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# Monsoon Journal

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**Emil Alphonsus** CA, CPA, CGA

## Canadian High Commissioner holds events in Jaffna to Felicitate Women

Canadian missions in South and South-East Asia work with local partners to raise awareness and advance opportunities for women and girls. Canadian High Commissioner David McKinnon, as part of this program joined implementing partners in Sri Lanka North to celebrate International Women's Day recently. The High Commissioner in these events highlighted the importance of including women in decision making processes, discussions and negotiations as women bring in new perspectives and a better future for the country.

During these celebrations, High Commissioner David McKinnon participated in the felicitation of women elected as new local councilors in the polls held in February this year. A key objective of the three iterations of

"FemParl" initiatives organized by Canadian missions in South & South East Asia is to encourage women's political representation at all levels.

The High Commission of Canada in Sri Lanka also held events to encourage women achievers across various disciplines; excellence in entrepreneurship, academics and sports. The High Commissioner paid tribute for the hard work and dedication in their chosen fields.

High Commissioner David McKinnon commenting on the events via twitter said: "Delighted that Canada through 'Canada Funds for Local Initiatives' (CFLI) partnered with 'Jaffna Social Action Center' to empower women to combat inequalities - a commitment to work together regardless of religious, ethnic, linguistic or caste

divisions. Important in the context of the recent inter-religious and sectarian violence."

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# Budget 2018: Top 10 Highlights



## 10 of the top investments from the 2018 Budget.

Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance, introduced the Budget in the legislature on March 28:

The province's plan includes significant new investments in health care, child care, home care and mental health, and new measures to create more opportunity for people across the province. Highlights include:

1. Free Prescription Drugs for Everyone 65 and Over through OHIP+

Making prescriptions completely free for everyone 65 and over, ensuring that no senior citizen ever needs to go without necessary drugs. By eliminating the Ontario Drug Benefit annual deductible and co-pay, this saves the average Ontario senior \$240 per year. This expansion of OHIP+ follows the introduction of free prescriptions for everyone under the age of 25 in the 2017 Ontario Budget.

2. More Child Care, More Choice

Providing more affordable quality child care by introducing free preschool child care for children aged two-and-a-half until they are eligible for kindergarten. This saves a family with one child \$17,000, on average, and builds on the savings families get from full-day kindergarten. Early learning has been demonstrated to improve children's academic performance throughout their lives.

3. New Ontario Drug and Dental Program

Introducing a new Ontario Drug and Dental Program, reimbursing 80 per cent — up to a maximum of \$400 per single person, \$600 per couple and \$700 for a family of four with two children —

of eligible prescription drug and dental expenses each year, for those without workplace health benefits or not covered by OHIP+ or other government programs.

4. Seniors' Healthy Home Program

Introducing the new Seniors' Healthy Home Program. This recognizes the costs associated with older seniors living at home, where they want to be. It provides a benefit of up to \$750 annually for eligible households led by seniors 75 and over to help them live independently and offset the costs of maintaining their homes.

5. Stronger Hospitals, Better Care

Improving hospitals by providing better access to care, reducing wait times, addressing capacity issues and better meeting the needs of Ontario's growing and aging population through an additional \$822-million investment in 2018-19, as well as investing approximately \$19 billion over 10 years to build and renovate hospitals.

6. Mental Health Matters

Providing better and faster access to mental health and addictions services for hundreds of thousands more children, young people and adults across Ontario — bringing the total funding to more than \$17 billion over four years.

7. Home Care for Seniors

Providing more access to home and community health care services, including 2.8 million more hours of personal support and 284,000 more nursing visits, through a \$650-million investment over three years.

8. Removing Barriers for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

Building a fairer society by invest-

## “Better to look good than feel good: Wynne's final, hollow budget” – Ontario NDP

Kathleen Wynne's final budget is a disappointing, last-ditch pitch for votes — with the details failing to live up to her vote-grabbing hype.

“It's clear that Kathleen Wynne believes it's more important for her to look good than for people to feel good,” said NDP Leader Andrea Horwath. “This is why people are disappointed. This is why people are cynical about politics. And this is why Ontarians are looking forward to electing a new premier in June.

“It's time to replace that cynicism with hope — with a premier that will deliver better health care, and a more affordable life for everyone.”

Wynne's prescription drug and dental promise turns out to be capped at \$50 per child for dental and \$300 for mom or dad's drug and dental combined. \$50 won't cover one dental check-up, let alone a filling.

A section on affordability turns out to include not a single word about making housing more affordable for renters or buyers, and nothing new to ease the pain of sky-high hydro bills, expected to rise again after the election.

And after short-changing hospitals by \$300 million in 2017-18, given the chance, Wynne would short-change hospitals again by \$100 million in 2018-19 — leaving patients waiting in hallways in overcrowded hospitals.

“The Liberals have had 15 years to get good things done for people,” said

Horwath. “Instead, Wynne chose to cut and privatize. She chose to sell off Hydro One and make hydro bills too expensive. She chose to let childcare become the most expensive in the nation. She chose to cut hospital budgets. And she chose to do nothing to deliver relief to the middle class — and even chose to ignore child poverty as Toronto became the child poverty capital of Canada.

“Now, she's choosing not to offer universal pharmacare. She's choosing not to offer complete dental coverage. She's choosing not to offer a plan for a more affordable life for everyone.

“The good news is that this is Wynne's final budget — because it doesn't have to be this way. We can do so much better.”

ing \$1.8 billion to strengthen services for about 47,000 adults with developmental disabilities through an approach that enables informed choices and active participation in the community.

9. Supporting Student Success with Free Tuition

Making college and university tuition free for more than 225,000 students of all ages. Free or low tuition is available for students from low- and middle-income families; tuition is free for those earning up to \$90,000, and students from families who earn up to \$175,000 are also eligible for financial aid.



Ontario NDP Leader  
Andrea Horwath

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- ontariondp.ca

10. Boosting the Minimum Wage and Creating Good Jobs

Providing a long-awaited raise for 1.2 million people across Ontario by increasing the minimum wage to \$14 per hour on January 1, 2018, and \$15 per hour on January 1, 2019. The province is also providing \$935 million in new funding over three years through the Good Jobs and Growth Plan to support Ontario businesses, students and graduates, and help attract good, well-paying jobs.

- Ontario.ca

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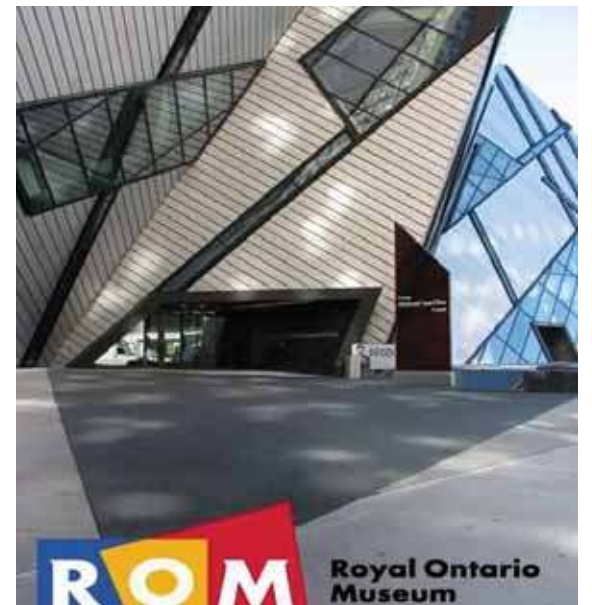
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# Royal Ontario Museum: A focal point for Torontonians culture

I was running through the 6 with my woes in the Royal Ontario Museum. The 6, or the nickname for Toronto popularized by beloved native entertainer Drake, has since become my home as a city dweller currently undertaking graduate studies at the University of Toronto. One of the earliest attractions that I have experienced living in Toronto has been the Royal Ontario Museum or the ROM both in the fall and winter of this year. Maybe it's my New Jerseyite roots talking in still ranking New York City at the top, but nonetheless, the ROM stood out as one of the many highlights of downtown Toronto. I would highly recommend it for one seeking a deeper sense of the Torontonians culture.



My two ROM visits were their Friday Night Live events, a joyous night defined by live music, food and countless art exhibits that illustrated topics including Indigenous culture to scientific phenomena. For the first trip, roaming throughout the exhibits, my attention was caught by the architecture in medieval Europe, particularly in England. One contained a statue of a woman and a small child standing on their lap, known as the Virgin and Child. It represented the changes in sculpture in the Gothic period based on its naturalism and targeted treatment of the facial features. Another was a portrait of a man and woman titled an English gentleman and lady, which normally hung around English dining rooms as a symbol of family lineage and social status during that period.



The ROM's Indigenous exhibit was especially interesting not only in immersing myself in a significant aspect in Canadian culture and history, but because it brought about a sort of nostalgic feeling. I found this with a painting by Norval-Morriseau, an Anishinaabe artist, called Sacred White Animal with Medicine Bag. While working in Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, I recall assisting with an event that organized the return of another painting by the very same artist at this department's headquarters, Androgyny. I felt proud of being a part of that event along with seeing that strong presence of Indigenous culture at the ROM, especially with a protracted history of oppression for that community in Canada, but that is a conversation for another time and place. This ROM painting speaks on the importance of white animals as being sacred to the Anishinaabe and being instructed not to be hurt, which is symbolized with an animal and a medicine bag.

able glimpse of the arts and culture scene situated within downtown Toronto.

For all travelers both out of province and from abroad, I suggest adding the ROM to your list of things to do in Toronto, as it won't disappoint.

**Contributed by HarrishThirukumaran**

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During my second visit, I was able to learn of a display known as Earth's Treasures that showcased an enormous purplish gray crystal-like object. It served as a gateway for a tribute to Canada's rich mining history, and how various minerals discoveries have shaped our everyday lives for our survival and comfort. I also stood in awe of an exhibit featuring currency from the Roman Empire such as the Gold aureus and silver denarius. Although not the same thing, this humorously reminded me of my macroeconomics class that described gold ducats during medieval Europe as an early basis for their monetary policy.

Overall, the ROM was a great sight in Toronto, and where one should check out to obtain a valu-

### Canada Historic Milestones: APRIL

April 4, 1949

Canada joins the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a founding member. The basic goal of this western military alliance is to safeguard its members' freedom and security. A few years after its founding, NATO will be counterbalanced by the Warsaw Pact, made up of the main Communist countries. Today, NATO includes 28 countries.



**Monsoon Journal** wishes Readers, Advertisers, Friends and Well-wishers a Happy **'Vilambi' New Year** ~ April 14 ~ and a **Happy Sinhala New Year**

“Never confuse the size of your paycheck with the size of your talent” - **Marlon Brando** (April 3, 1924 - July 1, 2004) American movie star, Activist

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

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# Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham (TCASD) celebrates third Youth Leadership Award Ceremony

It was a proud moment for the Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham (TCASD) and the entire team when they celebrated the Third Youth Leadership Group recently.

Twelve youth Candidates graduated in Leadership at this event and these graduates are looking forward to an implementation of their Leadership skills in the real world. Parents and guests were very proud of their accomplishments and congratulated them on graduating. As parents, there are countless moments during the last 4 months. The Youth Leadership Program has a unique educational system which has improved significantly the Leadership quality of Tamil Youth. Now, let me state where all this started. Before we start a Youth leadership program, we make sure TYLP has a clear vision and stated goals. As a Tamil, we see there was a leadership vacuum since the last war in Sri Lanka. It seems like a no-brainer, but our past experience say many communities discount this critical first step, which makes it harder to inspire new leadership for Youth. "These questions cannot be taken for

granted: we as founders, TYLP's value system and believe system will reflect on our Leaders behaviors and future contribution to the World. Therefore, TYLP has been rewarding and recognizing the Youth Leaders who are observed when they are doing it right? Finally, Are we keeping up with the pace of world change related to Youth Leadership? Explore the strategies Youth are facing and pursuing to manage themselves as well as contributing to the community at large.

Based on our research these are important points where our Youth need to focus on:

- Meet world changes head-on in micro level
- Create a data-led decision-making culture at local forum
- Support the decision with a collaborative planning system with local politicians so that it can be implemented.

We have developed and trained these

Youth in the TYLP – through the Leadership program; how to invest in this world changes, put in initiatives and growth plans to sustain a development that will benefit the humanity and remaining successful no matter what new technologies and global competition bring their way. Our Leaders will lead with passion and empathy to achieve their goals and dreams, at the same time enhancing the global citizen's goals and dreams.

Special guests at the event were MP Jenniffer O'Connell and Councilor Maurice Brenner.

(Seen here are some pictures of the event)

*(Contributed By Tom Thiru, Leadership Program Coordinator)*



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**Ms. Kala Amirthalingam, Director of Rabeena Foods (Pvt) Ltd was awarded the “Best Women in Management”, Small & Medium Agriculture Sector Award by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI-UK) Sri Lanka Branch recently at the “CMI Management Excellence Awards 2017” night at Shangri-La Hotel.**

**Rabeena Foods is one of Sri Lanka’s manufacturers and exporters of food products. The company exports food products to North America including Canada, Australia, U.K, Europe and the Middle East. The company has won several national and international awards for their food products which are of high quality. Rabeena food products are now a household name both in Sri Lanka and other countries.**

## Pakistanis ‘Have Stood Against Extremists’

– says Malala Yousafzai during her first visit to Pakistan since 2012

By Ayaz Gul

– Voice of America News

April 2, 2018: Malala Yousafzai says she wants the world to know that there is peace in Pakistan and that its people have stood up to extremists.

That is the message the Nobel Peace Prize laureate wanted to deliver during a previously unannounced four-day visit to her homeland that ended Monday, April 2, she told VOA in an interview. The visit was her first to Pakistan since 2012, when she was shot in the head at age 14 by Taliban militants opposed to her efforts to promote girls’ right to an education.

Yousafzai is now a 20-year-old student at Britain’s Oxford University and the co-founder of the Malala Fund, which has invested more than \$6 million in projects supporting the education of girls.

In the interview, Yousafzai said it was important for her to come back to Pakistan. “In the outside world, internationally, there are concerns that Pakistan is a terrorist country or there is no peace in Pakistan,” she said. “So, my trip was important to give the message that there is peace in Pakistan and the people of Pakistan have stood against extremists.”

Shortly after her arrival in the capital on Thursday, Yousafzai met with Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and delivered a highly emotional televised speech in which she became



Malala Yousafzai

tearful while describing her happiness at being home again.

“I usually don’t cry,” she said in the interview. “It is very rare for me to cry ... I wanted to share my happiness ... I was happy to be home ... I wanted to be home ... I was so desperate to see my land again ... I think it was something that I just could not control and I cried.”

That joy was shared by many young Pakistanis. “We’re very happy that Malala has come to Pakistan,” third grader Arfa Akhtar told Reuters news agency. “I am also Malala. I’m with Malala in this mission.”

However some Pakistanis feel her campaign has damaged the nation’s reputation. Students from a group of private schools in eastern Lahore protested her visit with chants of “I am not Malala,” though several other schools declined to participate saying they refused to spread hatred.

A highlight of Yousafzai’s visit was

## Emmanuel Arnold is new Mayor of Jaffna, Sri Lanka North

Emmanuel Arnold of Tamil National Alliance (TNA) was elected as the new Mayor of Jaffna on the 26th of March. He was elected after a contest with M. Remedius of Eelam Peoples’ Democratic Party and V. Manivaanan of All Ceylon Tamil Congress.

A report by D.B.S.Jeyaraj in the Colombo newspaper The Daily Mirror on the process and victory of TNA’s mayoral candidate has this to say about the new Mayor’s profile: “Emmanuel Arnold hailing from Paashaiyoor in Jaffna is an old student of St. John’s’ College Jaffna. He graduated from the Jaffna University with a BA degree specializing in economics. After graduating, Emmanuel Arnold joined Janashakthi Insurance and rose up from the ranks to become Regional Sales Manager for the North.

Arnold was a politically active youth with a social conscience. He had excelled in sports particularly soccer as a student. It is said that he may have played soccer at a national level but for the ethnic conflict, which devoured the youthful days of many Tamils including Arnold.

He was very popular as an undergrad and was president of the Jaffna University Students Union. Arnold



Mayor Emmanuel Arnold

who is a powerful orator organized many student protests and demonstrations at the Jaffna Varsity during his undergraduate days. He was once photographed giving a clenched fist salute at a political event and detained at Boosa as an LTTE suspect. He was cleared of all suspicion after being interrogated intermittently for six months and released with a clean sheet.”

a return on Saturday to her hometown of Mingora in Pakistan’s lush Swat Valley, where masked gunmen intercepted her school van in October 2012 and shot her in the head. She suffered several skull injuries and, after receiving emergency treatment at a Pakistan army hospital, was flown to Britain to undergo surgery.

The valley “is still as beautiful as it was,” Yousafzai told VOA.

“I saw my old school trophies, my drawings,” during a visit to her childhood home, she continued. “And I just tried to remember each and every day and how we lived in that house before I was attacked, you know, remembering the family time, having dinner together and lunch together, playing with my friends and playing cricket on our rooftop.”

Yousafzai’s fund has already built a school in Swat and she says schools are needed to fight extremists. “There is that extreme mindset ... and in order to protect children from that kind of mindset we have to make sure that children are in school, in safe schools where they are getting not just education, but quality education.”

She said it is especially important for a girl to be in school because if not, “she is more likely to get married at the age of 13 and 14. She is more likely to be in child labor. She is more likely to be in poverty. She is more likely ... not being able to speak out for herself

if she is facing any harassment or any violence. So, education is a protection for girls.”

Yousafzai said when girls are educated, “. . . it contributes to the development of the country, helps us tackle the climate change, poverty. . . It has so many benefits not just for that one specific part, but the whole country and then globally, as well.”

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– via VOA News



**“You and your families will be stuck with the bill for Wynne’s election promises” – Statement from the Ontario PCs on the Liberal Budget**



**Ontario PC Leader Doug Ford**



**Ontario PC Parliamentary Leader Vic Fedeli**

March 28, 2018

**Statement from Ontario PC Leader Doug Ford:**

“Today, Kathleen Wynne continued the re-election spending spree with your money. The Liberals think your vote is for sale, and this budget proves it. Kathleen Wynne is writing a lot of cheques. She is making big promises with your tax dollars. I’ve looked at the finances, and her cheques are going to bounce. You and your families will be stuck with the bill for Wynne’s election promises.

It has already started. Today’s budget includes massive tax increases that will hit 1.8 million hard-working Ontarians and their families, as well as tens of thousands of businesses. Shockingly, this budget includes \$2 billion in new tax increases over the next three years.

That’s what Kathleen Wynne is saying in an election year, just imagine what she will do if she is re-elected.

The only good news in this budget for the people of Ontario is that this will be Kathleen Wynne’s last budget. The party with the taxpayer’s money is over; and for Ontario families, help is on the way.”

Statement from Ontario PC Parliamentary Leader Vic Fedeli:

“Life has become harder in Ontario under Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals. There is an affordability crisis in Ontario. Hydro rates have skyrocketed, taxes and fees have ballooned, and our provincial debt is the highest of any province or state in the world – compromising the services we all depend on.

The Liberals have had 15 years to take health care, education, and child care seriously, and it’s only now in an election year that they’re throwing money at problems they helped to create.

Kathleen Wynne will promise the world if it means continuing to cling to power, but the people of Ontario know that they can’t be counted on to keep their word. They broke their promise to run a balanced budget, and are plunging Ontario into a massive \$6.7 billion deficit, with no plan to return to balance for years to come.

If the Liberals were to win the next election, everything included in this budget will be added to an already exhaustive list of broken promises. It’s time for a change in Ontario. It’s time for an Ontario PC government that respects the taxpayer and puts the people first – not the insiders.”

