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Wigneswaran and intellectuals call for Diaspora help in rebuilding the Northern Province, Sri Lanka

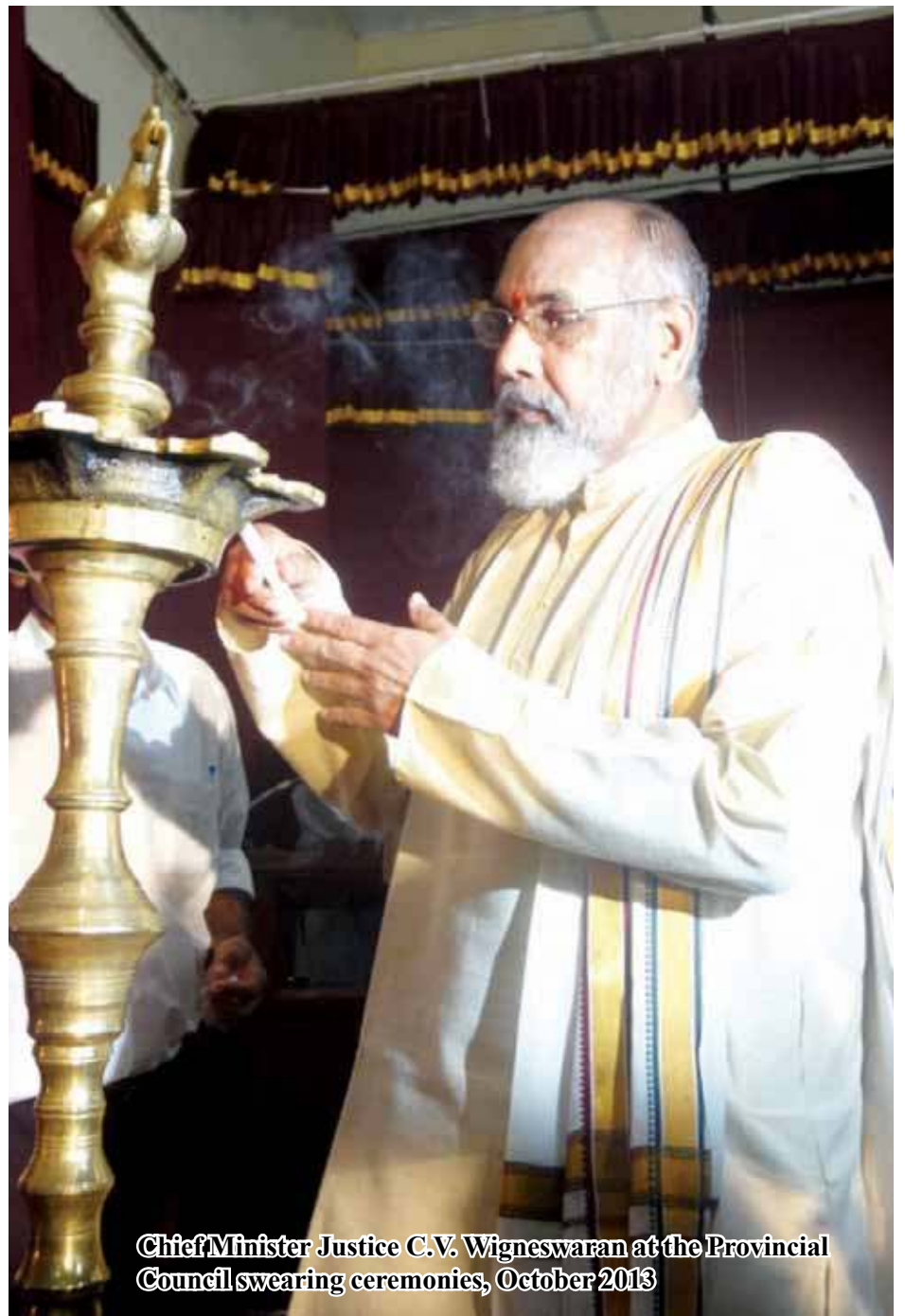
By: Thulasi Muttulingam

The brain drain that affected the Northern Province is continuing to hold sway and needs to be addressed, said Chief Minister C.V. Wigneswaran at a conference held in Jaffna recently. The conference, titled 'Democratizing the North: A Dialogue on Governance, Development and Vulnerability', organized by the non-governmental organization, The International Center for Ethnic Studies

(ICES), saw a number of provincial councilors, professionals and intellectuals from the Northern Province taking part.

