas in a very pleasant mood and so, offering pooja during that time gives an opportunity to remove Negative Karma and fulfillment of all desires. It is also said that just lighting a single lamp or just going for darsan in a Siva temple during the Pradosha time is enough to please Lord Siva. People keeping a fast on the Pradosham Tithi not only get all the worldly pleasures, but also get freedom from the cycle of births and deaths.

Benefits of Pradosha Vratams on different days of the week:

Som Pradosham – that falls on a Monday, helps the devotee attain Good Health and fulfillment of all his/her wishes.

Bhauma Pradosham – that falls on a Tuesday, cures diseases and blesses the devotee with good health.

Sowmya Pradosham – that falls on a Wednesday, fulfills the wishes of a person observing the fast.

Guru Pradosham – that falls on a Thursday, helps the devotee to get rid of his seen and unseen enemies.

Sani Pradosham – that falls on a Saturday, is especially very auspicious and is observed for attaining a happy and blissful married life. Also, those who are childless and who observe fast on this day will be blessed with a baby by the Grace of Gauri Shankar.

Somasuthra Pradakshinam (Pradosha Pradakshinam) is a unique way of circumambulating the Siva Lingam:

First saluting the Holy Bull (Rishabha or Nandhi), go anti-clockwise and salute Siva (not crossing the Gomukhi or Bull's

face). Now return in clockwise manner and salute the Nandhi and continue clockwise till the Nandhi's face (not to cross it again). Then return in anti-clockwise direction, salute the Nandhi again and proceed toward Lord Siva. From there return clockwise without worshipping the Nandhi and reach the Face of Nandhi. Finally return anti-clockwise from there to salute Nandhi and continue to Siva and return to Nandhi and worship Siva Lingam (at the altar) by viewing through the spaces between the two horns of the Nandhi. This is one Pradakshanam. Three times such Pradakshanams to be done. If you carefully observe the curve traced by doing the pradakshanam, will be very similar to the periphery of the crescent. Hence this way of circumambulating is called Somasutra Pradakshanam. During the pradosham time, Somasutra Pradakshanam is the recommended way of circumambulating the God. A point to note here is that the Nandhi's face is never crossed. The Nandhi's face is the place where the water after anointing (abhishekha theertham) would be flowing out. So, by doing this way of Pradakshanam, one does not step over the holy water.

Whether you take the spiritual or material route, one thing is certain: you must eliminate your karma to even to get there. Pradosham rituals give a great opportunity to build a road to prosperity and true happiness.

We all generally think that it is only human beings who worship God. If one goes into the attached link below and see the two-minute video he/she will be amazed at "Birds Worshipping the Linga on Pradosham day. Birds gather and perform Soma Sukta Pradakshinam, i.e. 3 times in the Temple of Bheema Shankar, one of the Jyotilingams in India. The link is: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DrYxPCKIew.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PANCHAMUKHA ANJANEYA

Panchamukha Anjaneya:

Pancha means *five* and *Mukha* means



face and so it means five-faced Anjaneya. The five faces of Anjaneya are: *Garuda-facing west, Varaahaa-facing north, Hayagriva-facing the sky, Narasimha-facing the south and the fifth Anjaneya Himself facing the east.* The Panchamukha Anjaneya has 10 arms and holding ten different deadly weapons, including His own renowned weapon, the Gada.

Anjaneya is a dedicated devotee of Lord Rama and is the embodiment of courage, loyalty and bravery. In all His deeds, He inspires us to brave the odds and face all the hurdles life throws at us.

The Origin of Panchamukha Anjaneya:

The origin of Panchamukha Anjaneya can be traced back to the greatest epic, the Ramayana. In the battle between Rama and Ravana, Ravana being the vile Rakshasa gains the help of Mahiravan, who is the ruler of the underworld. *Mahiravan* tricks Rama and Lakshmanan with his deceiving

appearances and holds them captive in his underworld prison. Anjaneya being the faithful devotee He is, undertakes the mission of rescuing them back safely. But He was quite perplexed when He reaches the underworld and realizes that the only way to save them was to kill Mahiravan. Mahiravan being the master of trickery and deceit carefully has lives split in all 5 directions, 3 of which were in lamps. So, Anjaneya took the form of Panchamukha Anjaneya, with five faces. The five faces were, Anjaneya, Garuda, Varaahaa, Hayagriva and Narasimha. And they successfully vanquished the enemy and saved Rama and Lakshmana.