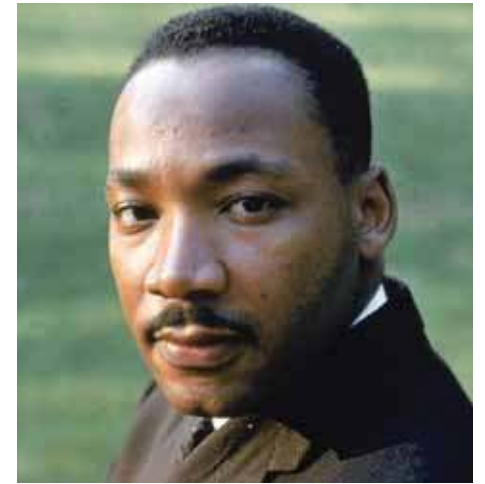
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**President Donald J. Trump Proclaims the 50th Anniversary of the Assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Issued on: April 4, 2018

Fifty years ago today, on April 4, 1968, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was tragically assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Though he was taken from this earth unjustly, he left us with his legacy of justice and peace. In remembrance of his profound and inspirational virtues, we look to do as Dr. King did while this world was privileged enough to still have him. We must learn to live together as brothers and sisters lest we perish together as fools. We must embrace the sanctity of life and love our neighbor as we love ourselves. As a united people, we must see Dr. King’s life mission through and denounce racism, inhumanity, and all those things that seek to divide us.

It is not government that will achieve Dr. King’s ideals, but rather the people of this great country who will see to it that our Nation represents all that is good and true, and embodies unity, peace, and justice. We must actively aspire to secure the dream of living together as one people with a common purpose. President Abraham Lincoln sought to eradicate the senseless divisions of racial hierarchies when he issued the Emancipation Proclamation. Just over 100 years later, Dr. King continued this effort and called upon Americans to reject ugly impulses and prejudices, and to recognize the beauty and the humanity of all people, regardless of the color of their skin. To-



**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

day, we remain steadfast in advancing their efforts, in hopes of hastening the day when all of God’s children will join hands in freedom forever.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD J. TRUMP, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 4, 2018, to be a day to honor Dr. King’s legacy. I urge all Americans to do their part to make Dr. King’s dreams of peace, unity, and justice a reality.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand eighteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-second. - DONALD J. TRUMP - via: Whitehouse.gov

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7



BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

# HUMANS OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA

The face Book Community page "Humans of Northern Sri Lanka" is a pictorial page by Thulasi Muttulingam.

Thulasi Muttulingam is a journalist based in the North of Sri Lanka. Having grown up away from her hometown of Jaffna, it is currently her mission to research and document as much of her culture and heritage as she can. If you are similarly interested, check out more of her work at the facebook page ~ Humans of Northern Sri Lanka: To follow the updates, "Like" the page at:

[www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka)

## Sri Lanka North:

# Jaffna's changing labour migration dynamics

An estimated 65,000 women left Sri Lanka's shores as housemaids in the year 2016. Of these the greatest number were from Kurunegala and Colombo – 7,000 from each district as per statistics released by the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment.

The main exodus as per figures released by the SLBFE are from the South, West, and North Central Provinces. The Eastern Province has a few thousands migrating from each of its districts too.

The lowest numbers, albeit picking up steadily over the last few years, are from the Northern Province. Jaffna and many of the other districts in the north have been slow to pick up on this trend. Cut off by the war for many years, many northern women did not take up this employment option over the last few decades, where the rest of Sri Lanka saw a boom.

Ever since the war ended in 2009, though, the numbers have been picking up steadily, bringing with it several changes socially and culturally – though not much economically – that the local populace are unhappy about.

As per Government records, 276 women left Jaffna as domestic workers, classed an unskilled category, in 2016. Some more leave without registering with the Government, but numbers as of yet are quite low in this region, ranging in the few hundreds.

The highest numbers from the north are from Mannar (653), followed by Vavuniya (443).

From both these districts, the numbers are generally drawn from regions relatively less affected by war. People who had access to the rest of the country and were not cut off by war have developed links and agencies to travel – mostly to the Middle East, as migrant labour.

It is yet a trend to be established in the worst of the war-affected areas, even though the poverty and the need of the women-headed families there is greater. Only 64 left from Kilinochchi and two from Mullaitivu in 2016 as per SLBFE data.

### Criticism

From wherever the women go, the people left behind do not have many positive things to say about the matter. In villages from where women significantly migrate, charges abound that the women:

-Would be sexually licentious once set 'free' in those foreign countries. They need the familial, cultural and social restrictions back in the village to keep them in check.

-Would come back with sexually-transmitted diseases and therefore be sickly, because almost certainly they would have been raped by their employer – which is somehow considered their fault as well, not much sympathy is exhibited for them.

-That they are terrible mothers to their children for leaving them in the care of the fathers or guardians. The primary duty of childcare should solely be the mother's.

-That they would be too 'independent' by the time they return, due to the arrogance of having worked abroad. They would no longer be meek and subservient and content to remain at home.

All of these are charges laid against women who are about to leave, have left, or have returned.

As for the migrant returnees themselves, they span the spectrum from heavily traumatized by their treatment both abroad as well as once back here, to the newly-confident and empowered women who feel better able to handle their own lives.

What was different for the empowered women? The conditions they outline when questioned about their working conditions are abysmal. Yet when asked how they liked their jobs abroad, they enthusiastically gave positive responses. Here are a few samples:

"No one yelled at me unnecessarily. I only got scolded if my work was not up to standard, so I strived to be good at it. Yes, I had a lot of work to do from early morning until midnight, but that's what we do back

here too. We are used to it. At least over there, I earned through it and was appreciated by my employers for it."

"I loved the freedom in Saudi Arabia to evaluate and understand myself as a person. Over here, we face a constant barrage of criticism from society, friends and family to be a certain way. It was while there, removed from our society's constant harsh feedback on who I was supposed to be and how I was stepping out of line of those rigidly set boundaries, that I managed to evaluate myself and came to understand my own thoughts, needs and personality. I discovered myself while out there."

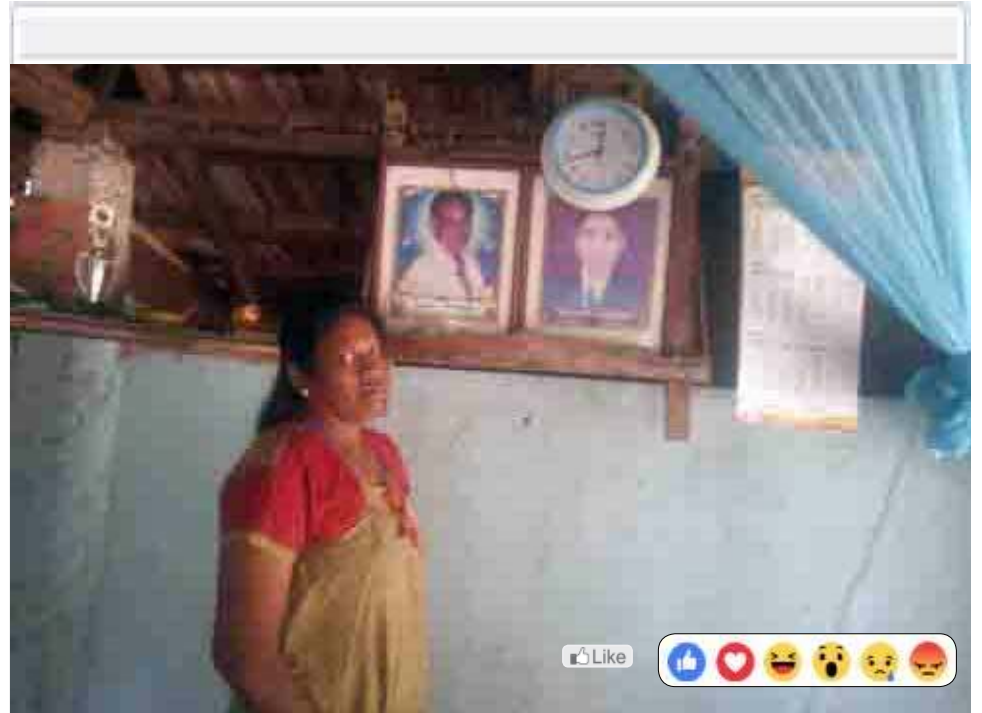
In answer to a follow-up question put to the above lady on exactly what kind of freedoms she had had in Saudi Arabia to explore and discover herself, she replied, "Oh I didn't mean freedom in terms of time or ability, to go out anywhere or do anything other than housework. I worked round the clock, other than for the six hours I slept. They were exceptionally nice employers, you know? They allowed me six hours of sleep, unlike most other employers there. They liked and trusted me because I had no inclination to go out on my own."

"The only time I went out was once a week to do shopping. I had to cover myself in a black abaya and the lady of the house would come with me in the car, driven either by her husband or driver, to supervise my shopping. No, I meant freedom to process my own thoughts and understand myself contextually, in the absence of the barrage of constant criticism that gets thrown at us women here, as to who we should be and how we should behave, with little regard to our own thoughts and feelings on the matter."

"It was good for me to remove myself from our culture for a while and be placed in a completely foreign culture, so that I could evaluate our society from a distance and come to my own conclusions on how I would reintegrate into it, once I came back. None can point a finger at me now. Well they do, but I pay them no mind. I came back after 10 years abroad to marry and settle down. I went at 18 and returned at 28. I am a dutiful wife and mother. I continue to work here as a housekeeper for an NGO, and am quite strong in

my views and thoughts. My husband is okay with it but my mother-in-law left the house in a rage, unable to see me treating my husband as an equal instead of being subservient to him."

Another returnee: "People here claim that we must be sick with sexually-transmitted diseases because we returned from the Middle East. How dare they? When it comes to culture, do they know how much more cultured the Gulf countries are? I was in Kuwait for seven years. The maama (lady of the house) would regularly check my phone every week to see if I had any other numbers or unwarranted phone call activity listed. I was allowed to have only her number and my Sri Lankan family's number on my phone – and phone calls would be tolerated only to those two numbers. We were never allowed to go out of the house unless



The Jaffna war affected mother of two sons, one of whom died in a bomb blast, and the other abducted by the army currently among the list of the 'disappeared.' As the sole breadwinner, she just returned from Saudi Arabia and is on her way again to Kuwait as a domestic worker.



A returned domestic worker from Kuwait, who detailed many of the abuses she has to endure as a 'fallen woman' back home. She currently wraps beedis for a living





People in the villages judge how well a migrant is doing abroad by their fencing, and beyond that their houses. Those who don't earn much have the cheapest, natural fencing of coconut or palmyrah thatch, those doing a little better have tin fences, and the ones earning the best have cement walls and houses.



Interviewing a man and his wife in the field. He had returned from Dubai after working as a driver for two years, and is working as a bus driver here.



they took us somewhere. How could we be anything other than scrupulously moral in such a setting?

"As for clothes, we had to be covered head to toe in black even in the house. Only my face would show. The men of the house would not even talk or look at us. They would communicate whatever they needed from us through the lady of the house. We lived in a far more cultured place than anyone here, and yet they dare call us sexually corrupted when we return."

As is evident from the above quotes, many women had a skewed perception and a very low threshold for what they termed 'good employment'. Many more with visibly-puffed red eyes even to this day said: "The employment was good but we only had two to three hours of sleep per day."

It became clear through the interviews conducted with several returnees through the districts of the north that lack of time allowed for sleep is a common problem in the Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia.

A single domestic worker would often be expected to serve several families living in multi-storeyed compounds – either due to a system of extended families living together, or polygamous family systems. Once she finished working for one family, she would have to move on to the next.

There was no concept of ever being able to take a break in between, nor any concept of off days or holidays other than for a two-week break every two years.

"We could never use any of the chairs in those homes. If we sit down on the floor for even a few minutes, the women of the house would scold us for slacking."

Thus they often didn't finish their work until well after midnight, yet had to be up well before dawn to tend to multiple families' needs before the children went to school and the adults to work.

"I slept only two hours for five years in Saudi Arabia. The employers were very nice otherwise, they didn't pay me until I returned however and gave my money as a lump sum for the five years' service. I was happy with the amount until I reached home and an educated relative did the math and told me I

had been cheated of three years' worth of salary. I am illiterate and so didn't realise the numbers didn't add up."

### Sexual abuse

All of the returnees were reluctant to talk of any sexual abuse they might have faced; understandable in the context of the stigma they face over it, back in their communities. As such, many took pains to say their male employers had never even talked or interacted with them.

In a few cases however, after first denying they had been abused, some relaxed over the interview period to detail stories that clearly showed abuse. None admitted to rape, but they did admit to being groped and sexual solicitations. Always with the entreaty, "Please do not publish this in the newspaper under our names. We face enough stigma back here already." Having endured abuse, they silently bear it, and cringe at the many aspersions cast on their character and reputation.

For all this work and abuse, they earn on average Rs.20-30,000 a month from the Gulf countries, from which deductions are made by their employers for phone calls they make home and other miscellaneous expenses, including medicine.

About Rs.15,000 reaches their homes every month, which the families back here use up without saving. The remittances are enough to ensure the subsistence of the family back in Jaffna but not much else. Thus, when most of these women return home, they return to the same conditions they left, with no savings whatsoever.

A few enterprising families over here take out bank loans to upgrade their houses on the strength of the migrant's stable monthly remittances, but only in cases where the husband or other family members work too. Drawn from the most vulnerable and poorer sections of society, families from these villages are used to eking out an existence through wage labour on a subsistence economy.

"That Rs.15,000 our men and women send home is not more than what we earn here actually. We work about 15-20 days a month and earn around the same for coolie work here too. Men can earn up to Rs.1,500 for masonry work and women up to Rs.800 for domestic work or farm labour. Under such a

system, we finish the money as soon as we earn it however. The only good thing about migrants' remittances is that their money gets deposited in a bank in stable, dependable amounts, so we are able to plan and where possible save, unlike how we deal with our daily wages," explains one woman whose sister is in Qatar as a domestic worker, and husband in Saudi Arabia as a driver.

She has three children at home. Asked whether she found it difficult to cope as a single parent without the assistance of her husband who would get two weeks' leave every two years, she was firmly negative: "No, he was a nuisance here, always drinking his wages away and causing trouble at home, beating me and the kids. Now he is in a country where he can't drink, a very good thing, and his salary gets deposited to our account back here, so it is a huge relief. He can't spend it either."

### Effects of men migrating

Far more men than women migrate out of Jaffna currently, heading out as skilled as well as semi-skilled or unskilled workers to the Middle East. Their mothers, sisters and wives back home view it as a good thing, as they are prone to alcoholism back in Jaffna. "The Gulf countries are good. Workers can't consume alcohol there so it keeps our men in check."

Yet here too stigma attaches – on the women left back home. The migrants' wives report that they can't step out of their houses to do shopping or talk to a male relative in the street before gossip about their licentiousness abounds, with unsavoury reports sometimes being sent to the husbands as well.

"Nobody ever talks about the men," says one migrant's wife. "There are husbands left back here with wives abroad, drinking their remittances away and carrying on openly with other women. Some husbands who migrate leaving their wives here contract other marriages abroad. Yet, whatever it is they do, we are somehow blamed for it. People say we didn't satisfy our husbands and so it is our fault, not theirs. No stigma attaches to the men, no matter whether they were the ones to leave or the ones to stay, and over whether they indulge in adultery or not. The blame is always upon us women, whether we go or whether we stay,

whether we engaged in adultery or were abused."

### Socio-cultural dynamics

According to staff at Social Organizers Networking for Development (SOND), an NGO which works with labour migrants and migrant returnees in the north, the social, cultural and economic issues surrounding such labour migrants are many, few of which are positive.

"The majority of the migrants to the Gulf are generally drawn from the oppressed castes and class in our society," says SOND Executive Director Senthurajah.

"The others try to migrate too, but to what they call the 'big countries' – Canada, Australia, UK and the like. The Gulf and other associated countries in which they will never gain permanent residency are called the 'small countries' in local parlance. Migrants to such countries will have to return eventually. They often return, especially in the case of women, to not much better circumstances than when they left, despite years of work abroad. In some cases, because husbands have gotten used to drink, and relatives including children have gotten used to stable remittances in her absence, the women are abused for no longer being the economic sustenance they once were, when they return."

He further adds: "If you study the villages these migrants are drawn from, you would see they have been traditionally relegated to the most resource poor of areas – places where there is not enough ground water, infertile lands that cannot be farmed, and inadequate plots of land that lack the space to plant even a few coconut trees. A coconut sells for Rs.100 now. How can wage labour dependent families survive under this rate of inflation? Unlike the wealthier landed families of Jaffna with their own home gardens and coconut trees, they have to buy everything. The curses of the feudal hierarchical systems and caste continue to affect them – impelling them to leave for exploitative work conditions abroad. This troubling migration pattern is not an accident. The inequalities of the past continue to fuel inequalities in the present, in our society."



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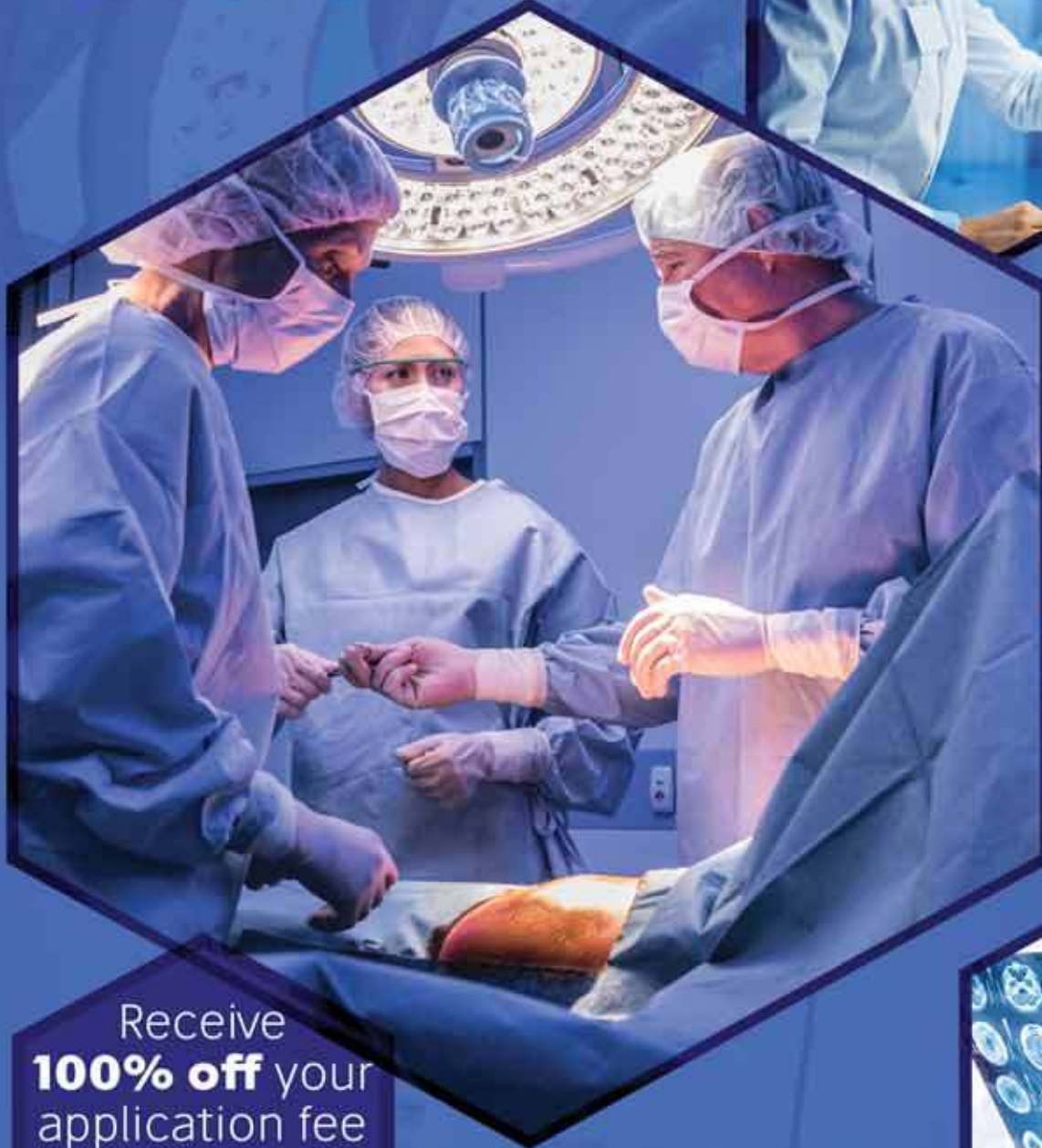
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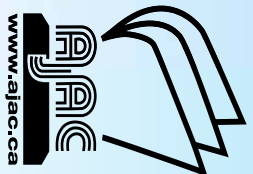
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## SENTHU CHAIRS PROVIDENCE'S UPCOMING CUISINE & CUVEE – EXPECTS HUGE SUCCESS ON APRIL 20, 2018



Ross Thomas, District Vice President at TD Commercial Banking (left) and Senthooan Punithavel Agent/Operator, the Co-operators (right) enjoying themselves at a Providence Healthcare Foundation event.