All three issues: Governance, Development and Vulnerability in the North were much discussed. According to the ICES, the dialogue was organized in Jaffna because the election of the Northern Provincial Council had created the space to explore such issues more closely.

Continued on Page 36 & 37...



Chief Minister Justice C.V. Wigneswaran at the Provincial Council swearing ceremonies, October 2013

China—on the road to world supremacy?



By: Jesudason Aputharajah

China is on the verge of ascent to a new level world power. History has witnessed the rise and demise of so many nations especially that of the Holy Roman Empire. As the USA is appearing to be on a stage of rapid decline, China may well be able to take its place if the current trend continues. China is now working hard to progress economically and militarily and expected to be the dominant power of the 21st century.


China has a population of 1.4 billion and is the most populous country

in the world. It has financial reserves more than U.S\$ 3.5 trillion. Its military and naval forces are developed systematically. Its annual economic growth of roughly over 9 % during the last 20 years has led to a ten-fold increase in its per capita Gross Domestic Product. Its purchasing power for military expenditure has increased 21 fold. Besides China has dominated 18 out of the 20 centuries of the world's recorded history. Hence China is well on the way to world supremacy.

Continued on Page 35...

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NDP's Sitsabaiesan 'right to be concerned' in Sri Lanka, says Mulcair



Thai Pongal Festival at parliamentarian Rathika Sitsabaiesan's Community Office, Scarborough, Jan 19, 2014 -(pic via: facebook.com/rathikaspage)

NDP Leader Tom Mulcair is defending MP Rathika Sitsabaiesan's trip to Sri Lanka over the holidays in a recent letter to the high commissioner of Sri Lanka in Ottawa, stating that Sitsabaiesan had "no intention to embarrass" the country's government, a report by Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) said.

The NDP leader's letter was sent in response to accusations by the Sri Lankan high commissioner that Sitsabaiesan MP intended to "embarrass" the Government of Sri Lanka while on a personal trip.

The NDP leader also stated on the letter that the controversy was only created when Sitsabaiesan was followed, and that she "was right to be concerned," the

CBC report said.

Mulcair says in the letter that the Sri Lankan government's "human rights record continues to cause significant concern around the world." He went on to urge the Sri Lankan government to hold an independent, impartial international inquiry into allegations of human rights violations and war crimes.

According to fellow New Democrat MP Paul Dewar, Sitsabaiesan was followed and closely monitored by Sri Lanka authorities from the moment she arrived for her visit.

Authorities showed up at Sitsabaiesan's hotel one night to try to meet with her but she did not respond, Dewar said.

John McCallum Begins National Tour on Immigration and Citizenship Issues

John McCallum, the Liberal Critic for Citizenship and Immigration, began his national tour recently consulting with Canadians on the Immigration system.

Mr. McCallum said, "Justin Trudeau appointed me at the Liberal Party's Citizenship and Immigration Critic last fall and has given me the mandate to consult with Canadians about what they expect from their immigration system."

The national consultation tour will see Mr. McCallum travel across the country to speak with Canadians and hear firsthand about their experiences with the immigration and visa system.

"What I heard was crystal clear," continued Mr. McCallum. "Our immigration system is not transparent and is full of delays. Residents of my riding are looking for a system that will respond to the

needs of our economy while ensuring that families remain one of our central focuses."

Delays in visa processing are unfairly separating families during important life events, such as funerals or weddings. These delays also have a negative effect on the tourism industry. Delays in the family reunification system also mean that families are left wondering if they will ever see their parents and grandparents again.