Anjaneya is a great mystic, having transcended the five senses (Pancha Indriyas). In Kamba Ramayana, the *significance of number five* is beautifully narrated as follows:

- He is the son of one of the five elements (son of wind – Pavana Thanaya)
- He crossed one of the five elements (water – the ocean)
- He went through one of the five elements (the sky)
- He met the daughter of one of the five elements (daughter of the earth – Sita Devi) and
- He burnt down Lanka by one of the five elements (fire).

This is probably the reason why it is advised that we go around Anjaneya idol 5 times or 14, 23 or 41, as sum of the digits give five.

Every Face of Sri Panchamukha Anjaneya has significance:

- Sri Anjaneya faces East. He grants

- purity of mind and success.
- Sri Narasimha faces South. He grants victory and fearlessness.
- Sri Garuda faces West. He removes black magic and poisons.
- Sri Varaahaa faces North. He showers prosperity and wealth.
- Sri Hayagriva faces the Sky. However, to make it visible to us, it is usually tilted and shown above Anjaneya's face. Hayagriva gives knowledge and good children.

There is a Tamil saying that says *start with Ganesa and end with Anjaneya.*

Panchamukhi is also the name of the place where God first came into being. It is located on the bank of the river Tungabhadra, where the present day Mantralayam is located. Raghavendra is known and revered across India. Not many are aware of the relations between Panchamukha Anjaneya and Raghavendra. According to the legend, Panchamukha Anjaneya, Lord Venkateswara of Tirupati and Kumara Avathara all appeared in front of Raghavendra Swami and blessed him. Raghavendra Swami observed a penance for 12 years at that place where his devotees built a Samadhi for him. It is said that there are *five ways of worshipping the Lord* and they are known as *Naman, Smaran, Yachanam and Arpanam*. Lord Anjaneya always used to Naman, Smaran and Keerthanam of Lord Sri Rama. He totally surrendered (Arpanam) to His Master Sri Rama and He also begged (Yachanam) Sri Rama to bless Him with undivided love, says Bhagwat Gita.

Panchamukha Anjaneya Dhyana

Mantra:

*Panchasyachutamaneke
vichitra veetryam/
Sri shanka chakra
ramaniya bhujagra desam//
Peethambaram makara
kundela noorpurangam/
Dhvavethitham kapivaram hruthi
bhuvami//*

Meaning:

The face towards the East is Sri Anjaneya Mukha in its original form. This face removes all blemishes of sin and confers purity of mind (Chitta Suddhi). Sri Karala Ugra Narasimha Swami, facing the South, removes fear of enemies and confers victory.

The face facing the West is that of Lord Sri Mahavira Garuda and this face drives away evil spells, black magic influences etc. and removes all poisonous effects in one's body.

Sri Lakshmi Varaahaa murti facing the North, wards off the trouble caused by bad influences of the planets and confers all prosperity – *Ashta Aishwarya*.

The Urdhva Mukha facing Upwards of Sri Hayagriva Swami confers knowledge, victory, good wife and progeny.

As the following mantra indicates, Lord Anjaneya provides His devotees with knowledge, power, courage and health: *Budhdirbalam yasho dhairyam
nirbhayatvam arogata /
Ajaadtyam vakpatutvam cha hanumat
smaranadbhavet //*

May we all get the Blessings of Lord Anjaneyar !!!

THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA

Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple



by Kidambi Raj

REPORT ON THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE UKRANIAN AIRLINES FLT. 752 HELD AT THE RICHMOND HILL GANESHA TEMPLE



On Friday, January 17th evening, starting around 7:30 PM, the Hindu Temple Society of Canada (The Ganesha Temple) in Richmond Hill, held a Memorial Service for the 176 people who lost their lives, in a Surface to Air Missile fired by the Iranian Military.

It was attended by the members of the temple board, over 100 devotees and special guests which included, the MPP for the riding of Aurora-Oakridges-Richmond Hill (which includes the Ganesha Temple), Michael Parsa, MPP, Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Logan Kanapathi, MPP, Markham-Thornhill and Ms. Marlene Cohen, Mr. Anthony Savonaropa executive assistants to MPP for Richmond Hill, Daisy Wai, who was at another memorial. Since there were quite a number of memorials the same evening in the GTA, many politicians couldn't make it to this service.