For Senthooan (Senthu) Punithavel, being involved with Providence Healthcare Foundation just makes sense. The second-generation insurance agent believes strongly in giving back to the community and supporting smaller causes that might otherwise be overlooked. Senthu is an agent/owner at the Co-operators on Milner Avenue.

A few years ago, a friend suggested he sponsor and attend a fundraising event for Providence Healthcare, which is an east-end hospital providing rehabilitation, community programs and palliative care, as well as a long-term care home. Providence was holding its annual Cuisine & Cuvée event, where roughly 30 Toronto food and beverage purveyors serve up unlimited food and drinks to several hundred savvy foodies. The event raises over \$250,000

every year for Providence. Senthu loved the event which he describes as: “a ton of fun”. He asked if there was anything more he could do and within three years, he was the volunteer Chair of the Cuisine & Cuvée Committee, making Providence one of his personal causes. “For me, it is pretty simple. I’m just doing what I think I’m supposed to do,” says Senthu.

It also stems from his belief in team work. Senthu took over his father’s insurance practice 16 years ago, after his dad retired, and has put together a team of people who complement his skills. He claims: “I’m a horrible sales person, but I’ve got good people skills. I’ve got a great team.” He also has a BA in Human Resources from University of Toronto. That, and his natural competitiveness and sense of fun, combine to make him an ideal business owner and committee member.

He recognizes that each person comes to the table with something to offer and he sets an example that inspires others to step up.

Evan Creighton, Providence Healthcare Foundation’s Special Events Manager and the staff person responsible for Cuisine & Cuvée, says Senthu is a leader who gets things done and isn’t afraid to suggest to others to get involved. “He sets the bar high and doesn’t hesitate to ask other people to help us reach the goal,” says Evan. “If I tell him I need something, such as items for a silent auction, I can count on him to call on his network and get what we need – sometimes delivering results within minutes!”

That spirit will contribute to the success of Cuisine & Cuvée under Senthu’s chairmanship. Evan is hoping to top the total raised last year by stretching this year’s goal to \$300,000. This year’s Cuisine &

Cuvée is scheduled for April 20 at Rebel, 11 Polson Street, Toronto.

Senthu is also a member of Men Advancing Philanthropy for Providence (MAPP). MAPP is a group of philanthropic men who have joined together to support the mission of Providence Healthcare. The men make monthly or annual donations to attend exclusive quarterly events, meet executive philanthropists from across the GTA, and vote on innovative projects. All donations received through MAPP support essential programs and services at Providence Healthcare.

To get tickets to Cuisine & Cuvée or to learn more about it, go to [www.cuisineandcuvée.ca](http://www.cuisineandcuvée.ca).

To join MAPP or learn more about Providence, check out [www.mappto.com](http://www.mappto.com) or contact Evan Creighton at [Ecreighton@providence.on.ca](mailto:Ecreighton@providence.on.ca) or 416-285-3666, ext.3872.



# Caring for someone with dementia? We can help!



Alzheimer Society of Toronto staff with Providence's staff at the partnership launch event

People living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias can access more support in their community with a new partnership that is bringing services closer to homes in east Toronto as well as Providence Healthcare's patients, residents, and clients.

In March, Providence Healthcare and the Alzheimer Society of Toronto (AST) celebrated a service integration that has AST staff co-locating at Providence Healthcare. This means that those seeking support can better maximize their visit to Providence by linking with a community of experts at a single site.

With over 43,000 individuals in Toronto living with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia and a projected 40% increase in the prevalence of dementia within the province over the next ten years, the

formation of an integrated satellite clinic speaks not only to the need for additional resources, but the commitment of both organizations to improve person-centred care.

Providence is strengthening an already long-standing relationship with the AST that includes Adult Day Program (ADP) counselling and support for clients, the iPod project in the Cardinal Ambrozic Houses of Providence, and the Minds in Motion program offered through the Scotiabank Learning Centre. It looks forward to the collaborative approach to care it brings as AST works more closely with its clinicians.

"The Alzheimer Society partnership is a natural fit because they're experts in dementia and family caregiving. Also, they have the registered social workers that can

help the caregivers when they really require that intensive counselling," adds Adult Day Program manager Elizabeth Davison. "They do navigate the system for families."

Collaboration will continue to expand the provision of education, counselling, workshops and social programs to patients, residents and clients at Providence and the community at large.

In total, four AST staff are located at Providence (3276 St. Clair Ave. East): education coordinator Joanne Tandoc, social workers Risa Kim and Erin Hawker-Budlovsky, and community programs coordinator Romina Oliverio – with their offices located on the B Wing 1st Floor (B116).

For more information or to book an appointment contact the Alzheimer Society of Toronto at (416) 322-6560.

## The Queen of Night



Tranquil moon! You swim against  
The clouds that is white and bright.  
Why do you come to my window straight  
And hide in the clouds when our eyes meet?  
We pity you, you are exhausted  
Roving the sky, but not agitated.

Magic Moon! You are so generous  
Care for everyone; to you precious.  
Good and bad, you don't discriminate  
Rich and poor; you don't segregate.  
Shine not only in all human beings  
But also on animate and inanimate ones.

O! Queen of night with silvery light  
You radiant, lovely deity of night.  
We wish you shine with one ghost eye  
On bashful virgin's lover's sigh.  
Moon in heaven shine with joy  
Making all, by your light enjoy.

Children love to play by your light:  
While the young enjoy the old delight.  
Many a gambol frolicked in your sight,  
Talking age and whispering lovers  
Spend hours of love ensconced in bowers  
enjoy your mystic radiance for hours.

– Kingsley-

# TEDDY BEAR CLINIC HELPS KIDS FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE WITH DOCTORS AND HOSPITALS

SCARBOROUGH (March 14, 2018) – Children across Scarborough brought their Teddy Bears and other stuffed animals for a “checkup” today and learned more about what might happen during their own visit to a hospital at Scarborough and Rouge Hospital’s (SRH) sixth annual Teddy Bear Clinic.

The Teddy Bear Clinic featured a series of stations where SRH staff and volunteers showed children, through medical play, many of the different kinds of activities and procedures that happen at the hospital. Children between three and 12 years old brought their Teddy (or other stuffed toy) to receive pretend x-rays, blood tests, surgery, and more!

“By supporting their own stuffed animal through various medical tests and procedures, the Teddy Bear Clinic helps children and families develop coping skills and to feel more confident and comfortable when needing to see a doctor or make a trip to the hospital, whether it’s a routine visit or an emergency situation,” said Alexandra Frankel, a Child Life Specialist in the Paediatric program at SRH.

“The Teddy Bear Clinic is one of the highlights of my sons’ March break,” added Cecilia Lui, who attended with her nine and six year old sons for the fourth

year in a row. “It’s a well-organized event and the hands-on activities are a fun way for children to better understand hospitals and health care.”

Photos from the Teddy Bear Clinic are available at <http://bit.ly/2FA88Vu>.

### About Scarborough and Rouge Hospital

At Scarborough and Rouge Hospital (SRH), a quality patient experience comes first. Affiliated with the University of Toronto, SRH consists of three hospital sites (Birchmount, General, and Centenary) and five satellite sites in Scarborough. SRH delivers a broad spectrum of health services to one of the most diverse communities in Canada, including a full-service Emergency Department at each site, advanced maternal and neonatal care in state-of-the-art birthing centres, and specialized paediatric services. SRH is home to a number of regional programs serving the central east Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and beyond, including nephrology, cardiac care, vascular surgery, and vision care, and is recognized as a centre of excellence in orthopaedic surgery, cancer care, and mental health.





# BUILDING CAPACITY AND EXPANDING RESOURCES FOR FIRST-CLASS SURGICAL CARE CLOSE TO HOME



The Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) Trek Everest Team stand proudly behind Jo-anne Marr, President, MSH, Brad Morris, Foundation Board Chair, Shaker Rehmatullah, President and Founder of Flato Developments Inc. – Lead Sponsor, and Suzette Strong, CEO of MSH Foundation.

MSH Trek Everest Team with Shaker Rehmatullah, President and Founder of Flato Developments Inc. – Lead Sponsor.

MSH Clinical Directors Sue Sheffield (left) and Trishla Lawless will be heading to Nepal a few days before their Trek to base camp Mount Everest to volunteer at a local school.



Dr. John Di Costanzo, Urologist at MSH and Tina Carr, Patient Care Manager, Surgery, MSH demonstrate tools used in minimally invasive surgery.



Jo-anne Marr, President and CEO, MSH and Suzette Strong, CEO of MSH Foundation with surgical staff at MSH Trek Everest launch.



Ten MSH Trek Everest Team members will travel to Nepal five days early to volunteer in the Solukhumbu District Hospital.



MSH Trekker Rabiah Usman (left) with father and MSH Foundation Board Member, Khalid Usman (right) and Shaker Rehmatullah, President and Founder of Flato Developments Inc. – Lead Sponsor.



MSH Trek Team members Sophia Sun (left) and Karen Chadwick.

MARKHAM, ON (March 9, 2018) – This April, 25 devoted Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) supporters will spend 18 days trekking 154 km to Base Camp Mount Everest all in support of surgical care.

The diverse team of physicians, clinicians, MSH staff, business leaders and passionate supporters have come together for one shared goal: supporting local healthcare—and their community has rallied behind them.

On March 6, Flato Developments Inc. was announced as the MSH Trek Everest Lead Sponsor.

“At Flato, we believe that building communities means more than just building homes – it is about giving back to the services and facilities that matter to the residents,” says President Shaker Rehmatullah. “We sincerely appreciate all of the trekkers taking a significant amount of time out to support this great hospital.”

The Markham-based building and land development company has a culture deeply rooted in philanthropy with a sense of responsibility for supporting community services.

“A hospital is a staple in any community, and in times of a medical crisis, there’s nothing more reassuring than knowing your hospital has the right equipment, facilities and doctors,” says Rehmatullah.

This shared goal resonates with the Trek team. With eyes set on reaching the summit, the team has been

participating in core-strength workouts, outdoor hikes and yoga classes. For them, it’s more than just an opportunity to take in all of the beauty and culture of the Himalayas.

The team will be raising funds for a new hybrid operating room (OR) equipped with fluoroscopy, or real-time x-ray video.

“This suite will provide a flexible, adaptable environment with extra space to incorporate new advanced equipment while empowering our surgical staff to provide world class care right here in the community,” says Dr. John Di Costanzo, Urologist, MSH.

The new OR will support the growing need for procedures that investigate the gastrointestinal tract, liver biopsies and urological surgery, as well as the growth of the hospital’s surgical orthopaedic program.

“For many of us, this experience is a bucket-list endeavor doubling as a philanthropic summit – with a cause too important to ignore,” says Brad Morris, MSH Foundation Board Chair and trekker. “Our goal is to impact lives – right here at home as well as in Nepalese communities.”

Ten healthcare practitioners among the trekkers will travel to Nepal five days early to assist in the Solukhumbu District Hospital and three others will volunteer at a local school.

The team is committed to raising \$750,000 for MSH

– the adventure of a lifetime begins April 14— follow their journey at [mshtrekeverest.ca](http://mshtrekeverest.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. Government can’t fund all of the hospital’s needs. Donations from the community fund life-saving medical equipment that helps to ensure the delivery of first-class health care at Markham Stouffville Hospital.

### About Markham Stouffville Hospital

Markham Stouffville Hospital is a progressive, two-site, community hospital with 284 beds, leading diagnostic services and clinical programs in acute care medicine and surgery, emergency services, addictions and mental health, and childbirth and children’s services. Partnering with other specialist providers, the hospital’s 450 physicians, 2,100 staff, and 1,300 volunteers make it the centre of community care for the residents of the City of Markham and the Towns of Stouffville and Uxbridge.

Having recently completed a significant expansion and renovation, Markham Stouffville Hospital is well positioned to serve the needs of the community.



By: Raymond Rajabalan

# Christ's Resurrection



The life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are key facts of history for a Christian. As the apostles testified, Christ's resurrection was the culmination of the events of His first coming—and enables the remaining steps in God's plan to save mankind.

Before He was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus promised: "Because I live you will live also" (John 14:19). He had been explaining to His disciples that He was about to die, which would demonstrate His incomprehensible love for humanity. As He went on to say in John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for His friends."

The death of God's Son is the foundational step in God's plan to save humanity. His sacrifice allows every human being the opportunity to have his or her sins washed away and become the friend of both Jesus Christ and God the Father. And not only can we become the friends of God, but we are invited to live with them forever as divine members of God's family! This is possible only through the resurrection of Christ.

Yet although the apostles heard Jesus speak these words, they could not understand what was about to happen or why. Their beloved Rabbi was about to suffer a horrible death to free others from death. He would be buried for three days and three nights and then be resurrected. Because of His resurrection, they too, along with every repentant, obedient and believing human being would also be resurrected at a future time.

Everyone will ultimately be given the opportunity to choose the way of salvation to live forever in God's Kingdom!

## Preaching the resurrected Christ, starting with Peter

Once converted through the Holy Spirit, the apostles proclaimed to the world that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was the capstone of His ministry. Yes, "with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 4:33). They were so confident in what they'd seen with their own eyes (1 Corinthians 15:5) that they were willing to die for it. They knew it to be the truth. They suffered humiliation, beatings and, later, even death for the name of Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:5 Acts 2 records that Peter and the rest of the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit 50 days after Jesus' resurrection, on the day of Pentecost. Starting in Acts 2:11, we read Peter's first recorded sermon, which was given that day. His message centered on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus was the miracle worker who "was crucified and put to death" (Acts 2:22-23)

But then Peter emphasized that before His body could suffer decay, God raised Him back to life (Acts 2:24, Acts 2:31-32)

Because He was crucified on our behalf, the only proper response for us is to repent of our sins and be baptized (Acts 2:38). God then gives His Holy Spirit to repentant believers so they can "be saved from this perverse generation" (Acts 2:38-40)

The next chapter records how Peter, accompanied by John, was used by God to heal a man who was lame from birth. Peter asked the crowd, "Why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?" (Acts 3:12)

He then explained that it was through faith in Jesus' name that the man had been made strong (Acts 3:16)

When Peter and John were arrested and brought before the Jewish authorities, these apostles were asked: "By what power or by what name have you done this?" (Acts 4:7)

Peter simply stated, "Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole" (Acts 4:10)

Once again, the message of Peter was that it was because of the power of the resurrected Christ that miracles were being accomplished. Again and

again, Peter's messages resound with the fact that he served the risen Christ. Our "living hope," he says in his first preserved epistle, is "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:3). And he adds, "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit"

(1 Peter 3:18)

This timeless message regarding the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ has been carried forth by God's ministry down through the ages. Anchoring this message is the undeniable fact that we serve a living Savior, Jesus Christ.

## Paul proclaims the same message

Paul's first recorded sermon is found in Acts 13. He traveled first to Cyprus, then on to what is now southwestern Turkey, and observed the Sabbath with both Jews and Gentiles, worshipping God with them in the synagogue. After giving a brief history of the Hebrews, he began speaking of the Savior for Israel, Jesus (Acts 13:23). He spoke of the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate authorizing Christ's execution (Acts 13:28)

Then Paul spoke the words which are repeated throughout the New Testament: "But God raised Him from the dead" (Acts 13:30). Like Peter, Paul too was driven to preach the crucified and resurrected Christ. This message contained a power heretofore not realized.

Jesus and His apostles proclaimed the gospel or good news of the Kingdom of God—the message that God through His Messiah or Christ would set up a literal kingdom to rule over all nations. As the biblical prophets had earlier foretold, when Christ establishes His Kingdom He will rule from Jerusalem and the world will at last know peace; the nations will learn war no more (Isaiah 2:4)

Paul never changed his message. The final words we read about him are these: "Paul ... received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence" (Acts 28:30-31)

Paul started his epistle to the Christians in Rome by stating that he had been "separated to the gospel of God" (Romans 1:1). He said the gospel concerned "His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:3-4)

Paul thus explained that both the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are vital to understanding God's gospel. He further declared that the "gospel of Christ ... is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Romans 1:16)

Christ's gospel transcends nationalities. His life, death and resurrection are vital for everyone; it is God's power to salvation—that is, eternal life in God's coming Kingdom—for every believing human being. Without this salvation all people are headed to the second death—the lake of fire (Revelation 21:8)

Paul continues with the key theme of the im-

portance of Jesus' resurrection in Romans 5:8-10

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

This is a key scripture. Paul wants us to know that while Jesus' death is crucial for our justification before God and reconciliation to Him, that death does not give us eternal life. We are ultimately saved, resurrected to eternal life, by the living Christ!

In Romans 8:34 Paul states: "Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us."

The word translated "furthermore" is the Greek *mallon*, meaning "all the more," "how much more," "better," "rather than," "more than," etc. So while the spiritual impact of Christ's sacrificial death on humanity is immense, His resurrected life makes it more so because He lives to make "intercession for us"—pleading for us as priestly intermediary with God.

Paul also makes it clear that Christians live the Christian life only through Christ living in them through the Holy Spirit. As he explains, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20, King James Version). Here we see how vital it is that Christ not only died for us but was also resurrected so that He could live in us—empowering us to resist sin and continue in God's way.

## Paul continues the focus in 1 Corinthians

Paul wrote his first preserved epistle to the church at Corinth to correct, in love, some heresies that were troubling the congregation. Earlier, he had spent 18 months raising up that church and teaching the members the fundamentals of the Christian faith (see Acts 18:11)

His instructions in this letter regarding the observance of biblical festivals date it to the spring of the year in the northern hemisphere. In 1 Corinthians 5:7-8, we are exhorted to keep the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread with proper spiritual focus—both of these occurring in early spring. Paul gives further instruction in chapter 11 on the right attitude Christians must have as we partake of the New Testament Passover.

In this springtime epistle, Paul also wrote of the crucial importance of Christ's resurrection. There were false teachers in the congregation who were denying the reality of the resurrection (see 1 Corinthians 15:12).

He told them when first addressing them that Jesus rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4) and that Jesus died for their sins and was seen by Cephas (Peter) and the other apostles as well as more than 500 others (1 Corinthians 15:5-7)

He mentioned this large number of personal

eyewitnesses to demonstrate that there was no possibility of fraud. These were all bona fide witnesses who knew they saw Jesus after His resurrection. Paul then reaffirmed that he himself had also seen the risen Christ (1 Corinthians 15:8)

Next he addressed the heresy some were spreading—that there was no actual resurrection of the dead. He anchored his rebuttal through the fact of Christ's literal resurrection as a forerunner of the future resurrection of all believers. He said that if Christ was not risen, then his preaching and their faith were in vain (1 Corinthians 15:14).