"Day after day, I see cases in my office where families have been unfairly separated by a system that is slow and full of red tape," concluded Mr. McCallum. "This needs to change. I look forward to hearing fresh ideas from Canadians across this country on how we can do this better."

Canada to benefit from India's fast-track visa regime

The Indian consulate here has taken various steps to make its visa regime more transparent and prompt to accelerate air travel, tourism, social, cultural and economic ties between the two countries, Consul General Akhilesh Mishra has said. - PTI



Canada Taking Strong Action Against Key Ukrainian Government Officials

Canada's Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander and Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird issued the following statement on Jan 28, 2014:

"Recent actions by members of Ukraine's ruling elite in the face of popular and growing protests have been utterly deplorable, and compel us to take targeted and meaningful action.

"Given the violent repression of legitimate protest and the intimidation of opposition voices, we will be restricting entry to Canada – effective immediately – for key government figures as a direct result of their actions in recent days.

"Although Canada welcomes the re-

cent developments in Ukraine, more needs to be done. The Ukrainian government must address the fundamental demands of the people, including accountability and a full embrace of democratic principles.

"We believe it will take more than words to establish trust with the people, and Canada will continue to stand with the Ukrainian people, who courageously continue to speak out in support of democracy.

"Canada will continue to monitor developments in Ukraine, and, with our international partners, consider further options if necessary." – via: cic.gc.ca

Canada's 2014 Economic Outlook: Business leaders continue in wait-and-see mode, says Canadian Chamber of Commerce

In its 2014-2015 Economic Outlook, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce observes that although Canada continues to recover from the recession better than other countries, the pace of growth has been slower than hoped. Consumer spending and housing activity are proving more resilient than expected, while the slow pace of global growth and ongoing competitiveness challenges have reduced demand for our exports and weighed on manufacturing production. Businesses also remain cautious when it comes to hiring and investing.

Against this backdrop, Canada's economy is on track to expand by 1.7 per cent in 2013, matching the previous year's sluggish pace. The economy is projected to grow by 2.3 per cent in 2014 and strengthen moderately to 2.5 per cent in 2015.

"A reinvigorated U.S. (and global) economy should translate into better prospects for Canada's export sector in 2014," said Perrin Beatty, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. He added: "To reap the full benefits of an improving global outlook, we need to strengthen our competitiveness, tap new markets and secure and grow our involvement in global supply chains."



Canada's share of the U.S. import market has declined steadily since 2000. Much of the loss in competitiveness reflects the strength of the Canadian dollar, but Canada's weak productivity performance has also played a significant role.

Government can play an instrumental role in strengthening competitiveness by improving the policy setting—for example, reducing the regulatory burden, cutting high marginal personal income tax rates, shifting away from taxing income and profits to taxing consumption, investing in infrastructure and education, and championing unencumbered global trade and investment—however, the onus is on businesses to craft a sustainable competitive advantage to capitalize on these opportunities. - CNW

from the publisher's desk

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2014 – International Year of Family Farming: Linking with global farming citizenry

Comprehensively, agriculture can be considered a key activity that has facilitated a sense of interconnectedness in a globalizing fashion. Farming structuralized by a family makeup has been quite multifaceted in its purposes and inclinations when defining its contributions to overall prosperity and happiness.

Economically, it has served to be a significant viable function throughout both the developed and developing worlds in fostering basic growth. There is also definite consensus that it has been an effective mechanism in stemming hunger and strengthening human security nutritionally.

Apart from its underlying business mentality, it has inevitably showcased genuine en-

definite consensus that it has been an effective mechanism in stemming hunger and strengthening human security nutritionally.

Including some of these inherent characteristics into account, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has launched a worldly initiative focused on constructing a solid framework dedicated to agricultural assistance to family farms.