The president of the temple board, Mr. Mano Thillainathan thanked the devotees and the guest for attending the Vigil that we have organized to pray for those who lost their lives in the Ukrainian Airlines plane crash on January 8th. All of us are gathered today to pray to Lord Siva, asking him to bless all those who died in this plane crash so that their souls can Rest In Peace. We also pray to god to provide strength to the victims families and their friends so that they can overcome this difficult time. Our priest at our temple will continue to pray daily for unity

and peace all around the world. On behalf of The Richmond Hill Hindu temple I would like to extend our deepest sympathies to the Canadian Iranian community. In the wake of this tragedy please know that you can count on the Richmond Hill temple and its devotees for support. Thank you and now please allow me to introduce

Mr. Kidambi Raj our former Trustee who will describe the process of today's vigil and introduce distinguished guests who have kindly agreed to participate in our vigil today.

Then, Kidambi Raj who spoke next, said how most of those who lost their lives in that ill-fated flight were bound for Canada. He also added how all their dreams of starting or continuing their better life in the great country of Canada were abruptly cut by those who had utter disregard for Human lives. He added, that this tragedy hits everyone irrespective of who and where they are from, it was particularly harsher on Mr. Parsa, who is himself originally from Iran. Raj added, "whatever we say or do is not going to bring their lives back, so all we can do is to pray to Lord Almighty to Shower His Blessings to the immediate family, relatives, friends all in various communities, the Strength and peace of mind to bear this irreparable and premature loss."

Then the learned priests of the temple performed the pooja, chanting "Mrityunja Mantra and Santhi

Panchakam", seeking the Divine help seeking Salvation to those who lost their lives.

Then a one minute silence was observed by one all. MPP Michael Parsa explained how difficult it has been to lots of people both in his riding and elsewhere, since he personally knew lots of the victims, their relatives and friends. He profusely thanked the Temple for arranging this memorial.

MPP Logan Kanapathi expressed that he had known quite few of the victims and their friends. He also mentioned about 57 Scholarships, set up by the Provincial Govt. in memory of the 57 Canadians killed in this tragic event. He spoke both in Tamil and in English.

Then, Mr. Anthony Savonaropa introduced Ms. Marlene Cohen, Executive Asst. to MPP for Richmond Hill, Daisy Wai, who couldn't attend, since she had committed to attending another memorial. Ms. Cohen read the message where in, the MPP had expressed her heart-felt condolences to the victims of the crash and also thanked the Ganesha Temple for arranging this memorial.

Then the guests and the devotees of the temple, all lit a lamp each and carried it on a plate and came around the Altar of Lord Siva as the concluding part of the ceremony, seeking God's Blessings and help to the families of the victims.





TCASD celebrates Tamil Heritage Month 2020

“Thamilan Endru Sollada Thalai Nimirnthu Nillada”

The Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham celebrated their 11th year Tamil Heritage month celebration recently at the Pickering Town Centre with an attendance of members, well-wishers and dignitaries.

The Thai Pongal festival which is the most important and widely celebrated festival amongst Tamils around the world falls in the middle of January every year. Pongal is both a time of thanksgiving for the blessings of a past year and a time to look forward to the beginning of a new year.

Canada's Tamil population is now estimated to be approximately around 300,000. Today's Tamil Canadian community is flourishing and boasts of tens of thousands of entrepreneurs, professionals, and post-secondary students along with active and engaged community organizations and a thriving arts and culture scene.

Tamil Heritage Month aims to celebrate the history of Canada's Tamil community and its contribution to the social, cultural, political and economic strength of Canada while rejuvenating Tamil culture in Canada. Tamil Heritage month celebrates the richness of the Tamil language and culture. It also celebrates the traditions, arts and cul-

ture of the Tamil community. Despite the challenging weather, the ceremony started with a welcome procession and a live orchestra provided by Tharmini Thisyan's disciples. TCASD showcased the rice pouring ceremony during the Pongal festival.

TCASD's THM Celebration opened with the National Anthem in Tamil and English by TCASD's youth Ms. Ishwarya Thayaparan followed by Santhiyaragam Golden Super Singer finalist Mrs. Kannika Chandran.