Furthermore, Paul said that if Christ was not risen, then he and the other ministers were false witnesses and the Christian faith is futile, with all of us left still in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:14, (1 Corinthians 15:17). For it is Christ living in us that empowers us to live in obedience to God. And if Christ is not risen, Paul stated, then those who have died in Christ have perished—there is no hope of anyone ever being resurrected. And if it's only in this present life that we have hope, we are of all men the most to be pitied (1 Corinthians 15:18-19)

Paul goes on to emphatically state that Christ has risen from the dead and has become the first-fruits of those who have died (1 Corinthians 15:20), the beginning of God's spiritual harvest of mankind. He explains that while the first Adam, the father of wayward mankind, brought death, the last Adam—Jesus Christ as the beginning of a renewed human race—has brought life.

Paul then spends the rest of this lengthy chapter talking about the resurrection of the dead. Furthermore, he makes it clear that Christ's resurrection is the guarantee of our resurrection.

## The Kingdom of God is for resurrected believers

The key to the Kingdom of God promised in the gospel message is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If it weren't for Christ's resurrection, there would be no Kingdom of God to come. There would be no messianic King of that Kingdom—and no resurrected followers of His to serve as kings and priests along with Him.

Some think that the message of the Kingdom of God is merely about experiencing God in our lives today. But without a future literal resurrection and ruling Kingdom to come, what would be the point? We would be most pitiable, as Paul said.

While we can experience a foretaste of the Kingdom of God today through personally living by God's Word, Paul announces that the Kingdom is ultimately yet to come and that inheriting it requires a resurrection or change to immortality:

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep [in death], but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (1 Corinthians 15:51-54)

It is God who gives us this victory through the risen Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57) Our living forever has been made possible through the One who said that He is "the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). His life, ministry, death and resurrection have made eternal life possible for humanity! We're reconciled to God by Jesus' death but saved by His life—by His living in us to lead us and interceding for us as High Priest.

Jesus will come back to rule as King under God the Father. In the coming Kingdom of God, the resurrected Messiah and His resurrected followers will lead the rest of mankind, those who are willing, to repentance and ultimately experiencing the same change to immortality. Let us never forget the awe-some importance of Jesus' death and resurrection!



# Canada unveils \$10 bill featuring civil rights icon Viola Desmond

The bill marks a growing recognition of Desmond's refusal to leave the whites-only section of a Nova Scotia movie theatre on Nov. 8, 1946 and the seminal role it played in Canada's civil rights movement.

A new \$10 bill featuring civil rights icon Viola Desmond was unveiled in Halifax on Thursday Feb. 08. Desmond's sister, Wanda Robson, thanked the bill's artist for creating a "beautiful" and "unique" bank note. (The Canadian Press)

Viola Desmond's trail-blazing act of defiance — overlooked for decades by most Canadians — was honoured Thursday Feb. 08 in a Halifax ceremony that cemented her new status as a civil rights icon.

A new \$10 bill featuring Desmond was unveiled by Finance Minister Bill Morneau and Bank of Canada Governor Stephen Poloz.

The purple polymer bill — the first vertically oriented bank note issued in Canada — includes a portrait of Desmond and a historic map of north end Halifax on one side and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg on the other.

"It was long past time for a bank note to feature an iconic Canadian woman," Poloz told the large crowd gathered at the Halifax Central Library on International Women's Day despite a blustery snowstorm and flickering power. "That's been a goal of mine since I became governor."

Morneau said the deck was "doubly stacked" against Desmond because of her gender and the colour of her skin. He said she stood up for what she believed in and helped make the country a better place.

"It's an important story because it shows that standing up for what we believe, whether it's on the steps of Parliament Hill or in a movie theatre in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, can make our country and our world a better place for future generations," he said.

Wanda Robson, second from left, sister of Viola Desmond, unveils the new \$10 bank note featuring Desmond with Bill Morneau, left, Minister of Finance, and Stephen Poloz, Governor of the Bank of Canada, during a press conference in Halifax. Desmond is the first Canadian woman to be featured on a regularly circulating bank note

"Her legal challenge galvanized the black community in Halifax's north end and paved the way for a broader understanding of human rights across our country."



The bill, which also features an eagle feather and an excerpt from the

"I was speechless," she said describing her reaction to the bank note. "It's beyond what I ever thought. It's beautiful."

Desmond becomes the first black person — and the first nonroyal woman — on a regularly circulating Canadian bank note.

Both sides of a sample of the new \$10 Canadian bill, featuring civil rights icon Viola Desmond, is seen in this undated handout image from the Bank of Canada.

"It's a long-awaited sense of belonging for the African Canadian community," said Russell Grosse, executive director of the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia.

"The launch of the bill sends people of African descent the message that Canada is finally accepting us. We belong."

The bill marks a growing recognition of Desmond's refusal to leave the whites-only section of a Nova Scotia movie theatre on Nov. 8, 1946 — nearly

a decade before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus in Alabama — and the seminal role it played in Canada's civil rights movement.

While her civil disobedience was remarkable, Grosse said racial segregation and systemic discrimination was once commonplace in Nova Scotia.

"It's a familiar story," he said. "It's something that a lot of African Canadians once experienced, so they can sympathize and they can connect with it."

That's what makes the new \$10 bill such a powerful act of acceptance, Grosse said.

"It's a remarkable story. It really shows the progression of society, and that's one of the reasons why it seems to have gained this groundswell of interest over the last couple years," he said.

Desmond's story went largely untold for a half-century, but in recent years she has been featured on a stamp, and her name graces a Halifax harbour ferry. There are plans for a park in Toronto and streets in Montreal and Halifax to bear her name.

Viola Desmond was headed to Sydney, N.S., when her car broke down. Stuck in New Glasgow, she decided to watch a movie. The segregated theatre relegated Black patrons to the balcony, while floor seating was reserved for whites. Desmond sat in the floor section and refused to leave. She was dragged out of the theatre, thrown in jail for 12 hours and fined.

Lindell Smith, who represents the north end on Halifax council, said Desmond is an icon for the African Nova Scotian community and all Canadians.

"I have a daughter who's eight, and she'll be able to look at a bank note and see a woman who reflects her, an African Nova Scotian woman who stood up for her rights and now is being commemorated on a bank note," he said. "You can't get any better than that in terms of historical value and importance."

Isaac Saney, a senior instructor of black studies at Dalhousie University, said many Canadians are unaware that slavery and segregation existed here, and often know more about U.S. civil rights icons than those in Canada.

"We know more about Rosa Parks than Viola Desmond," he said. "We know more about Martin Luther King than perhaps we know about W.P. Oliver," he said referring to social justice advocate and reverend Dr. William Pearly Oliver.

But the new bank note could change that, helping Canadians learn about civil rights north of the border, he said.

"When young people see Viola Desmond they'll be able to ask 'Who is this particular person,' so it becomes a teachable moment," Saney said.





## WORDS OF PEACE



## A Pill for Peace

There are pills to get to sleep, pills to stay awake, pills to kill headaches, backaches, joint pain. There are even pills to improve your mood -- at least for a little while. Wouldn't it be nice if there were a pill to bring lasting peace?

"There actually is a pill for peace," says Prem Rawat, who has been recognized in several countries as an ambassador of peace for his efforts to promote awareness of a personal feeling of fulfilment within, that is the birthright of every human being. "It's called consciousness. That's the pill for peace -- to be awakened."

Oddly, he says, when offered an opportunity to experience this peace, people often use a very common excuse: "I don't have time."

"This is the excuse everybody comes up with," he says. "I don't have time for my family.' I don't have time for my friends.' I don't have time for me.' I don't have time, I don't time, I don't have time. Next time you say, 'I don't have time,' understand that you are forecasting your own future,

because that's exactly what's going to happen. Once you become dust again, time doesn't matter. Time only matters when you are alive."

The problem is, Mr. Rawat says, that peace has become a word that has no real relevance to our lives.

"Peace doesn't need to remain a word," he says. "It can become something beautiful. What will it do for the world? I don't know! People are shocked when I say, 'I don't know.' They say, 'Well, isn't it the world that needs peace?' No! The world doesn't need peace. You do."

"We have more educated people on the face of this Earth today than we ever did. There are more schools on the face of this Earth today than there ever were. There are more universities on the face of this Earth than there ever were -- but we're missing the key ingredient. It's called humanity."

"True peace lies within you, in being truly human. Peace is not in somebody's pocket, not on top of some mountain, not in some pledge—in-

deed, not written on any paper."

If peace were something that had to be manufactured by diplomats sitting around a conference table, he says, then it truly could be called an impossible challenge.

"The good news is that peace doesn't have to be created. It is dancing in the heart of every single human being, regardless of religion, regardless of race, regardless of color, regardless of whether they are rich or poor, educated, or uneducated. Whatever the circumstances may be, peace is dancing in the heart of every single human being. It's here to be discovered, not created. That's the peace that's going to make the difference."

"You did not arrive on this Earth unarmed. Do you respect every moment as it comes into you? Do you understand the value of being alive? Alive! Not just clinically alive, but both awake and awakened. To feel, so that when someone says, 'peace,' you say, 'I want that feeling of peace in my life—not just as a word, but as something real. I want that feeling of

being fulfilled every single day.'

"I hope you find the value of peace in your life, find the thirst for peace in your life. This is my effort. I go around the world to bring this message: that the miracle of existence is also happening for you. For each one of us on the face of this Earth, there's something miraculous taking place. You're alive, you're awake, you can see, you can feel, you can understand."

"If we can change our way of looking at peace, then maybe peace is not that impossible. Maybe peace is not that difficult. Because the most beautiful news is this: It doesn't have to be created. Peace is already here."

To learn more about Prem Rawat  
1 877 707 3221

416 431 5000 Tamil

416 264 7700 Hindi

[www.wopg.org](http://www.wopg.org)

[www.tprf.org](http://www.tprf.org)

[www.premrawat.com](http://www.premrawat.com)

[www.timelesstoday.com](http://www.timelesstoday.com)



# What is the purpose?

**By: Janani Srikantha**

.....  
Every morning, children wake up and go to school. They pack their bags, grab their projects, make sure they have their snacks, and set off for the day. But, do they know why they are going to school? Do we know why we're sending our children to school? What exactly is our purpose for school?

We often focus on the curriculum. We make sure all the standards are met. We highlight the importance of doing well, which translates to many children aiming for the perfect results. We check off the boxes and have a piece of paper with a column of grades. Is this the purpose of going to school?

Our purpose is what drives us further. It is what helps us set goals beyond the minimum requirement. It is our purpose that helps us overcome obstacles because we have something more to achieve.

If children believe that the purpose of school is getting the perfect grades, then what do they do when they try their best and someone else deems that they're not successful? Does that mean all of their effort doesn't mean anything? Are they a failure?

There have been too many times where children have felt diminished because of a grade. There have been too many times where students experience anxiety because of the fear of not doing well.

Our reality is that the education

system is standards-driven. But, I believe that students can have a bigger purpose than grades, and still be successful in a system that determines success based on numbers.

I think it's important that we talk to children about their purpose of going to school.

So where can we start? Let's begin with reflection.

We need to identify what our beliefs about school are. Why do we send our children to school (beyond it being the law to do so)? How do we react to grades, both high and low? Why do we react that way? Do we feel that achievement in school has a direct correlation to success in life?

It's important that we understand how we feel before we address the topic with our children. This is because as adults, without being aware, we transfer some of our beliefs to them. Children are like sponges, and they will absorb the joys and the anxieties that they encounter in their environment.

Once we have reflected on what we believe to be true of education, we need to help children find their own beliefs. It can be as simple as starting with discussing an achievement that they are most proud of and why. For some students, it may take a long time to answer this question because, without realizing, we may have already conditioned them to see all the things that are wrong or could be done better. Once they have identified their proud-

est moment, they can begin thinking about how they felt, and why it is their proudest moment. Pay attention to their response because if it always comes back to the grade, we need to focus on the reasons this is so.

Usually, we can delve deeper into how hard they worked or how they pushed their own boundaries. We can address how they tried something new, or that they were resilient and tried different strategies to overcome a challenge. We can discuss how they may have enjoyed the task because, in life, we rarely do well in things we don't enjoy.

Conversely, identify a situation they are not proud of. This discussion will also go beyond just the grade to reflect the lack of effort or hesitancy to try new ideas. It may connect to giving up or not enjoying the task.

Our children need to see that the grade was just a result of all of these other aspects that played a role. They need to see that success is based on hard work, willingness to explore, nurturing their inherent curiosity, their resilience to face challenges, and their enjoyment of learning.

Next time, a child brings home an assignment or test, maybe our first question shouldn't be "What grade did you get?" Let's first ask "What did you do?" "How did you feel?" "Did you like it?" "Did you try something new?" "What have you learned?" "What can you do differently next time?" "What

would you like to celebrate?" Maybe, after all of this, you can take a look at their grade keeping in mind that it may be the least important aspect of this conversation.

Once children find their purpose, they can build their road to being successful. Then, if others deem that a task wasn't successful, it's not the end. Their self-worth won't be defined by numbers and letters on the corner of a piece of paper. Their purpose will let them be resilient as they have their eyes set on something more. Their purpose for school, that speaks to who they are, will guide them towards success.

Janani Srikantha is a certified teacher who is experienced with the Ontario curriculum and the International Baccalaureate. She provides tutoring using personalized learning plans based on students' needs. She is knowledgeable on integrating technology to



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redefine learning that is inclusive of all students. Janani has led workshops for educators and parents on topics that address different facets of education. For more information or queries on how to help your child with learning, please email [info@thinkshif.edu](mailto:info@thinkshif.edu) or visit Thinkshift Edu on Facebook.



# Women's Equality and a Grand Old Man from India

By: Manoj Karuppanan  
Toronto, Ontario

On July 13, 1848, Elizabeth Stanton and her 4 women friends met over tea to discuss their own situation in a country that broke the yokes of tyranny not 70 years ago. The wheels of change were set in motion. A man born 30 years later in British India initiated the Self Respect Movement to reform the backwards Indian society.

E.V. Ramasamy, fondly known as 'Periyar' (Respected) and 'Thanthai Periyar' (Father Periyar) was a multifaceted social justice warrior when social justice was seen as an affront to the establishment. He is well known for his atheism and his fight for human rights. The lesser known facet of this gem is one that is taken for granted by Tamil women in their everyday life - women's rights. Periyar was not part of any political movement but his ideas reverberated across all laws laid down by the Justice Party that governed Madras Province till the Indian Independence, and the Dravidar Munnetra Kalagam (People's Progress Party) after independence.

Periyar penned his thoughts in his "Kudi Arasu" (Republic) magazine from 1931 to 1936 which formed the

basis of propagating his social reform ideas. He had written various topics from marriages and their effect on women, arranged marriages, child marriages, the state of widows in Hindu society, advocated for widow remarriages, education for women, women in the armed forces (in 1931 when the Europeans hadn't started having women in the workforce), birth control, property rights, divorces, dowry, and the highly deplorable devadasi (temple prostitute) system. He criticized the double standards set by society for women with respect to chastity.

The Self Respect movement started by him not only had anti-superstition and untouchability eradication as a goal, but also had establishment of a united society based on sisterhood/brotherhood where women enjoy equal rights, prevention of child marriages, conduct self-respect marriages without following demeaning rituals. He was a strong proponent of widows getting remarried, and inter-religious and inter-



caste marriages. Periyar advocated for birth control rights not only for population control, but also for the health of women and their liberation. A woman not worrying about getting pregnant frequently will be able to step into a breadwinner role instead of being tied to the cradle.

These ideas attracted women from all walks of life to the movement - former prostitutes & devadasis, labourers, doctors, teachers, and other marginalized women.

Periyar rightly felt that empowering women and not enslaving them would lead to a healthy society that can grow by leaps and bounds. While

we celebrate Women's History Month in March, it should be apt that we acknowledge the contributions of an old man in a remote corner of the world. Every South Indian woman that has migrated to North America or Australia or Europe has been positively impacted by Periyar. His thoughts were considered revolutionary 80 years ago. He has written about topics that even the west is still grappling with today, like birth control and reproductive rights. Without Periyar, Indian society would've still been a highly religious and socially backwards society akin to theocracies and church-influenced countries all over the world.

## PERIYAR AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Kanimozhi MV,  
New Jersey, USA

March 8th is International Women's day. We know the history of Women's day. The first National Woman's Day was observed in the United States on 28 February in the year 1909. The Socialist Party of America designated this day in honor of the 1908 garment workers' strike in New York, where women protested against working conditions.

As far as India is considered, in India division of society into castes degenerated into a most disastrous and blight of all-human institutions. It condemned them to a civilization, which made them feeble, weak and unable to fight foreign invasion and aggression. In addition to the caste system India was suppressing the women below Sudras and Panchamas who occupied the lower caste ladder in Indian society. As Evelyn Cunningham says, "Women are the only oppressed group in our society, that lives in intimate association with their oppressors", Indian society was

not an exception. From this land came Periyar as ray of hope in eradicating the inequalities and injustices done in the name of caste and bringing in reforms to empower women.

Periyar was born in South India, (TamilNadu) on September 17, 1879. He was the father of Self-Respect movement that was started in TamilNadu in the year 1925. In the year 1929, at Chengalpattu First Self-Respect conference was held where lot of resolutions were passed to uplift and empower women. The conference emphasized women's right of inheritance of the property of her parents and deceased husband, the right to divorce her husband and seek remarriage if she is not happy with the existing marriage, a widow's right to remarriage, resistant and prevention of child marriage and the right to exercise birth control now known as family planning. To promote economic empowerment of women, resolution was passed in that conference emphasizing that women should

be recruited for military service. Only in the year 1949 did western world was exposed to feminist thoughts by the book *The Second Sex* which is a book by the French existentialist Simone de Beauvoir, in which the author discusses the treatment of women throughout history. But Periyar spoke about empowering women in late 1920's. Periyar quotes that Man treats woman as his own property and not as being capable of feelings, like himself. The way man treats women is much worse than the way landlords treat servants and the high-caste treat the low-caste. These treat them so demeaning only in situations mutually affecting them; but men treat women cruelly and as slaves, from their birth till death.

Even long before the widow Remarriage Act was enacted in Indian subcontinent, Periyar as a social reformer advocated remarriage of widows and put it in practice when his niece became a widow at a very young age. By introducing Self - Respect marriages,

he ensured that women are not treated as a property by the husband by tying of nuptial chain. He insisted exchange of garlands and said women and men into family life are good friends and destroyed the concept of slavery of women in the institution of marriage. Another objectionable practice in Hindu temples was devadasi system, tying the nuptial chain around the neck of young girl and allowing her to lead the life of a prostitute in the name of religion and God and Periyar's fight against Devadasi system and the subsequent legislation put an end to this obnoxious practice.

Periyar's book on *Why were women enslaved?* is a must read to understand Periyar thoughts about women empowerment. On this women's day it is a sign of gratitude we women show to Periyar for all his tiring efforts he took to liberate womanhood to live a life of honor, dignity and respect.