It has broadcasted a message towards the international community to mobilize a transnational policy environment to enhance farming efforts in for high-quality rural development. Essentially, the 2014 International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) has been rendered a relevant indica-

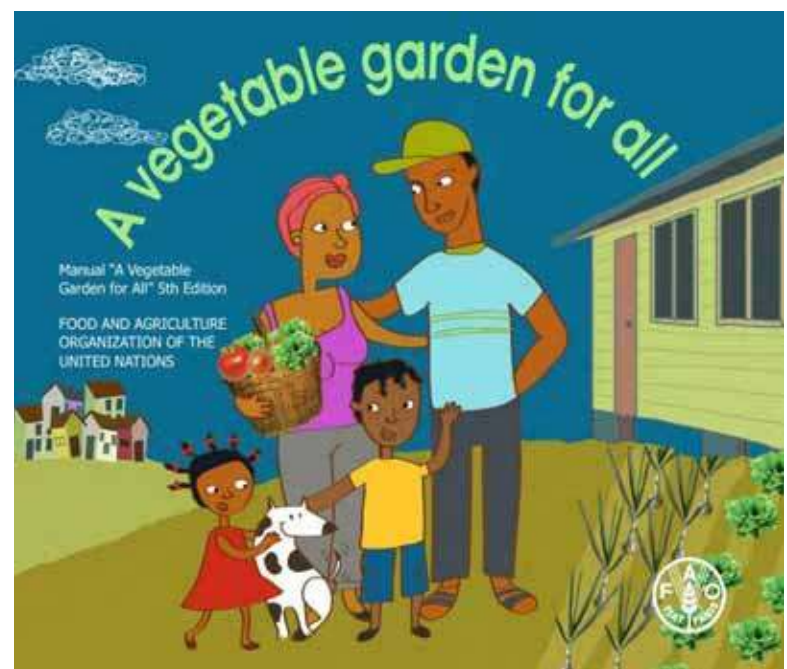


lies. According to Winnipeg Free Press columnist Laura Rance, she states that family farms are indeed a reputable business that leads to economic efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, she expresses the belief that the declaration rightfully acknowledges the sound capabilities of farmers in reducing aspects of hunger crises and systemic poverty.

Countries contained within the developing world not only reap the existential benefits but in unison with the developed world. Distinguishing between divergent nations like Canada and Namibia is misconceived when realizing the common convergence in their respective progressions through equitable farming aspirations.

This spring, individuals across Canada too can indirectly link with their global farming citizenry by utilizing their time to some form of planting such as home gardening. Incrementally, it is foreseeable to create a recognizable agricultural domino effect for a long-term direction towards concrete human development both rurally and urbanely.

Contributed by Harrish Thirukumaran (2nd Year Student, Majoring in Political Science, Brock University, Ontario)



Now available online: "A Vegetable Garden for All", a practical guide for setting up family gardens for the production of nutritious, safe food crops, that would contribute to the diets of populations affected by food insecurity: <http://www.fao.org/>

vironmental appreciation and gratitude thus enabling a commitment to driving preservation.

In a cultural sense, however, its powerful symbolic association amongst family essentially notifies agriculture and the social bonding it conveys. There is also

tor in producing an atmosphere friendly to improving millions of livelihoods with agriculture.

Some traits of this extensive mindset include educating individuals on the foundations of agriculture to promotion of democratic dialogue with fami-

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“Wherever we are, it is our friends that make our world.” – Henry Drummond (1851-1897); Scientist, Evangelist, Writer, Lecturer

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

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Canadian stocks likely to outperform in 2014: CIBC



Gains driven by less stretched valuations and more leverage to the global economy

Canadian stocks are likely to outperform American stocks in 2014, finds a new report from CIBC World Markets Inc.

“After being trounced by New York - and Europe and Japan for that matter - in 2013, Toronto stocks entered the year with less stretched valuations, and greater potential for earnings gains that will pay off in outperformance in the year ahead,” says Avery Shenfeld, Chief Economist at CIBC.

Mr. Shenfeld, who co-wrote the report with CIBC Senior Economist, Peter Buchanan, notes that Canadian stocks also have more leverage to a rapidly heating global economy than do their U.S. counterparts.

In its most recent forecast, “Outlook 2014: Give Low Rates a Chance”, CIBC economists call for 2014 to be the first year since 2010 in which global growth surprises on the upside. They are calling for growth to run at a four per cent pace, about a half-point above current consensus or International Monetary Fund expectations.