The celebration continued until 4 pm with many interesting programs by young children, youth, adults and seniors of Durham. Smt. Manorani Thusitharan, Smt. Elilini Derrick, Smt. Kavinaly Raveendar, Ms. Kunalini Tharmanandarajah, Miss. Swetha Anand, were able to stage their disciples with beautiful dances and music programs and made the day very colourful. A & A Dance Academy Durham, Ms. Anushalini Atputharasa, TCASD youth coordinator staged her young children for the welcome dance which was incorporated with Mahakavi Baharathiyar's sayings.

Santhiyaragam Golden Super Singer team Mr. Para Verakathiyar, Mrs. Kiruba Ganesh participated and sang

beautiful songs. Villa Karuna Home for Seniors participants Mrs. Indrani Nagenthiram and Mrs. Girija Balakumar graced the function with their beautiful dance performance.

The young emcee for the day was Ms. Cavina Vairamuthu, TCASD youth, who was hosting the entire event tirelessly, with her warm smile. Athursh Vaithilingam, TCASD event coordinator delivered the welcome message for this special event. Abiramie Shanmuganathan and Sutha Thiru were handled the entire programs and managed it well for that day!

Dignitaries present were MPP Peter Bethlenfalvy, MPP Rod Phillips, MPP Lorne Coe, MPP Vijay Thanigasalam, MP Mark Holland's office Rep. Dev Ramkallie, City of Pickering Mayor Dave Ryan, City of Pickering Regional Councillor Kevin Ashe, Councillor Sheen Butt, Councillor David Pickles, Whitby Deputy Mayor Steve Yamada, Councillor Deidre Newman, Councillor Maleeha Shahid, Town of Ajax Councillor Sterling Lee, Regional Councillor Marilyn Crawford attended and grace the TCASD's Tamil Heritage Month celebration 2020 at Pickering Town Centre. Tamil Heritage month Chair Mr. Ponniah Vivekanandan and

Neethan Shan delivered excellent messages about Tamil culture and heritage. Mrs. Susila Pathmanathan, from TCASD's Advisory committee delivered a warm thank you speech for the event. TCASD's heartfelt thanks went to media supporters Mr. Charles Deva-sagayam from Tamil Mirror, Mr. Raj from Eetv, Pickering Snapd for being there to capture the memorable and historical moments of Tamils.

TCASD extended their sincere thanks to “Monsoon Journal” newspaper for posting their events for years and being a great media supporter in the past and looks forward for future support too.

TCASD thanked the executive team for their tireless hours of support, the parents and participants for their on-going participation and the well-wishers for extending their wishes and blessing to the growing organization in Durham.

TCASD extended their thanks to the Pickering Town Centre Management and wished everyone a peace and prosperous Thai Pongal.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the event)

(Contributed by TCASD media coordinating Team)





Durham Tamil Association (DTA) celebrates Tamil Heritage Month 2020

Durham Tamil Association (DTA) celebrated Tamil Heritage month 2020 successfully recently with a well-attended audience present at the event.

DTA's kids membership made the organization proud with their amazing performances once again choreographed by the DTA Youth. The event demonstrated the versatility of the younger generation and DTA offered its thanks to the Choreographers

for their dedication and commitment. DTA also thanked the parents for the support they gave to make the event a success. The co-operation offered by the volunteers was very helpful too.

DTA was able to provide free quality programs due to the valuable support of the Sponsors and DTA is grateful to the sponsors for their continuous support.



DTA SENIORS MONTHLY MEETING

DTA's Seniors monthly meeting takes place every last Sunday of the month. Professional speakers address the guests followed by discussions and birthday celebrations. Short eats and dinner are provided at the event. It is an event where the seniors of the region gather together in one place.



UPCOMING EVENT

DTA's upcoming event will be "Tast To Success". Many community partners will be participating at this event. Details will be announced soon.

Please check out the DTA website at durhamtamils.org or contact the email or phone below:

Email: info@durhamtamils.com

Phone # 905-428-7007



Tamil Heritage Month celebration in Waterloo region

Kitchener, Ontario: Tamil heritage month is an annual celebration held in the month of January in the region of Waterloo. Various activities take place during this month, major being Thai Pongal (Tamil Thanksgiving).

Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region celebrated Thai pongal celebration on the 18th of January at Foreset Heights Community Centre in Kitchener. Around 350 members and their families attended this colourful event.

The bad weather, a 20cm snow, did not spoil the event. Mrs. Dharini Sivakumar organised the milk, Rice boiling ceremony. Children had a chance to add Sakkarai (Sugar) into the clay pot. Community members thanked the sun god for making plants grow and cattle for producing milk and help till the soil. Dennis Loyola, the Secretary of the association welcomed the guests and introduced the President Mrs. Yoga Arumugam to the public.

A large number of children includ-

ing Waterloo-Cambridge Tamil language school children were on hand to witness the ceremony. "This is the only way our children, who are born in Canada, could witness the actual ceremony. I will thank the Tamil cultural association to be part of the community and to preserve our culture" said Mrs. Shanthi Durai, one of the event volunteers. Students of Sri Abiramy Dance performed folk dance. There was also Carnatic music as well.

The Chairman of Region of Waterloo

Karen Redman and Kitchener MP Tim Louis attended the event. The greeting message from Canadian Prime Minister Hon. Justin Trudeau and Waterloo MP Bardish Chagger were read during the event.

For the Tamil community in the Waterloo region, Brantford and Guelph, the ceremony is a way of passing their tradition and culture to their children. The day ended with a community get together and traditional sit down pongal meal served on a banana leaf.



PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

Message from the Prime Minister of Canada

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region's Pongal event, held at the Forest Heights Community Centre.

Tamil Heritage Month is a wonderful opportunity for individuals of all backgrounds to celebrate Tamil culture and history. It also provides a chance to recognize the tremendous contributions that Tamil Canadians have made, and continue to make, to our country.

Canada is home to many cultures that live, work, and thrive together. Let us take this occasion to honour the diversity that makes our country such a wonderful place to live.

Thank you to the organizers of this amazing event and to all in attendance celebrating the Pongal Festival.

Please accept my warmest welcome and best wishes for a memorable event.

Ottawa
2019

SATURDAY

MAY

30

www.tholilexpo.com

tholi

education • career • volunteer

EXPO

A unique event for Tamils across the GTA that brings together different Tamil-owned or operated educational providers, businesses, and non-profits from our community who share a common goal: to provide the platform, tools, skills, and resources to lift and propel the Tamil-speaking diaspora in Canada, of all ages, into positions of power, influence, and success! Exhibitors, speaker line-up, ticket sales, and more details to follow shortly.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

IMG
CONFERENCE

A conference/tradeshow for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) specifically targeted at addressing issues around medical licensing examinations, residency training, pathways to licensure, clinical clerkships (for medical students), observerships (for foreign graduates), research opportunities, and more. Exhibitors, speaker line-up, ticket sales, and more details to follow shortly.



SAVE THE DATES!

Finally a tradeshow specifically for the South Asian parent with infant & toddlers, those who are expecting, & everyone in between! We're bringing together the top products, brands, services, & influencers who specialize for the South Asian parent's needs. Exhibitors, speaker line-up, ticket sales, and more details to follow shortly.

SATURDAY

NOV

28

M

Y

A

South Asian Baby Show

Interested in becoming an exhibitor/sponsor? Want to join our team? Media inquiries?
Please contact us at info@mrxnorthcommunications.com | 647.608.2501
www.MRXNorthCommunications.com



Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala - 2020

Application for nominations from Canadian Tamils for achievements in Business Entrepreneurship



Annual Awards Gala

Saturday, April 25th, 2020

Hilton Toronto/Markham Suites Conference Centre

**Best Entrepreneur Award
Best Woman Entrepreneur Award
Best Young Entrepreneur Award
Best Marketing Award
Professional /Academic Qualifications
Most Outstanding Community Service Award**

Application forms and regulations can be obtained from CTCC's website (www.ctcc.ca).

Kindly forward applications to CTCC's email address or it can
also be mailed to the official mailing address.

Closing date to receive applications is February 24th, 2020 before 5.00 p.m.

For more details: Santha Panchalingam 416-200-5470 | info@ctcc.ca

**5200 Finch Ave. East, Suite 209, Toronto, ON M1S 4Z4
Tel: 416-335-9791 | info@ctcc.ca | www.ctcc.ca**