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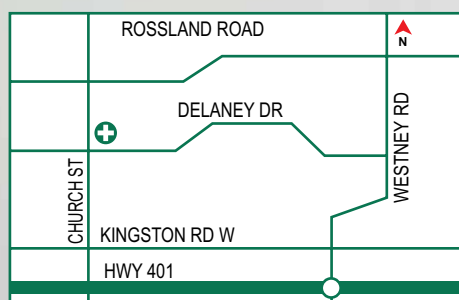
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6:00 PM – 7:00 PM  
**UPDATED PROPOSED TAX CHANGES FOR PRIVATE CORPORATION**  
**DEBBIE PEARL-WEINBERG**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - TAX & ESTATE PLANNING, CIBC WEALTH STRATEGIES GROUP



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# THE JACKFRUIT

C. Kamalaharan

It was a tempting sight for anyone who saw the bunch of large jackfruits hanging from the tree in Ravi's compound. Jackfruit trees neither need fertilizers nor water through irrigation for survival. They sustain themselves throughout the year by storing water during the rainy season. Then why are Ravi's jackfruits more delicious than the ones in the neighbourhood? Ravi's jackfruit trees are of special significance. They are specially grafted hybrid saplings bought by Ravi in a sale several decades ago. And so most of the people in the neighbourhood had an eye on Ravi's jackfruits. Among them was Ratnam who craving for Ravi's tasty jackfruits drew a plan to steal a fruit from his tree.

One night during waning moon when the area was pitch-dark Ratnam scaled the parapet wall and landed softly on the ground inside Ravi's compound. He slowly tiptoed to the jackfruit tree drew the knife from his waist and snapped the stalk of one of the fruits. Having done this he staggered to the parapet wall carrying the weighty fruit. With much difficulty he lifted the fruit and placed it on top of the wall. But being placed unbalanced it rolled over and fell outside the compound with a heavy thud. Always on the alert Ravi's dogs ran here and there barking in search of the source of the thud. Immediately the exterior lights of the house were switched on. Ratnam instantly leaped over and landed outside the parapet wall. He slowly crept into a dense thicket and hid himself with the fruit. Ravi went around flashing his torch light all over but to no avail. Presuming the thud to be the fall of a Palmyra fruit from a height he switched off the lights and settled down to sleep.

It was only after daybreak Ravi noticed the theft of one of the fruits from a tree.

"Someone in the neighbourhood must have stolen it. Who is it?" Ravi murmured within himself. Later he asked all those who went past his house whether they had noticed anyone carrying a jackfruit. He also went to the market to see whether anyone was keeping his fruit for sale. He even went to a soothsayer who predicted that someone in the neighbourhood had stolen his fruit.

Every year the men in the neighbourhood organise a get together to celebrate Deepavali. To enliven their spirit freshly tapped toddy is served. But the main menu is the traditional 'kool' (spicy seafood soup) which they prepare by boiling a mixture of Palmyra root flour ('odial' flour), snake beans, tapioca, drumstick leaves, sprats, shrimps, crabs etc in huge earthenware. These items are brought by the participating men in the neighbourhood. Having prepared the nourishing 'kool' they relish drinking it in improvised cups prepared by folding ripened jackfruit tree leaves into a cone and securing it with coconut leaf midrib ('eekle'). This year too on this festive occasion all of them met and prepared the wholesome soup. They sat on the straw mat spread on the ground and relished drinking their favourite nutritious 'kool'. While munching the ingredients in the 'kool' Ravi's neighbour Somu quipped, "What tasty fried jackfruit seeds are these!" "What! jackfruit seeds in the 'kool'! Only my trees bear fruits during off season," Ravi raised his voice rudely and continued, "Who brought these seeds?" All of them looked at each other tensed. Among them Ratnam seemed excited and cast a distressing look. Noticing it Ravi looked sternly into Ratnam's eyes. Not able to face Ravi's piercing looks any further Ratnam sprang up and took to his heels closely followed by the enraged Ravi. The hunter and the hunted ran through footpaths, zigzagging lanes and palmyra



Kool



Jackfruit with seed



Toddy

grooves. But Ratnam outplayed Ravi and vanished leaving Ravi panting and fully exhausted. It was fun for the others who were in a drunken state after consuming toddy to their hearts content. When Ravi returned limping they all greeted him with cheers hoping that Ratnam was

being brought captive by the onlookers. "Where is Ratnam?" Somu asked. "The bugger has escaped. I'll teach him a bitter lesson," saying so he settled down and joined his peers in the Deepavali fiesta.

The following day Ravi went to the police station met the O.I.C and made an entry regarding the theft. A couple of days later a police constable arrived and handed the summons to Ravi requesting him to be present for an identification parade at the police station. About 10 suspects were produced for identification. Ravi looked intently and carefully at each one of them. He thought for a while and said, "I don't suspect anyone of them." All of them were freed.

The next day Ravi through Somu requested Ratnam to meet him immediately. Ratnam appeared before Ravi as a pious person with a stretch of 'viputhi' and a dot of sandalwood paste on his forehead. Not able to face Ravi he seemed restless and gripped by fear as to what lay in store for him. Ravi began, "I saw you among the accused standing in the identification parade yesterday at the police station. But I avoided identifying you. Do you know what the punishment is for such thefts? Its six months of rigorous imprisonment. You being the sole breadwinner of your family having little kids and also struggling with tight financial problems my mind prevented me from identifying you. I can't even imagine seeing the rest of your family leading a poverty-stricken life during your absence. Be a good person and never ever try to steal. Work hard and earn money in an honest way. Have faith in God who will guide you" Very much relieved from anxiety and tension Ratnam in return made a genuine pledge to Ravi that he would sincerely follow his advice. Since then he turned over a new leaf and acted with responsibility. It was a turning point in his life.....



# Charity



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## *JJ Atputharajah*

To give to the needy alone is charity; all the rest is investment for return. Most people give to others with the hope that they will be appropriately recompensed. Lord Jesus Christ who taught the abiding virtues of faith, hope and charity gave prominence to charity. Even if it would lead to heaven, to receive charity is bad but without recompense of heavenly reward, it is great give charity to others. Only the truly noble give till it hurts; the rich are

endowed with a generous mind and they never declare their inability to give.

When people come to beg of you, you may feel unpleasant but such feeling lasts only until you see the distress relieved face-as it lights up in radiance. Great are those who hunger's pangs sustain, but greater are those who relieve hunger's pain. By relieving the people of their devastating hunger, one lays by valuable possessions as investment.

Men who have experienced the delight of giving, will never be so hard-hearted as to hoard their wealth and refuse charity. Lord Dryden asserts that the secret pleasure of a generous act is the mind's bribe. Death is painful but even that will be pleasant to one who finds himself unable to relieve the distress of others. Valluvar's feelings of charity appear to underlie the acts of social justice and social service prevalent today in this modern world.

*"Ilam ennum avvam uraiyamai eethal,  
Kulan udaiyar kanne ula'*

*(Kural: 221-230)*



Valluvar's Views



# ILL-EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA



*J.J. Atputharajah*

## A. The Social Media Icons:

Social media is one of the remarkable products of the changing technologies of the modern world. Computer mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas and other forms of expression through virtual communities and networks - are mainly considered as social network. Social media has made all information and knowledge easily accessible to all. Smartphones are there to tell you all the information necessary by word of mouth. However all is not well with social media. Most of our privacy is intruded. The Google, Amazon, Microsoft and others are eavesdropping on us. The World Wide Web, social media and technological devices are changing the way how we spend our time, how we communicate with others and how we relate to one another. The family associations are themselves affected. People have no time for personal relationships with one another. They are either glued to their laptop, tablet, smart-phone or TV. Some authorities are concerned that small children can become confused over difference between real and imaginary people. They have concerns regarding communication skills. Children become unfriendly users of unfriendly devices. They find it difficult to relate to real people. Even adults talk as if characters in the TV serial are real people. Problems of TV characters are taken too seriously and lamented. Even church services are affected. Some pastors curtail their preaching time by introducing film strips and videos. They are not guided by the Holy Spirit but by spirit of short films and recorded materials. There is pastor who

spends his time taking i-phone pictures of church proceedings instead of waiting on the guidance of the Holy Spirit or meditating on the word.

## B. Its Adverse Effects:

Though social media is expected to be a boon to its users, it has also led to many unintended consequences. Children and society in general are badly affected by the mechanical effects of the social media. If you go to a public library in Toronto, you will find that more adults and children come to the library to use the freely available computers and not to borrow books. Most books are left untouched, though the Toronto libraries are well stocked with up-to-date books and magazines.

Phone addiction can drastically hamper the brain. Scientists at a Korean University found that teenagers who obsessively used their mobile devices scored higher on standardized tests that detect mental disorders. The study measured how much internet and smartphone use affected daily routines, social life, productivity, sleeping patterns and feelings. Similarly a recent study found 46 per cent of Americans could not live without their smartphones. Scientists are increasingly looking at disruptions in the glutamate cycle because of a variety of neurological disorders and conditions such as epilepsy, Alzheimer's and autism. The addictive nature of these devices has adverse effects. Kids could be incited to indulge in violence triggered by the video games they play. Parker the founding president of Facebook felt that there is danger to culture and individuals because of Facebook and twitter. He also stated that Facebook was deliberately designed to addict people

to its use. Facebook consumes much of your time and conscious attention. You get a thrill when someone liked or commented on a photo or post. It is essentially a social-validation feedback loop. It exploits the vulnerability in human psychology. It affects children's brains. It virtually interferes in productivity. A New York Times article explained. 'People are using Facebook to showcase suicides, beatings and murder, in real time. Twitter is a hive of trolling and abuse that it seems unable to stop. Fake news, whether created for ideology or profit runs rampant.

## C. Unexpected Consequences of the Social Media:

Co-creator of Blogger and Twitter thought that technological devices could enable people to speak freely and exchange information and ideas. On the contrary he was proved wrong. People's] minds are brain-washed. Young millennials parrot back ideas espoused by socialist professors. Hate speech is promoted through web sites. Pro-lifers who sincerely believe that abortion is murder are painted as fascists or hate-mongers. There is an outcry for monitoring and deleting such postings on social media and internet in general. Google hired 10,000 people in 2017 for this very purpose. Logos, symbols or images are utilized to promote hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and ethnicity. In Sri Lanka Buddhist Bhikkus were reported to have used web-sites to incite violence against Muslims living in Kandy. The Sri Lankan government has to take the extreme step of banning Facebook. The Donald Trump campaign was alleged to have used social media to influence the

outcome of the presidential elections. That is why the Waldorf School in Silicon Valley doesn't allow their kids to compute. The Waldorf School of the Peninsula, one in a chain of 160 across the United States, shies away from technology. - so much so that there are no computers, no iPads, and no iPhones. The school's teaching tools are: high tech pens, paper, knitting, needles and occasionally mud. No screens at all. Some parents feel that computers and schools don't mix. Surprisingly the children attending these schools are off-springs of tech executives. Social media is the head of addiction, the head of mis-information through fake news, the head of destroying face-to-face communication, the head of physical inactivity, vulgar and hate-filled speech.

## D. The Ways of Nullifying Its Negative Effects:

It will be difficult to combat the evil effects of the social media easily. We could begin at home. We must control its use by kids. Their computer use should be streamlined and supervised. Social media consumes your time and attention in a considerable manner. Restrict the use of social media at least during meal times. We should set time limits for each day and stick to it. We could also keep a log of every minute we spent on social media. We should never text or use mobile devices while driving. We should never text or check our social media accounts while visiting others. You may reserve one day in a week as social media free day. You should also not indulge in social media while enjoying recreational activities. We should never allow anything to overpower us.

# Social Media: THE DARK SIDE

By: Joshua Jayakumar

Over the past decade, social media has grown rapidly. According to Statista.com, the number of people on social networking sites in 2016 was 2.3 billion, compared to 970 million in 2010. The number of social networking sites have also increased in the past decade. The new social networking sites that have emerged are Instagram, Snapchat, and more. The reason for social media's growth at a rapid rate is the development of smartphones, Wi-Fi, and cellular data. According to comscore.com, almost 92% of the people in the world use their phones to connect to social media. People from world leaders to average citizens use social media for work and entertainment. Social media also connects people from around the world. It has many negative effects, including vulnerability to attacks, cyber harassment, and diminished writing skills.

One of the effects of social media is that it makes people vulnerable to attacks, such as robbery. Social media influences you to put out your private information, such as home address, by using status boxes, personal information columns, and photo-tagging. When people are on vacation, they usually write in their status box, and tag a picture. What many users don't know is that most social networking sites are "location sharing" applications. In other words, all robbers have to do is find your house through a tagged photo, and by using Google Maps' street view layer. All of this information could be used to rob your possessions. In addition, social media can create a false sense of connection. When we talk to people online, we are not sure who is on the other side of the screen. Many people create fake identities to become friends with you, gain information about you, and hold you hostage. This is known as sock-puppetry.

The second negative effect of social media is that it makes people vulnerable to cyber harassment. People on social media are susceptible to bullying. These days, bullying doesn't stop in the playground at school. Instead, it continues everywhere you go. This type of bullying

is not physical abuse, but is a form of systematic harassment – using pictures and words. Cyber bullying has been an outcry for the past couple of years. It has been on the forefront of our minds because when kids send demeaning messages to others, they don't immediately see the effects of their taunts, which otherwise might create empathy for the pain they've caused. According to a CBS report, almost 42% of kids in the United States have admitted to being bullied. Adults aren't left out of the harassment equation either. Twitter, the social networking site, has a free speech policy, where anyone can say anything, and the site won't censor that information. This policy has led to many users becoming victims of severe harassment. Recently, many people have boycotted the networking site, due to the recent extreme degrading comments on the site's users. This is one of the biggest problems the networking site is currently facing.

The third negative effect of social media is that it diminishes students' writing skills. Most students use social media to communicate with each other. When they communicate, they use abbreviations and improper punctuations. Little thought is put into writing and the messages they send. This type of writing shows up in formal essays and tests in school. Professors from universities across Ontario say that texting and social media are contributing to students' bad writing and grammar skills. The director of the English language proficiency test at the University of Waterloo states that the failure rate among students who attempt the test has gone from 25% to 30%. The director also mentioned that the elite students who pass grade 12 with good marks aren't able to pass the English proficiency test. The director says that the main reason why students fail the test is because of poor grammar.


In conclusion, though social media may have benefits, we have to take good with bad and be informed about its negative effects. It makes people



Mr. S. Selvaratnam, RG Education founder presenting certificate to Joshua Jayakumar

vulnerable to attacks (robbery), cyber bullying, as well as diminished writing skills. The era of social media is not going to end anytime soon. Therefore,


it is our responsibility to protect ourselves and our children from social media's harmful effects.



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# FAMOUS SCIENTIST STEPHEN HAWKING DEAD

He Explained the Conduct of Black Holes & Examined the Origin of the Universe

By: Dr. Uthayan Thurairajah

**World-renowned** physicist Professor Dr. Stephen Hawking has died at the age of 76. He died peacefully at his home in Cambridge in the early hours of Wednesday, March 14, 2018. The British scientist was famed for his work with black holes and relativity and wrote several favorite science books including *A Brief History of Time*. At the age of 22, Prof. Hawking was given only a few years to live after being diagnosed with a rare form of motor neuron disease.

The illness left him in a wheelchair and mostly unable to speak except through a voice synthesizer. In a statement his children, Lucy, Robert, and Tim said: "We have deeply saddened that our beloved dad passed away today. "He was a great scientist and an exceptional person whose work and legacy will live on for many years." They praised his "courage and persistence" and said his "brilliance and humor" inspired people across the world. "He once said, 'It would not be much of a universe if it were not home to the people you love.' We will miss him forever."

Prof Hawking was the first to set out a theory of cosmology as a union of relativity and quantum mechanics. He also discovered that black holes leak energy and fade to nothing - a phenomenon that would later become known as Hawking radiation.

His work with Sir Roger Penrose he showed that Einstein's general theory of relativity. It indicates space and time have a beginning in the Big Bang and an end in black holes. He was portrayed in both TV shows and film by Oscar winner Eddie Redmayne in *The Theory of Everything*, which charted his rise to fame and relationship with his first wife, Jane.

## PROFESSOR HAWKING BIO:



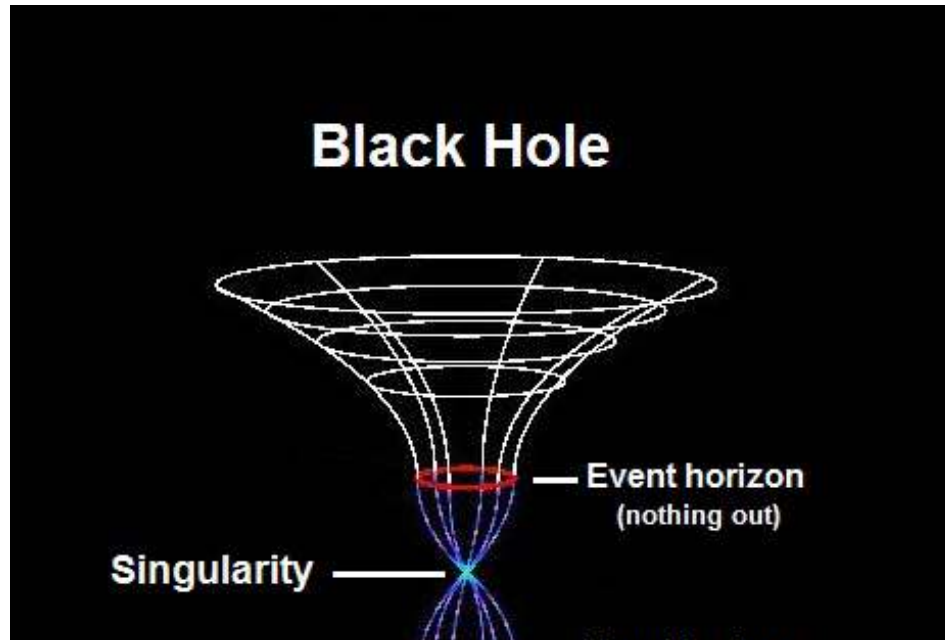
► Born on January 8, 1942, in England. Studied at Oxford University, natural science in 1959, before studying for his Ph.D. at Cambridge. He was diagnosed with motor neuron disease in 1963 and given two years to live.

► He outlined his theory that black holes emit "Hawking radiation" in 1974. He became the Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge in 1979, a post once held by Sir Isaac Newton.

► Published a book named "A Brief History of Time" in 1988, which made him famous and sold more than 10 million copies. He also published several other books as well. He was offered a knighthood in the 1990s.

He had fantastic willpower and determination to explain the mysteries of the cosmos. He was a brilliant scientist and had a pleasing spirit and mind.

Prof James Hartle, who worked with him to create the Hartle-Hawking wavefunction to explain the Big Bang, said Prof Hawking had a "unique" ability to "see through all the clutter in physics" and get to the point.



## HAWKING' S DISCOVERIES:

► He and Prof. Roger Penrose showed that if there was a Big Bang, it must have originated from a tiny point - a singularity.

► Black holes radiate energy while gradually losing mass. It is due to quantum effects near the edge of the black hole. This radiation was later known as Hawking radiation.

► He guessed the existence of mini-black holes at the time of the Big Bang. These black holes would have shed mass until they vanished, potentially ending their lives in an explosion that would release vast amounts of energy.

► In the 1970s, Hawking considered that the particles and light that enter a black hole destroyed and the "information" lost from the Universe. US physicist Leonard Susskind disagreed. These ideas became known as the information mistake. Hawking admitted that the information must be conserved in 2004.

Dr. Hawking inspired generations to look beyond our blue planet and expand our understanding of the universe. His everlasting contributions will remain forever. Stephen Hawking's integrity and scientific dedication placed him above pure brilliance.

## A SINGULARITY:

Hawking deserves a Nobel Prize, is to have brought together several different but equally fundamental fields of physical theory: gravitation, cosmology, quantum theory, thermodynamics, and information theory.