Historically, years in which global growth ran at four per cent or better were big winners for the cyclically weighted Toronto Stock Exchange, producing median returns well above the S&P 500. Mr. Shenfeld notes that the “TSX has outperformed the S&P in each of the last six years in which global growth has topped four per cent and 2014 should add to that streak.

“That reflects the heavier weighting in Toronto’s benchmark towards resour-

ces sensitive to global activity. To this point, sluggish activity has held back demand, in a period in which supply was expanding in such areas as natural gas, oil and base metals. Little wonder, then, that the resource sector has been largely responsible for a disappointing earnings recovery of late, offsetting steady gains elsewhere in the index.”

However, he believes the increases in supply for oil, natural gas and metals are already well priced in. “What isn’t, is the pressure from demand associated with pleasant surprises in global economic activity,” adds Mr. Shenfeld. “That should have oil prices steady but oil futures trading at much less of a discount than now in the curve. Natural gas could hold onto recent gains, while base metals and lumber move higher.”

The report calls for TSX composite earnings growth to run a consensus-topping 13 per cent in 2014. Last year, CIBC Economics’ top-down model, which is based on a set of macroeconomic, cost and resource market indicators, accurately anticipated a disappointing low, single-digit pace for TSX composite earnings. The report also calls for the S&P 500 to roughly match bottom-up earnings expectations with growth of about 7.5 per cent, trailing the TSX pace.

Mr. Shenfeld notes that forward price-to-earnings multiples also seem favourable to a year in which Canada lands on top. “Though stocks aren’t wildly cheap on either side of the border, the TSX’s current multiple of 14½—close to the historical average—is well below that for the S&P 500. Toronto’s average dividend is higher, and many investors feel dividends are a better guide to longer

Trudeau leads on Senate Reform: Liberal Leader takes concrete action to remove partisanship and patronage from the Senate

OTTAWA – The Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement:

“Canadians expect their leaders to be open and honest with them, and they expect us to come forward with practical solutions that address problems directly. The Senate, through extreme patronage and partisanship, has become an institution that poorly serves the interests of Canadians.

“Paired with patronage, the pervasive issue of partisanship and control in the Senate is a deeply negative force. We need immediate action to address this. That is why, as of today, the National Liberal Caucus will only include elected Members of Parliament, and not Senators. This action will immediately mean that each of the 32 current Liberal Senators will become independent of the Liberal Caucus.

“This is about doing the right thing for Canadians and our institutions. I believe that Canadians are rightly seeking an effective institution that debates the difficult issues they are facing today. Equally, I believe that Canadians have no desire to re-open the Constitution. I am taking action today with these reforms, and I hope to earn the opportunity to go further as Prime Minister.

“That is why I am also announcing to-

term profitability than current earnings, suggesting dividend-rich players should trade at a premium. Controlling for compositional differences between the markets suggests the typical Toronto-listed stock trades for about eight per cent less than the average large cap member of the Big Board.”

While he is calling for Canadian stocks to perform to the upside, Mr. Shenfeld expects some of that advantage could be eroded by a further slide in the Canadian dollar in the near term. “The loonie is still vulnerable to another few months of the low inflation readings that have had the Bank of Canada talking more dovishly about future rate moves.

“For now, Canadian asset managers will want to keep some of the U.S. dollar exposure they’ve built up, perhaps doing



day that if I am elected Prime Minister, I will put in place an open, transparent and non-partisan appointment process for Senators. This process will be developed working with experts and informed by other non-partisan appointment processes, such as that of the Supreme Court Justices and Order of Canada recipients.

“Further, as the majority party in the Senate, immediate and comprehensive change is in Conservative hands. I’m calling on the Prime Minister to do the right thing and join us in ending patronage and partisanship in the Senate. All he needs is the judgment and will to get it done.