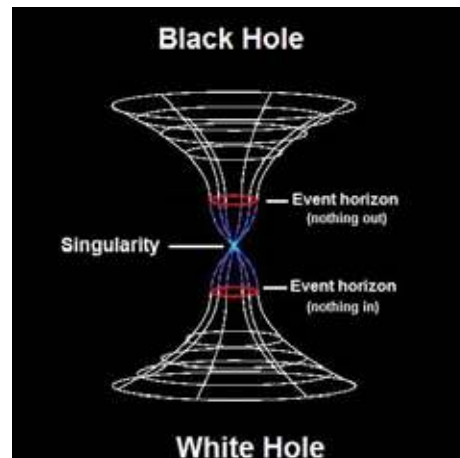
The theory of gravitation devised by Albert Einstein in the 1910s to replace that of Isaac Newton. Newton's view of gravity assumed that massive objects created a "field" that flooded space. Newton did not deserve to know what this force was. It was merely a fact of nature that all objects that possess mass create it.

Einstein's theory of general relativity emphasizes the gravity is not a field in space, but it is a property of space itself. The idea is that massive earth or Sun cause space to curve around them. The gravity holds the Earth in orbit around the Sun. One of the predictions of Einstein's theory is that a sufficiently large star can col-

lapse under the pull of its gravity. All the mass shrinks into a small point of infinite density called a singularity. It creates a region of space so severely warped by gravity. We call this a black hole.

## Entropy of Universe

The total entropy of the universe can increase according to the second law of



thermodynamics. Hawking pointed out earlier that the surface area of a black hole growing same as the increasing entropy of the world.

Later he proved himself wrong: black holes can get smaller after all. To show this, Hawking had to bring together general relativity and quantum theory. The Quantum theory is described invisibly tiny things, like atoms and particles, while general relativity is defined as a matter on the cosmic scale of stars and galaxies.



**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.

Physicists have struggled for decades to unify two theories – to make a theory of everything to use a suitable formula. In his early career, Hawking analysis of black holes did not pretend to offer one. Instead, his quantum analysis of black holes used a sort of patchwork of the two existing theories.

Pairs of particles are continually foaming, one made of matter and the other antimatter. One has positive energy and the other negative, so overall no new energy is being created. The two then crush one another.

The total energy and mass of the black hole decrease if the black hole absorbs the negative energy particle. The other particle then carries away positive energy. The black hole radiates known as Hawking radiation, while gradually getting smaller. In other words, Hawking had proved himself wrong: black holes can get smaller after all.

## The End of the Universe

Two weeks before his death, Dr. Hawking completed a research paper about the origin and nature of the Universe. Some media outlets have been flooding praise onto the paper, saying it could be the most important thing he ever did.

The paper, "A Smooth Exit from Eternal Inflation?," was authored by Dr. Hawking and Dr. Thomas Hertog, the Institute for Theoretical Physics at the University of Leuven in Belgium. In it, he predicted how our universe would eventually fade to darkness as the stars run out of energy.

Dr. Hawking also proposed a way in which scientists might be able to find alternate universes by using probes on spaceships. He had previously posited the idea that Earth would turn into a giant ball of fire by 2600. Therefore, humans would eventually need to colonize another planet or face extinction.

At the end of the paper, they admit that getting a full theory of this method will need "a significant extension of holographic cosmology to more realistic cosmologies." In his last paper, Hawking approached one of the most critical problems of modern physics, going beyond the field of our universe, and proposed a possible way towards its solution.

Stephen Hawking was a deep thinker committed to tackling some of the universe's biggest mysteries. He is probably the most famous genius of the modern age. He explained the conduct of black holes and examined the origin of the universe. The general relativity, quantum theory, thermodynamics, and information theory in Hawking's work on black holes is innovative and remarkable. Dr. Hawking will be hugely missed by all including his family, friends, and colleagues.



## MANAGING YOUR MONEY

## Post-retirement Tax Planning

To save the most during your working years, to build the largest possible retirement nest egg, tax planning is an absolute necessity. And it becomes even more important after you retire when you'll need to maximize your (perhaps) limited income so you can live your dreams for all your retirement years.

Tax planning is one thing that definitely should not stop when your employment stops. Post-retirement tax strategies are vital to maintaining the retirement lifestyle you want for all the years of your retirement. Start with these three income-protecting objectives:

Post-retirement tax-planning is vital to maintaining the retirement lifestyle you want for all the years of your retirement. But even if you're already past the 'post', it's not too late to implement tax saving strategies that work for you – starting with these income-protecting objectives:

- Always take full advantage of all the direct tax deductions available to you.

- Keep your net income and taxable income low enough to avoid such potential pitfalls as the Old Age Security (OAS) clawback or losing out on the age credit and possibly the GST/HST credit.

For the recovery period of July 2017 to June 2018, or income year 2016, the minimum threshold is \$73,756 and the maximum threshold is \$119,615. Qualifying individuals whose net income is below \$73,756 will receive the full

benefit amount. Individuals whose net income is above the threshold amount will have their benefit amount clawed back at a rate of 15% of their income above \$73,756. When individuals reach a net income of \$119,615 (2016), they no longer qualify for OAS benefits and the full amount is clawed back.

- Ensure that your monthly cash flow is not eroded by increases in the cost of living and that your investments will last a lifetime.

In keeping with these objectives, here are some other important post-retirement tax-reduction and income-protection strategies:

- **Plan Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF) withdrawals:** Withdrawals from investments held in your RRIF are fully taxable – so manage your taxable income by withdrawing only amounts that are required.

- **Reduce taxes through tax efficient asset allocation:** Keep fully-taxable, interest-generating investments inside a tax-deferred Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) or RRIF as long as possible while keeping assets that are more tax-efficient – those that generate capital gains or Canadian dividends – outside your registered plans.

- **Take full advantage of all available tax credits and deductions:** Don't forget the age credit for those aged 65 and older, the pension income credit and medical expense credit.

- **Reduce your taxes by sharing Canada or Québec Pension**

**David Joseph, M.A., CFP®, CLU, RRC** Financial Consultant

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**Plan (CPP/QPP) income with your spouse:** When your spouse has a lower CPP/QPP entitlement and is in a lower tax bracket.

- **Contribute to a spousal RRSP:** You must convert your RRSP to a RRIF no later than December 31 of the year in which the owner attains age 71.

These and other income-protecting and tax-saving strategies – like investing in a Monthly Income Portfolio (MIP) that can protect your income against inflation and generate stable and reliable income distribution (outside your RRIF or RRSP) and potentially higher long-term growth – will help ensure that you'll continue to have the income you need for all your retirement years.

Every tax-eligible Canadian gets the Basic Personal Tax Credit and those over age 65 also receive an Age Credit. Other tax credits that can benefit retirees include the Medical Expense Credit, the Dependent Credit, the Disability Credit, and the Caregivers Credit. There are also generous tax credits for those making charitable donations.

Canada is a great place to retire! But to make your retirement all it can be, you need a plan that includes retirement income from other sources such as your company or personal pension plan and your own investments.

Talk to your professional advisor about smart tax-planning an investment strategies that makes sense for your retirement.

**Disclaimer:**

***This report specifically written and published as a general source of information only, and is not intended as a solicitation for mortgage or to buy/sell specific investments or insurance, nor is it intended to provide investment / tax advice. For more information on this topic, please contact me.***

# HOW TO AVOID ONLINE SCAMS

There are tons of great opportunities available to you online and unfortunately along with those great opportunities, there are tons of online scams. What you might think is an amazing deal might be a scam wrapped up inside pretty paper. On the other hand, something you may be suspicious about could be a real, legitimate opportunity. So, how do you avoid online scams? Here are some great tips to help you become aware of them so you never have to fall victim.

1. When you're on a site that is making all sorts of promises that sound too good to be true - check their terms of service. Many times, you will be tempted to sign up for some sort of offer or something like that until you check the terms of service. It is usually there that you will find outrageous hidden fees, ridiculous terms and so forth. This is where you should be looking if you want to avoid a scam!

2. Another way that you can be sucked in by internet scams is through e-mail messages. The best way to avoid this is to avoid e-mails that are offering things which are from people you don't know. Unless you've signed up for an offer or personally know the sender, forget about it! There are so many scams through e-mails that it's almost impossible to keep track of them all. By the way, if you think you've won some foreign lottery or that you're about to become rich because some foreign bank manager is going to send you a deceased person's money - you're not. Those are some of the most common e-mail scams that exist.

3. If you come across a great offer and after having checked their TOS, you still aren't sure if it's a scam or not, search their name. In fact, if you type 'scam' in with the search for their name on the internet, chances are you can pop up valuable information from past



individuals who have been scammed. Many people post about scams that they've experienced to stop others from having to deal with them as well. This can really help you identify a scamming company or individual!

4. Don't trust all sales letters. Look at them very carefully. Very often you will see that you're getting something FREE (of course, it's in huge red and bold lettering) but you don't notice that under that there is tiny,

discreet lettering which states something along the lines of 'free with purchase of...' You can end up signing up for something that costs thousands of dollars in order to get some cheap item free. Watch these very carefully. Although there are many sales letters which depict legitimate and fair opportunities, there are many which nothing but scams are.

Following this advice can help save you from the heartbreak of losing money and experiencing a scam first hand. Search for each of the warning signs before you sign up for anything online. Using the tips and tricks above will help you steer clear of scams!

**Contact MARK at 416-489-2000 if needs to clarify any concerns or further information about debts. Also please Refer Page 23 for all the services offered.**



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7<sup>th</sup> April 1930 - 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2016



# Peter Munk, Canada's leading philanthropist passes away at age 90

## APPRECIATION

**“Canada is a country that does not ask for your origins but concerns about your destiny.”**

By Siva Sivapragasam

He arrived in Canada at the age of 20 fleeing from Budapest to escape the Nazi invasion of Hungary with an almost empty wallet carrying a small suitcase admitting “not knowing the language or even a dog”. Over the years he made enough wealth but was also convinced that the “wealth should flow back to society one day”. He made this a reality by donating an unprecedented amount of one hundred million dollars to the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre run by the University Health Centre at the Toronto General Hospital. This amount was the largest single donation to any hospital in Canada.

Peter Munk, Canadian entrepreneur with a Midas touch and well-known philanthropist who founded Barrick Gold and built it into the world's biggest gold-mining company passed away peacefully in Toronto recently surrounded by his family at the age of 90. Apart from his success in business, Munk was more known for his philanthropy. In his later years, his focus turned to philanthropy, donating



\$300 million to numerous causes, most notably in a \$100 million gift to found the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre at the Toronto General Hospital in 1997. It remains the largest single gift ever donated to a Canadian hospital. Dr. Barry Rubin, medical director at the centre that bears Munk's name, said the philanthropist was frequently stopped on the street by people who wanted to thank him for his role in saving their loved ones' lives through the groundbreaking medical research he funded. “I will miss his wisdom, guidance,

charm and wit, and the way in which he treated everyone he met with dignity and respect,” Rubin said.

He started his first company while he was an undergraduate at the University of Toronto, employing fellow students to sell Christmas trees outside 17 Toronto supermarkets. After graduating from the University with a degree in Electrical Engineering, he formally entered business in 1957 with \$3,000 from his then father-in-law.

“He was a great Canadian. He did much for our economy in many differ-

ent ways, and left a large legacy,” Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in Parliament.

Toronto Mayor John Tory referred to Munk as “A legendary good citizen. “From his start as an immigrant picking tobacco in southwestern Ontario to creating thousands of jobs for other Canadians, Peter Munk was a business legend. But more importantly, he was a legendary good citizen. With his wife Melanie, he donated millions to better education and health care for other Canadians,” Tory said.

Munk always believed that you can make wealth but that wealth should flow back to society.” “You can create wealth. You are entitled to the joy of this creation. But ultimately society makes it possible, and this wealth should flow back to society.” He referred to Canada as “a country that does not ask about your origins, but concerns itself with your destiny.”

Munk is survived by Melanie, his wife of forty-five years, by his five children, Anthony, Nina, Marc-David, Natalie, and Cheyne, and by his fourteen grandchildren.

# ‘Sorrow and Joy are Dual Spectrums of Life’

## - Good Friday Message

By: JJ Atputharajah

Rev. PonAnandarajah, a guest preacher from Sri Lanka speaking at the Good Friday service of the Tamil Christian Church of Canada asserted that sorrow and joy are dual spectrums of life. He referred to the Lent season and its climax of Jesus being crucified on the cross on Friday as the climax of sorrow and his resurrection on Sunday as an incident of joy. Jesus demonstrated to humanity that one should keep sorrow on par with joy if he is to live a life pleasing to God.

It appears to be similar to the idea of Saivite saints who said that a devotee should treat the broken bits of a pot and glistening gold as they are of equal value (‘OodumChemponnumokkanokuvvar’). The same dualism was explained by Bro. Joel Joseph as victory and defeat and Rev. Jebanesan (Pastor-in-Charge) as proximity and alienation



from God.

The spirit filled, inspiring service was studded with thought provoking songs which narrated the sufferings of Jesus on the cross. The welcome words (quoting Ann Siddal) described the Good Friday that it is the day when we remember how Jesus suffered and find at the foot of the cross a place to lay down ours and the world's sorrows. Final song ‘vinthaikkirees-thuyesu rajah’ glorified the cross as greater than anything in the world. The service was well attended and proved to be an adequate remembrance of Jesus on the cross to enlighten the world.



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For more details, please contact any our committee member.



## Monsoon Kitchen

Sisters Niranjini Thirunesan 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.



### GENIE SISTERS SAMAYAL SANTHAI

**W**elcome 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!*

### LAMB SOUP

It's April and I'm sure everyone is finally ready to move away from the cold winter and into better weather. April also has two major events - Easter and Tamil New Year. We decided that this year, we'd focus on the first event of the month.

Easter is synonymous with quite a variety of foods. There are eggs; especially chocolate eggs (big smile), there are rabbits - although typically people do not tend to eat them and then, of course, there is lamb. Although lamb isn't an ingredient commonly used in Canada, this recipe can be made with goat, but it's worth getting some lamb just for this.



#### Ingredients:

- 250g lamb with bones, cut into pieces (aatiraitchi)
- ¼ cup of peas (pattaani)
- ¼ cup of cubed carrots
- 1 medium potato (urulaikilangu)
- ½ cup of barley (valkothumai)
- ½ tsp whole black peppercorns (milagu)
- 1 vegetable bullion cube
- 1 tsp lemon juice (Elumitchai saaru)
- Salt to taste (uppu)

#### Method

**Soak the barley** for an hour prior to making this dish. In a pressure cooker, add all the ingredients except for the lemon juice and salt. Cook for 14 whistles with 2 cups of water. Once the cooker has let off all its steam, check for salt (adding more if required) and then finally add the lemon juice. This surprisingly simple recipe is perfect for when the weather cannot seem to decide whether or not it wants to leave the winter behind. For those with a passion for spice add some chopped chillies, or roughly pounded Szechuan peppercorns before eating.

Try making this recipe this month and do hashtag #monsoonjournal on Instagram and send us your pics, comments and feedback. Spread the love (and recipe!)

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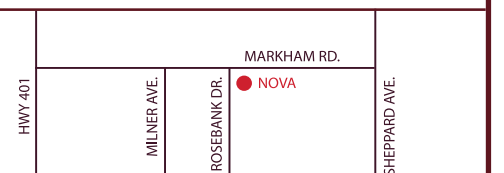
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# Special Feature

By Siva Sivapragasam

**RE/MAX Community, a well-known name in the Real Estate Brokerage field, held an event, "4th annual Power Up 2018" recently to celebrate their years of excellence and to recharge and boost their team's production.**

The event began with opening remarks made by Logan Velumailum, a Broker of Record with 25 years of sales experience and who has been leading the company's team along with RajeefKoneswaran. RE/MAX Community began its activities with 25 agents and has grown with over 170 agents working for the company now. The steady increase in the number of agents is a reflection of the growing image and prestige of the company's brand name in the real estate field.

Mr. Logan welcomed the guests and stated that the company has achieved many milestones and continued to move forward. He complimented the role of the company's agents for their contribution and achievements in the progress of the company and increasing production. He also acknowledged

the time, efforts and commitment by the Broker Manager Rajeef, who has taken every item as a challenge and always with a resolve to win, and always returned as the winner. He also traced the company's activities in holding progress meetings, coaching sessions, annual awards gala and overseas trips.

He also mentioned that RE/MAX Community office won for Broker/Owner of the year award among all single offices in Canada and also Top Office award for Largest Net Gain in Sales Associates in the Metro Market, Canada. Logan also thanked all the partners especially, the mortgage, legal and in-

surance professionals who have helped the company in its activities. He also remarked that the Company will be opening a branch office in Ajax to expand its activities.

There was a panel discussion with RamananSanthirasegaramoorthy, Shan Thayaparan, Dexter King, PirashaV ygunthavasan, JelishaNagulendran on matters related to real estate.

Among those presented valuable information at the event were Beata Caranci, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist of TD Bank, Patrick Gibbon, National Manager for Business Relationship at TD Bank, The

President of Toronto Real Estate Board Tim Syrianos, Ryan Hodge, Broker of Record and Owner of an independent brokerage, Executive Vice President and Regional Director for RE/MAX Integra Ontario-Atlantic Canada Chris Alexander, Nancy Sears, Executive Director of Franchise Growth for RE/MAX Integra, Peter Mueller, CEO and Founder of The Profit Centre and Valerie Garcia, Speaker and Consultant.

At the end of the day's event, awards were presented to agents in recognition of their achievements.

**(Seen here are some pictures taken at the event, Courtesy of E-Kuruvi)**

# RE/MAX Community holds 4th Annual Power Up 2018 Event - A Huge Success



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within this period,  
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continues...



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# Polythene is it a boon or bane?

By: Kumar Punithavel

Polythene is relatively a new commodity discovered in the 1930's. However it became a much desired product in the 1970's only. It came in as a boon to replace paper, which need deforesting for timber and also used lots of energy to produce paper from wood. Today polythene's popularity is so great; one cannot see a road junction or road side without its ugly presence. If you are an older person you certainly will remember the days buying groceries in paper bags and jute bags. When you bought a pound of sugar, it would be weighed from the pile and wrapped in cone made out of old news paper, and tied with a jute string.

Today polythene bags have become unavoidable in our everyday life. It's easily producible nature has made people reluctant to seek an alternative choice. But it is time we find alternate solutions. To this date no sustainable economical solution has been found to reduce the impact of polythene in the environment. Reusing them may be a solution, but, they are made so thin it is not suitable to reuse. Invariably it ends up an eye soar, and finally reaches the dump yard.

The polythene bag that ends up in the dump yard is never reused. Burning of them emits toxic gases that harm the atmosphere and increase the level of VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) in the atmosphere while landfills holds them indefinitely as part of plastic waste problem throughout the globe. These VOCs increase the green house gas effects and cause global warming. What is left in the landfills disintegrate to minute particles which are hazardous to human health. It is estimated about a trillion plastic bags are used globally. It pollutes the environment, and is harmful to health.

Effects of polythene bags in water ways: It is estimated approximately three hundred million polythene bags reach Atlantic Ocean each year! These cause great danger to the water living creatures. Especially dolphin mistakes polythene bags to jelly fish and eats them. The bags don't digest and obstruct the food passage. The dolphin finally ends up in a painful death of starvation.

According to the estimation done by United Nations polythene plastic wastes reaching the oceans amounts to eight million tons annually. It is equivalent to a truck load of waste dumped in the ocean every minute of day and night! If this situation persists by the year 2050 there will be more plastic products than living beings.

Effects of polythene on the land: On

the average it takes hundreds of years for polythene to break up. When a bag reaches the wooded area, it has profound detrimental impact in the life of animals dwelling in the area. Last year when I went on a holiday to Ceylon, and visited the Koneswaram temple I came across a notice board advising not to throw polythene bags in the areas where deer moves around.

Similarly in South India at Kanniyakumari near Thiruvalluvar statue saw a billboard advising to refrain from throwing polythene bags. Around the world polythene bags are detrimental to wild animals.

Even the polythene bags that end in dump yards potentially cause deaths in birds and animals. It has a profound adverse effect on the lives of all living beings.

I would like to share a personal experience I had in Mexico. Two years ago I had travelled on holiday to Mexico and was on a local tour seeing the ancient ruins. The young guide took a polythene bag he saw lying around in his hand and said, "Today our government is making much ado about throwing polythene bags around. But mother earth has faced much greater adversities and come out victorious. This pollution problem too she will take care in due course".

His observation on the matter irritated me, and made me intervene. I stepped up from that multicultural group and said loud so that all could hear, "Excuse me. I totally agree with you. Mother earth knows to take care of her. The governments fear that she will get rid of the human race which is destroying her by pollution. Only you, I and our progenies will not be there to enjoy her benevolence of mother earth". Those who assembled agreed with my sentiments.

What are the alternates for polythene bags: There are some not very effective alternatives already found and search is on for better solutions. Using paper bags is an easy alternative. Paper bags will rot very fast and become part of soil. The objection to use paper are that we will have to destroy forests and further it needs great amount of energy to make paper, both of which are environmentally destructive. In fact polythene was considered a boon to rid of paper!



Using reusable polythene bags is a healthy alternative. It is a logical conclusion to use reusable polythene bags, and a small user fee is attached so that people will tend to reuse the bags. It is a healthy turn of events that in recent times, to some extent people have started using reusable cloth bags. Because it is compact, and is easy to carry around.

Ceylon – Colombo: in 2017 April rain fall a mountain of garbage pile in the dump yard collapsed. In this incidence thirty-two lives were lost. They have also observed large quantities of polythene bags floating in flood waters. As a result of these events the president of Ceylon passed a law under the protection of environment act banning using of polythene bags completely.

However polythene manufacturing establishments raised objections on the ground that there will be 345,000 jobs will be lost overnight. Following this he made an amendment to the law giving a grace period.

Accordingly the law will come to effect from September 2017; penalties will be imposed from January 1st, 2018. Those found guilty can be imposed to a maximum of two years of imprisonment and a fine of ten thousand rupees.

India – Delhi: Though all types of plastic boxes and polythene bags were banned in 2009, it was not implemented in Delhi for a long time. However it was retaken up and approved 2012. The new bill stipulates that anyone found guilty will be sent to a prison up to five years; and a fine up to hundred thousand would be levied.

Canada – Montreal: The honor being the first large city in Canada to ban polythene bags goes to Montreal. In 2016, then Mayor of Montreal, His

Lordship Denis Coderre passed this law. It was deemed that this law will come into effect from second of January 2018. This allowed adequate time period before the law comes into effect.

Another salient point to notice in this law is that this banning is for polythene bags which are less than 50 micron. The logic behind this is that thicker bags can be easily reused.

Canada – Victoria: According to the notice given in Victoria in the province of British Columbia in December 17th 2017, polythene bags will be banned from July 2018. Here selling and giving away polythene bags free is prohibited. According to that report in Victoria annually 17 million milk bags are being used. Further 15% of the garbage pile is polythene bags.

Canada – Toronto: The first city to bring the law banning of polythene bag was Toronto. It passed a law as early as 2012. However Canadian Plastic bags association brought litigation against it successfully and the law was dropped. Their argument like Ceylon was, because the law was brought in too sudden it will affect the economy very badly. Finally the law was repealed. It is estimated that in Torontonians use annually 215 million polythene bags. Its weight is about 1,400 tons.

We do not know whether our political leaders have the conviction and courage to enact laws preventing use of polythene bags against the wish of the manufactures. But as you can see the polythene is a bane to humanity and it is important to act fast. Let us all take a resolution today to procure a cloth bag, and use it for all our shopping.

**Kumar Punithavel.**

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By A.Muttulingam

The girl in the green-yellow-white waitress uniform was a refugee. She could be either from India or Sri Lanka, or perhaps even Guiana. Not only was she dark complexioned, with black hair and black eyes, she also wore black lipstick and nail colour. Her name was definitely something long and with a string of consonants. She had shortened it and had pinned the name Rathna on one side of her dress.

True to her training, she stood a little away from the tables, just enough away to be noticed by the customers, but out of their earshot. That was the rule. And there were many other rules. While placing food on the table, she should serve from the left side of the guest: Rule 12

She had to remove leftovers from the right side of the guest: Rule 11.

While pulling out a chair to help a customer sit, she should stand to the: Rule 26.

A napkin is folded and left on the left side of the plate indicated that the guest has finished eating: Rule 7

If the napkin is kept on the chair, it means that the guest has not yet finished his meal: Rule 9

The cutlery set at the table should begin from the outside and keep reducing as the meal progressed: Rule 19.

There were still more, and she knew them all by heart.

What bothered her were not the rules themselves. It was her English classes. Her teacher had said that nouns were very important. Salt, napkin, cheese, cucumber, glass, soup, olive, lettuce... but verbs were not as important at this point. All he said was that the verbs would come and join the nouns on their own at the right time, but he had not specified when and on what date they would make the appearance. Like the chants of some old prayer, she filled her single-lined copy book with nouns and committed them to memory. How were they to be used without verbs? But the teacher had said that it would happen eventually, and she had faith in him.

Her roommate scoffed at the way she learnt everything by heart. Perhaps she knew a better way to learn them. After she had found a lover, the roommate had started to mark the calendar with crosses. On those days, the refugee girl could not return to her room until eleven at night. Her friend said that she should not be a hindrance during the sacred moments of the lovers. Her boyfriend spoke in a voice that rattled like a tin pipe. When he stretched out his arm for a handshake, it dangled in front of her like a bunch of grapes. She had to do the shaking. His eyes never looked straight into hers. They were always focussed on some

point above her right shoulder.

That day's party had been arranged by one of the Canadian elite. They were so rich, it was said, that they changed their curtains every day, the bed linen twice and electric bulbs eight times in their house. It was well past eleven when the refugee girl came back to her room. She was paid by the hour. At wedding and birthday parties, she was extra careful. Her supervisor did not condone mistakes. Whenever the supervisor entered the room, with her black stockings pulled up tight and her arms spread like a bird preparing to take off, a certain cubic feet of air equal to her weight would get expelled from the room. No Archimedes was needed to calculate this; the girl was capable of doing it herself.

Her supervisor also sprang surprise tests on her.

'What is this called?'

'Pudding.'

She would cut a piece of the pudding and taste it. 'Now, what is this called?'



"Refugee Girl" is one of the stories in well-known Tamil short-story writer Muttulingam's collection of stories titled "After Yesterday" which is a translation of the original stories written in Tamil.

Mr.Muttulingam celebrates almost 60 years of Tamil short-story writing. His stories have won several awards and he is also actively involved in The Tamil Literary Garden, a Toronto-based charitable organization dedicated to the international promotion of Tamil literature.

# Refugee Girl



'Leftover food.'  
'What do you do with it?'  
'Throw it in the garbage.'  
She had passed the test.

In addition to the rules in the book, her supervisor had given her some additional duties.

She should interact pleasantly with the guests. She knew this one already.

She should at all times try to satisfy the guests with intuitive understanding of their needs. She knew this one

too.  
Never do anything that could irritate the guest. She was aware of this as well.

Since her English was not up to the mark, she was supposed to avoid making conversation with guests. If they asked her something, she could be generous with her smiles. She thought this last rule was quite unnecessary, for when she spoke without verbs, nobody really understood her anyway.

The guests at the table across from

the main table looked strange. The one who looked like the mother must have been around thirty years. She guessed that the father would be around fifty, the son eighteen and the daughter eight. Then perhaps the woman was his second wife and the son born to the first wife. These were all just inferences she made; she was clever at making such assumptions.

She was in charge of their table. They were a lively bunch. They said something among themselves and burst into laughter every five minutes. Perhaps it was Polish that they spoke; it was full of consonants. But she could not make out if they were nouns or verbs. What could be common among a fifty year-old father, his thirty year-old wife, eighteen year-old son and eight year-old daughter? But their laughter sure was infectious. It made laughter well up inside her too.

It was then that she saw him looking at her. Generally, no one ever seemed to see her. But this 18 year-old red-haired boy was looking right at her with his piercing eyes. There were many girls at the party, but he was looking only at her. What did the rules say about this? What would her supervisor say? Could she return his gaze? She was not sure. She concentrated on her work.

She felt teased by this new experience. The red-haired boy turned to his sister and laughed often saying something to her. But the remnants of his laughter were always directed towards her, the refugee girl. Every time she went to their table to serve, his eyes touched her and stayed with her until she exited the room.

At one point, the napkin on his lap slipped down. She thought that his fingers had helped accomplish that. There was a rule she had to follow; she bent down, picked up the napkin and handed it to him. He thanked her and took it from her. Even as his lips were thanking her, his fingers were, without any doubt, pressing on her palm. As it always happened to her in unfamiliar situations, she began to shiver right from her feet. But she quickly moved over to her place like nothing had happened. Afraid of disturbing the air around her, she stood perfectly still. She stood at such a distance that she could not hear them, but be seen by them. That was Rule 17.

The guests then began to dance. His mother and father went to the dance floor. The mother went twirling round and round as she danced. The father, with a minimum of movements, accomplished his part precisely. His sister turned her chair around and watched the dancers intently.

Suddenly, a smile appeared on his face. He raised his hand and beckoned





her. She hurried up to him and bent her wasp-like waist as much as she could, and said, 'Yes?' She was allowed to speak that much.

He said, 'Coffee, decaf, two sugars.' She felt his words fall sweetly on her ears. It felt like he had uttered her name with love. 'Coffee, decaf, two sugars,' had rolled out of his mouth smoothly, without touching his tongue. That day, he ordered coffee three times before the party was over. Her duty was to serve him whatever he ordered. Rule 22. So she was ready to serve him even if he repeated his order twenty more times.

The guests began to leave one by one. They too would be gone soon. His mother opened her handbag, set something right in it and then slung the bag on her shoulder, getting ready to leave. He picked up his napkin, folded it into a square, and placed it on his plate, with his eyes all the while on her. He then signalled with his eyes.

She had managed not to violate any rule. She took her time piling up the cups one over another. He kept staring at her. She picked up his plate and took it inside. When she removed the napkin, a five dollar note fell off the plate, and a phone number was written in ink on the napkin. Quickly, she wrote down the number on her palm. For the second time that day, her palm came of use to her.

Her roommate was not in when she got home. She turned her hand over and looked at her palm. The number was still there. She said the numbers once out loud. Even the numbers sounded sweet. Her mind swung in air like never before. What would the red-haired boy be doing now? Would he be thinking of her? The room was silent. She thought she should call him now. She thought that nobody would answer her call at that hour. So she slowly dialled the numbers one after another.

A voice spoke at the other end immediately. She recognised the voice. It was the same rounded voice that had said, 'Coffee, decaf two sugars'. But her hands shook, her voice faltered and her thighs trembled. She put the phone down. But exactly a minute later the phone rang. He must have pressed the last number received on his phone. She did not take the call. She stood some distance away and looked at the phone like at a coiled-up snake. It continued to ring. Finally it fell silent after saving up a message that he left on it.

When she replayed his message and listened to it she could understand only half of it. His voice showed some hesitation as if he wondered if he was speaking to the right person. But he seemed to have guessed who his caller might have been. He begged her to call him again.

She did not call him, but played his message over and over whenever she wanted to hear his voice. It became her special ritual. Somehow, her roommate

got wind of it. Perhaps, she was even a trifle jealous of it. One day, her roommate erased that message when she was away. The girl was in great agony.

The room they shared had just a roof, a door and a window. Her friend's cot was right beside hers. If she stretched her hand, it would hit the other girl's face. So the refugee girl always lay down close to the wall. There were many other problems as well. She did not like the way the croaky-voiced boyfriend looked at her. When her friend was not in the room, he would call and make enquiries about his lover. Should he not put down the receiver as soon as he was told that the girl was not available? He wouldn't. He would try and pick up a conversation with the refugee girl.

One winter day, when the sun refused to come any higher than one's shoulder, her roommate and her boyfriend treated her to a meal. They wouldn't take a 'no' for an answer. It looked like they were determined to put her through as much agony as they could before the day ended. Unaware of their intentions, she went. Only later did she realise that their sole aim was to torture her. They had worn dark glasses, hoisted over their foreheads as if to suggest they belonged to a particular group of elite. They often conversed in some sign language and broke out in sudden bouts of loud laughter. She had no clue what was going on, but she felt that most of their laughter was at her expense. She did not like it.

When she finally got to her workplace, she had only a few minutes left to get ready for work. Usually, she was ready and in her uniform well ahead of time. That was as per Rule 16. She would be sent to any of the dining halls. Rule 18. Some girls who had come there looking for a waitress's job like hers were already there, waiting. That day she worked continuously for ten hours as if she was out to avenge somebody. She did not sit down even for a minute. Her legs ached. Her arms were tired with carrying heavy plates around. But by then she was used to that kind of work. The party went on after midnight. On such occasions the supervisor became an epitome of kindness. She'd give them a five-minute break.

Between the dining room and the party hall there was a small room tucked in. It had an old model black telephone, with the numbers on its face that could be dialled. Every time she went past that contraption, she felt a great emotional turmoil. Her heart beat fast. He came up in her thoughts that day like never before.

After she had called him for the first time a few weeks ago, she had called him three more times. Every time, it was answered by a gruff male voice. Perhaps it was his father. She cut the call at once each time. But on that day she was desperate to hear his voice. She

placed the plate she had in her hand on the floor and dialled the numbers on the telephone. Her fingers trembled. Her heart throbbed inside her like a sparrow in its last few moments of life.

Surprisingly, it was him. It sure was him; she had no doubt of that. The world seemed to dry up instantly. No sound came out of her. He kept calling, 'Hello!' 'Hello!!' What was she to say? What could she say? What should be the word to speak? What should be her tone? She had not considered any of these. She had just wanted to hear his voice. He said, 'Hello!' once more.

'Mozzarella Salad'

'Lettuce'

'Fruit cake'

'Spaghetti vongole'

'Lasagne'

She did not have any verbs. She merely recited all the items the party ordered a few weeks earlier. She only heard a faint sound, between spurts of laughter, from the other end. With that the girl cut off the phone.

Three days later, she stretched out her legs on the bed, crossed them one over the other and tried to recall the face of the red-haired boy. Suddenly her friend opened the door and entered the room. The noise of her opening the door was far greater than when she banged it shut; it was a wonder how she managed it. She shook off her shoes, still standing, and threw away her handbag. Her quivering lips went up and down like the eye lids, but no sound came out of her.

The refugee girl did not open her mouth. As if she woke up just then, she rolled over to the other side, turned her head both ways, and looked. Sub-standard room, bad friend, dirty blanket, and an awful smell. In that room she

met with the wall whichever way she turned. She closed her eyes once more and tried to recall his face. She remembered how his lips rolled and the words slipped off of them:

'Coffee, decaf, two sugars'

'Coffee, decaf, two sugars'

She drifted off to sleep.

He did not stay put after the telephone conversation got cut off. It took him very little time to guess that it was the waitress who had rattled off all the items he had eaten at the party. But he needed some time to find out the company she worked for. He also had to find out when the company sent its employees to which party hall. But he kept up his efforts relentlessly. He went to different party venues and looked for her. But the refugee girl was quite unaware of all this.

He was on the top of the stairs. And the refugee girl was standing at the bottom. She saw him before he saw her. But by then he had also seen her. The way he looked at her seemed to carry all the words that he had brought with him from Poland. Her look too conveyed nouns, verbs and all kinds of words mentioned in the grammar that she did not even know. He needed them all. She held the plate that she had in her hand close to her green yellow and white chest. She looked like an angel in that uniform. He took two steps at a time and hurried up to her only to find that the plate stood between them. She was holding on to it tightly. She looked down. On that plate were all kinds of food that would be eaten in another few minutes by some guest in that party. She broke rules no 27, 32 and 13, all at the same time.

the END...

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# THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA

Richmond Hill Ganesh Temple

Compiled by Kidambi Raj, Life Member of the Temple



Community Watch



The Masi Magam , Tamil Festival - India

## MAASI MAHAM

Thursday, March 01, 2018

### About Maasi Maham

Maasi Maham comes in the Tamil month of Maasi (February-March), and it is very auspicious day for Tamilians all around the world. Maham, is one of the twenty seven stars in the Hindu astrological constellation. It is said that it is one of the most favourable times for spiritual purification. It is one of the most powerful Full Moons of the year, because the Moon aligns with Maham which is considered the birth star of lots of kings and ancestors. This occurs only once a year and signifies the descent of heavenly beings to our earth. The divine beings appear in the astral form to purify their karma and the karma of the human race. Maasi Maham is said to combine the benefits of abundance and prosperity associated with the Full Moon and the majestic quality of the Maham star. It offers a unique opportunity to gain power and energy. Most importantly, Maasi Maham is considered the most appropriate time to destroy our ego and surrender ourselves at the feet of the Divine.

According to the traditional ritual, the Idols from the temple are given a bath in the sea, lake, or temple pond. The idols of the Deities from the temple are taken in a big procession to the sea, lakes, rivers or ponds. Pujas are performed there; observed and participated by thousands of people in the auspicious event. In additions to the idols of Deities being given a bath, devotees also take bath there, as it is believed that the holy waters washes away all their sins. The festival of Maasi Maham gives a colourful and exquisite look.

The Maasi Maham celebrated once in twelve years has a greater significance and it is called "Mahaa Maham". Besides the full moon, during Mahaa Maham, there is the movement of Jupiter in Lea (Simha Rasi). This Mahaa Maham has greatest importance at Sri Adi Kumbeswarar temple in Kumbakonam, South India. This is considered similar to the "Kumbhamela" that is celebrated in Northern India, from the point of view the unbelievable number of devotees attending the event.

### Legends associated with Maasi Maham

According to one of the Legends, King Vallala of Thiruvannamalai, South India was a very ardent devotee of Lord Siva. The king had no child and Lord Siva, once appeared as a child before him. Lord Siva blessed him and promised to perform the king's last rites. That king died on Maasi Maham day and Lord Siva performed not only performed the king's last rites as promised but also blessed the king by saying that whoever takes a bath in the sea, lake, river or pond on Maasi Maham would get Moksha (salvation). It is believed that Lord Siva visits the sea every year to perform the rites of the king.

Another legend says, that quite a lot of saints were arrogant of their power and began to ignore Gods, since they gained vast knowledge and their egos grew large as well.

The saints also were over confident in thinking that they can guide the human beings and no longer needed the blessings of Gods. Lord Siva became angry over this and wanted to teach them a lesson and so took the form of a beggar. Since the saints did not recognize his disguise and thought that it was the devil who has come to kill human beings. So, the saints started to misuse their power and mantras and attacked Lord Siva who was in the form of a beggar with various deadly weapons and animals, finally ending with a wild and mad elephant. As the elephant approached Lord Siva to attack, He disappeared from there. Watching the disappearance of Lord Siva, Parvati was worried that the entire world would come to an end with His disappearance. Lord Siva easily killed the elephant appeared wearing the elephant's skin as garment. This is known as "Gaja Samhaara". The saints immediately realized their mistake and apologized profusely to Lord Siva seeking His forgiveness.

### Significance of the month of Maasi (mid Feb. to mid-March)

1. Lord Vishnu is said to have incarnated on Maasi Maham day.

2. Sankatahara Chaturthi that falls on the Maasi month is considered very auspicious and the devotees who fast on this day will be relieved of all their Doshas.

3. On Maasi Maham day, Goddess Parvati was born as a right sided conch (Valampuri Sangu) on a lotus flower that floated on the Kaalinthi River.

4. Lord Siva is said to have performed most of His Thiruvilaiyadals during the month of Maasi.

5. Kulasekhara Azhwar was born on Punarvasu star in the month of Maasi.

6. Maasi Maham reinforces the significance of Annadhaanam (Feeding the people).

7. Lord Muruga is said to have educated His father, Lord Siva at Swamimalai on the Poomam Star day of the month of Maasi.

8. Two Ekaadas's that can cleanse even the devils and Brahmahathi, fall in the month of Maasi.

9. Initiation of higher education and research will be a great success, in the month of Maasi.

10. Saint Agasthiar performed his thapas and received all that he wished for in this month.

11. Karadayaan nambu and Savithri nambu are two important festivals of the Month of Maasi. Kamdhakan festival is celebrated on Maasi Maham da.

12. It is said that when Housewarming ceremonies held in this month, the people tend to reside in that house for a longer period of time.

13. This month is called Mangalya month.

14. Those who are not able to have a dip in any holy river on Maasi Maham day, can instead read the Maasi Maha Puraanam or can listen to it and get the same benefit.

15. People born on Maasi Maham are set to rule the world. As per the famous proverb,

## PANGUNI UTTIRAM

Friday, March 30, 2018

It is an important day for Hindus. On the day of Panguni Uthiram in March-April, a full moon transits through the star Uttara-phalguni. A full moon day coinciding with the day of Uthiram star in the twelfth month of Hindu Calendar, is an auspicious time.

### Significance of Panguni Uthiram

According to Hinduism, Grihastha or a household life is a phase through which everyone should fulfill their duties of maintaining a household as a family person. A family person is expected to get married and rear their children and then move towards the path of liberation. Panguni Uthiram is the day that teaches us the significance of relationships in our lives. Without relationships our society would cease to have stable family life which is the breeding ground for our children and our next generation. It is a Day of Divine Relationships, God Almighty has directed humans to set up an institution of marriage, and nurture this pious relationship to bloom with love, thoughts, words and action.

On this day, Goddess Paarvati in the form of Gowri married Lord Siva, Lord Ranganatha (form of Vishnu) married Goddess Aandaal. According to Raamaayanaa, Sita's marriage with Lord Raama was celebrated on this day and so was the marriage of Lord Muruga and Goddess Deivanai. This day is also known as Mahaalakshmi Jayanthi, as Goddess Mahaalakshmi incarnated on the earth during legendry churning of the Milky Ocean on this day. Panguni Uthiram is also celebrated as Lord Ayyappa Jayanthi. It is believed that offering prayers to Lord Ayyappa on this day helps one to remove Saturn afflictions and also open the path of spiritual enlightenment. According to Kandapuranaam, Lord Siva, on the request of Rathy, reincarnated as Kama Deva, the God of love, from the ashes on this day. According to Brahma Purana, on Panguni Uthiram every Holy Water joins Thumburu Teertha, one of the seven scared tanks in Tirupati. Based on all these, it is our moral responsibility to celebrate this day, when Lord, in both Siva and Vishnu temples, appears to devotees with their Consort. It is said that by offering prayers to the Divine Couples and participating in Panguni Uthiram rituals on this spiritually significant day, all the doshas and negative influences that are causing disturbances and troubles in the family life are minimized or dissolved. This also gives divine protection to the marital life, prevents separation, and bestows strength to reignite love, affection and understanding in a married life.



May we all get the Blessings the Divine Couples on this Day !!!



# RAMNAVAMI-HARIJAYANTI FUNCTION CELEBRATION AT HINDU SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR & CULTURAL CENTRE



the year. Hence, we are most fortunate that even though we leave miles away from our home country we still manage to take out time and celebrate this kinds of festivals on regular basis.”

India is a land where in every Era Lord takes birth to bless and guide correct path of life for his devotees. This kind of festival day is perfect time to remember Lords life and his blessings given to many devotees during his life. Hence, youth volunteers of Yogi Divine Society performed a live drama showing life of Bhramaswaroop P.P. Gunatitanand Swamiji. This drama explained how P.P. Gunatitanand Swamiji helped the society with his blessings and discourses to change their life from lots of negativity towards positivity. Youth performed this drama under the guidance of P. Champakbhai with lots of dedication and practicing late nights from many days. Under the guidance of P. Anandbhai, Decoration team did late night seva a day before to set up the perfect stage for this drama. Women Volunteers of Yogi Divine Society also organised a Bake Sale Day Event in which they made many different types of home-made cup-cakes. The funds gathered from this sale were donated under the lotus feet of P.P Hariprasad Swamiji Maharaj for the re-development of the Haridham Mandir.

On this auspicious day many PC Party candidates like Mrs. Nina Tangri, Mr. Deepak Anand Mrs. Nina Tangri, Mr. Deepak Anand and PC party nominee candidate Mr. Sudeep Verma attended this festival celebration. Also, different devotees of different communities Mr Deepak Ruparelia, Mr. Raj Tanna, Mr. Jay Patel (Rehabmax physio) also attended this event. This function was also broadcasted on-line so that many devotees staying long distance can attend this event. Volunteers of Yogi Divine Society handled the whole function with lots of Atmiyata which was seen by many devotees.

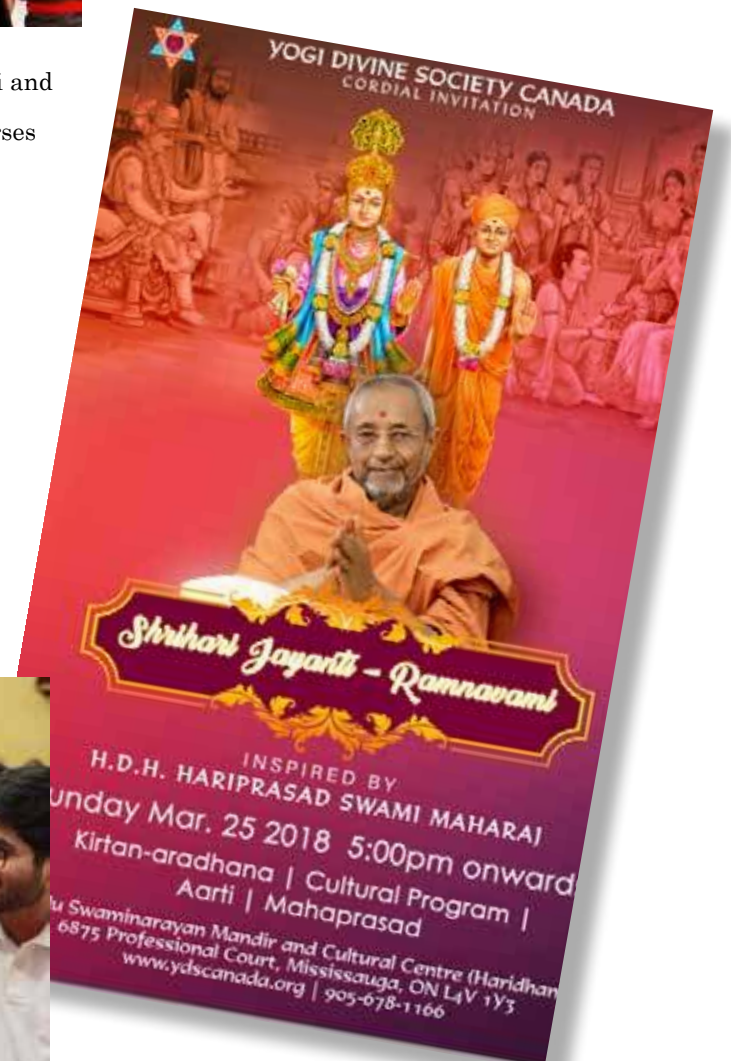


performed this rituals by Pooja, Bhajan, Aarti and chanting Ram dhun.

Haridham Mandir performs regular discourses on every Sunday since many years under the Spiritual guidance of His Divine Holiness P.P. Hariprasad Swamiji Maharaj and with blessings of his guru Brahmaswaroop P.P. Yogiji Maharaj. This year was an Epitome of perfection having both Sunday Discourse and Auspicious Festival of Ram Navmi on same day. Hence many devotees of attended this festivals with joy and happiness by performing Bhakti-Kirtan, Maha Aarti and Maha Prasad.

P. Purnambhai, Shahishnu Sevak at Haridham Mandir started the discourse by explaining that “To maintain our true Hindu culture, traditions, moral, values, Ethics our Ancestors started this celebration. Since, there is no ending of out busy schedule in our life and we don’t forget all these values and culture we celebrate this Hindu festivals throughout

On 25th March 2018, Yogi Divine Society Canada located at Haridham Mandir, Mississauga celebrated a Hindu Festival named “Ram Navmi and Hari Jayanti” (Birth Anniversary of both Lord Ram and Lord Swaminarayan) with lots of Faith and devotion. The Celebration started with some Hindu rituals on exact Birth time of Ramchandraji at Haridham Mandir. Many Devotees of Lord Ram





# Regional Councillor Joe Li's 2018 Canada Diversity Celebration Event

Chair Regional Councillor Joe Li hosted his 7th annual Indian-Chinese Hindi singing cultural event in collaboration with Co-Chair Amar Erry- President of Arya Samaj Markham- Vedic Cultural Centre, Joe Samion, Hakka Canadian Association, and Event Coordinator NeeraChakravorty. This event was held at the Flato Markham Theatre on Saturday March 31, 2018.

The Indo-Chinese Hindi singing event provides a unique platform to many local artists and brings the two communities together to celebrate unity and diversity in our City of Markham, most diverse city in Canada. This program featured a mix of 20 talented amateur singers who sang a variety of popular and classic hits in Hindi, Chinese, and English. Over 520

attendees experienced this cultural event. Among the dignitaries in attendance were MP Mary Ng, Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Deputy Mayor Jack Heath, Alan Ho-Ward #2 Councillor, and Logan Kanapathi-Ward #7 Councillor.

Thank you to the artists, Muzic City, Upper York School, volunteers and supporters for making this event a grand success. Special thank you to

Event Sponsor Liberty Development, Platinum- Sponsors Federick Restaurant and Li Dynasty Indian Hakka Cuisine, Silver Sponsors- Deloitte, Top Notch Employment Services Inc, and Toronto Printing Ltd.

Congratulations Regional Councillor Joe Li and team on another successful year! Looking forward again to exciting show next year April 2019!!



Neera Chakravorty, Joe Samion, Amar Erry, Mayor Frank Scarpitti and Regional Councillor Joe Li



# DTA opens its own Cultural Centre in Durham

Durham Tamil Association is pleased to announce the opening of the first ever Tamil Cultural, Recreation and Resources Centre in Durham, serving Ajax, Pickering, Whitby, Oshawa and neighbourhood cities. Grand opening ceremony is scheduled at 11AM on Sunday, April 8th at 73 Hunt Street in Ajax. ON. L1S 1P3 (Bayly St W and Harwood Ave S) 905.428.7007, info@durhamtamils.com. www.durhamtamils.com

DTA is Proudly serving Durham since 2000.



# DTA hosts Annual Easter Egg Hunt

It was a cold but a sunny day but over 35 children attended and enjoyed DTA's annual Easter Egg Hunt.





# NEW TECHNOLOGY CENTRE AT JAFFNA ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE OPENED BY PRESIDENT MAITHRIPALA SIRISENA

**TNA Leader Sampanthan, Chief Minister Vigneswaran call for lasting and permanent solution for Tamil problem**

By Raymond Rajabalan

A modern and new technology centre was opened recently at St. Patrick's College, Jaffna by President Sirisena amidst a large gathering of politicians, parliamentarians, religious leaders and old boys of the school.

St. Patrick's College is one of the well-known premier educational institutions in Jaffna which had produced ministers, judges, doctors and other professionals along with members of Parliament and Bishops. The past students of this school have made a mark of holding top positions not only in Sri Lanka but also in several countries abroad. Associations of past students have been established in countries like Canada, U.S., United Kingdom and Australia. The school was established by Italian Roman Catholic missionaries in 1850 and chose to remain as a private and non-fee levying school when most of the schools were taken over by the Government in 1960. The new Technology centre was built at a cost of 30 million rupees and was established due to the generous contribution of the past stu-



New Technology Centre Building



TNA Leader R. Sampanthan with Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin Bernard Gnanaprasagam and President Maithripala Sirisena

dents residing abroad, many of whom were present to participate in the centre's opening event.

At the ceremonial opening of the Centre, President Sirisena emphasized the importance of education and stated that a good education for the people will be an asset to solve issues of the country. President Sirisena admitted that Graduates with technological knowledge are having many opportunities in Japan and that in order to make the Sri Lankan graduates qualify for these opportunities he discussed the issue during his recent visit to Japan with the Japanese prime minister.

Speaking on the importance of technical education, Northern Province Chief Minister Vigneswaran paid a glowing tribute to the new centre and that the new Technology Centre will contribute to the enhancement of the knowledge of Technology and Electronics to the students. He also stated that the Bishop of Jaffna Diocese Very Rev. Justin Gnanaprasagam had earlier served as

the Rector of this college and wished that the college which functions with excellent results and continue to be one of the leading educational institutions in the North. Stressing on the role of the missionaries, Mr. Vigneswaran pointed out that the missionaries were not only interested in spreading the catholic religion but also were deeply involved in providing English education and established numerous schools in the North. He also emphasized the importance of establishing a common link language that would help unity among all communities and help uniting the country.

Mr. R. Sampanthan, leader of the TNA and the leader of opposition speaking at the event repeatedly stressed the need for a permanent solution for the Tamils. He also pointed out the importance of technical education as an important aspect of the economy of the country. He stated that technical education and related moves have been playing a vital role in the economic stability of many countries in the world.

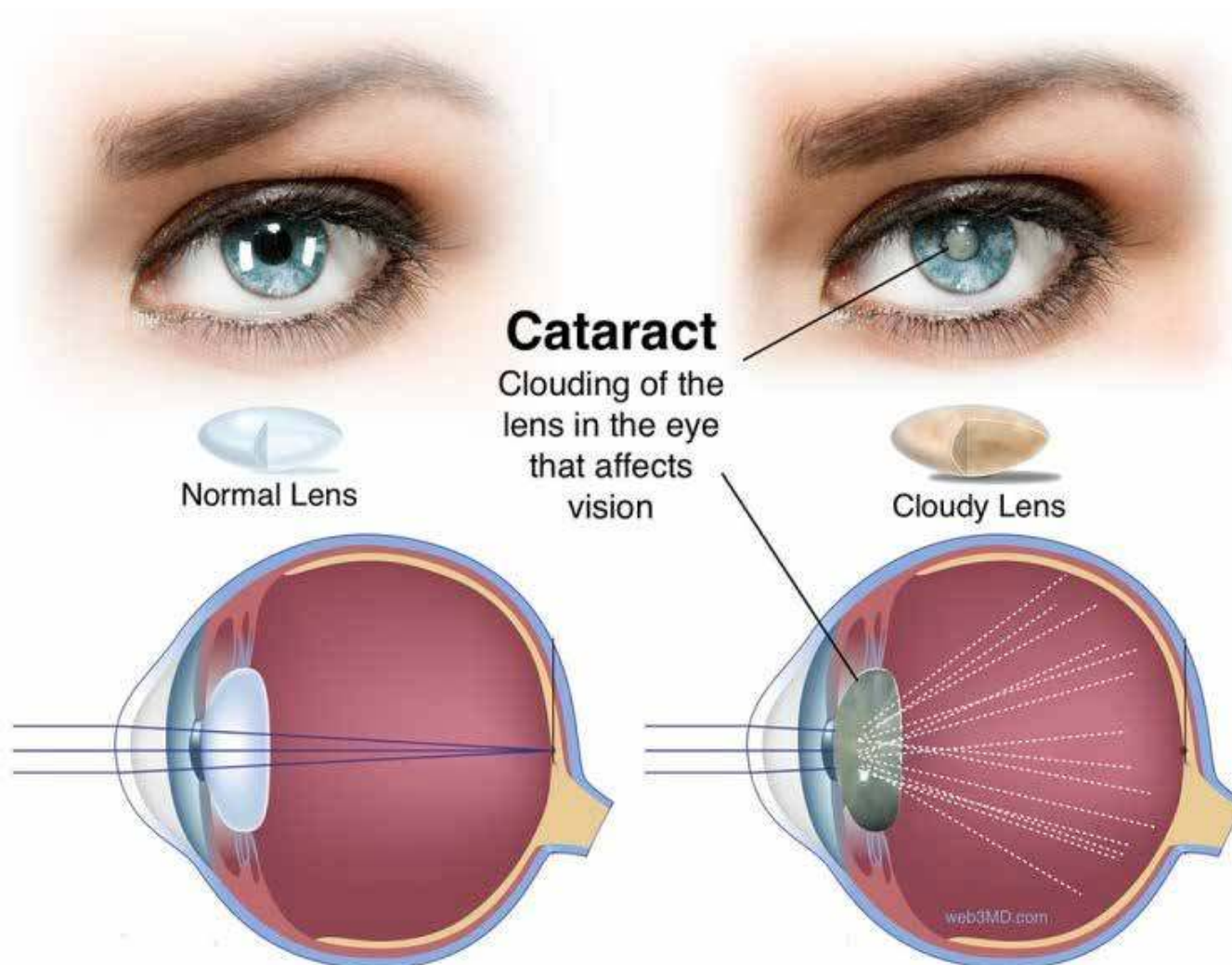
Among those present at the function were Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith, Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin Bernard Gnanaprasagam, and other members of the clergy, Members of Parliament Angajan Ramathan, Mavai Senathirajah, The Principal of the college Father Thirumahan, former Rector Rev. Fr. Jero Selvanayagam, the staff members, parents and past pupils.



Dignitaries at Stage



# CTHA plans to set up cataract surgery camp to treat **100** patients from the rural regions of Batticaloa, Sri Lanka



- WEB3MD.COM

**By: Saranga Sriranganathan,  
BMSc (Hons)**

The Canadian Tamils Humanitarian Association (CTHA), founded in 2015, as a non-profit organization, works to facilitate, initiate and support projects that create sustainable positive change for rural communities in the Eastern province of Sri Lanka. In addition to the numerous projects we have completed in the past, such as vocational training programs, microcredit programs, supporting neglected preschools, children homes, girls hostel and centres for physically and mentally challenged individuals, as well as adopting a village by the name of Pavatkodichchenai in Batticaloa. This year we will do some projects on Health & Wellness, vocational training for women and farming.

A cataract is a medical condition which results in clouding of the lens

in the eye. This blocks the light which normally passes through the eye, leading to blurred vision. If left untreated, it could eventually lead to complete blindness. Fortunately, a simple non-invasive surgical procedure can be performed to treat cataracts where the cloudy lens is removed and a new artificial lens is used as a replacement. The actual surgical procedure only takes about 10 minutes, and patients can be in and out of the hospital within a day. Cataract surgery is actually one of the safest and most common medical procedures, but in developing regions such as the rural villages of Batticaloa, access to eye care is extremely limited and many cannot afford to pay for this simple procedure, which can be life-changing in many cases.

CTHA is planning to support 100 patients in desperate need of cataract surgery with the help of doctors from Batticaloa hospitals. We have started initial

discussions with the Rotary Club of Batticaloa and few medical doctors in the area who are willing to volunteer their time and expertise for this cause. It will cost us \$150 CDN to perform the surgery which includes the cost of the lens and transportation of the patients from the villages to the hospital. CTHA will raise the funds with the help of our supporters.

The surgeries will take place between October of 2018 to March 2019. In June 2018, we are expecting two medical doctors to visit Canada and meet and to discuss their needs with Tamil community groups.

Please contact us to get more information on how you can help with this initiative, whether it is to make a donation of your own or become a volunteer on our team. You can contact us through our email at [cthacanada@gmail.com](mailto:cthacanada@gmail.com) and visit our Facebook page or website ([www.cthacanada.org](http://www.cthacanada.org)) for regular updates.

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