“Taken together, these steps represent the most significant and concrete actions to reform the Senate in its history. At our best, Liberals are relentless reformers. When public institutions fail to serve the public interest, we take bold steps to change them. These proposals will bring real, positive change for Canadians.”

so on the fixed income side. We’ll need to see more improvement in Canada’s trade position as the year progresses, and an uptick in inflation that quells dovish talk from the Bank of Canada, to put a floor under the loonie.”

Mr. Shenfeld believes the Canadian dollar will fall below 90 cents U.S. by next summer. The currency should bounce back to current or higher levels by the end of the year should marginally higher inflation and reasonable growth see the Bank of Canada renew its warnings of rate hikes in 2015. He also expects growth in oil and other exports should also help narrow the trade deficit, a gap that has been a feature while Canada’s domestic demand outgrew that of its customers abroad.

- CNW



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Ban wasteful Conservative government ads



David McGuinty, MP for Ottawa South

Dear editor,
The Conservative government claims that it is serious about eliminating wasteful spending, yet it has ramped up the most obvious example: partisan government ads.

Everyone has seen them, and that's not cheap. Just one of their "Economic Action Plan" television commercials can cost up to \$95,000 to air.

Last year the government spent over \$2.5 million to advertise the Canada Jobs Grant, which was never launched. Spending millions of dollars to advertise a program that doesn't even exist is like flushing tax dollars down the toilet.

Over time, all this waste adds up: since coming to office, the Harper government has spent over \$600 million on advertising; by 2015 they're projected to have spent nearly \$1 billion. That's an extraordinary amount of money.

Yet some government ads have legitimate goals like promoting public health. So how do we keep the good and cut the

bad? The federal government should follow Ontario's model: its ads are screened before they air by a panel setup by the Auditor General to prevent partisan waste. That model has proven to be a success.

That's why I've introduced Bill C-544, the Elimination of Partisan Government Advertising Act, modelled on Ontario's system. It will have the Auditor General appoint an independent advertising commission to oversee government spending on advertising and pre-screen all ads.

No Member of Parliament can look their constituents in the eye and justify the kind of wasteful commercials taxpayers have paid for under the past eight years of Conservative government. Please ask your MP to support Bill C-544. We can all do without more ads for programs that don't exist.

Sincerely,
David McGuinty, MP
Liberal Party of Canada
613-992-3269

Canada's Visa System is Drowning in Red Tape

By: John McCallum, P.C., M.P.

Anyone who has experience with Canada's visa system knows how slow and bureaucratic the process can be. This is especially punishing for those looking to have close family members visit for important life events and for our tourism industry.

Other countries around the world are seizing on the flow of tourists from countries like India and China, streamlining their visa systems to be more competitive for tourism dollars. Canada, on the other hand, is dragging its feet and forcing applicants to jump through hoops in order to travel here to visit their families or tour our beautiful country.

The numbers don't lie. Between 2000 and 2012 Canada experienced a drop of 18% in international arrivals, compared with growth in almost every other country. With the bulk of tourist growth coming from visa-requiring countries like

China, India, Brazil and Mexico, visa headaches are costing the Canadian economy thousands of jobs every year.

The most frustrating part of this problem is the lack of clarity from the government on why applications are being rejected. My own constituency office faces this problem every day – virtually identical cases with different results. And the consequence is often heartbreaking when, for example, a grandparent from overseas is barred from attending a grandchild's wedding in Canada.

It's a question of attitude. Of course Canada has security concerns, but so do countries like the United States and Australia which have far more welcoming visa systems. Immigration policy needs a balance between vigilance and welcome. In recent years, our policy has become all vigilance and no welcome. This must change.



John McCallum, P.C., M.P. for Markham - Unionville

Defending Canada's Prostitution Laws

By: Parm Gill, M.P.

The Supreme Court of Canada has struck down Canada's prostitution laws. In a year's time, this decision would make the operation of brothels, living on the avails of prostitution, and communicating in public for the purposes of buying and selling sex legal.

Prostitution victimizes women and threatens the safety of our communities, which is already of growing concern. Our Government will vigorously defend the constitutionality of Canada's prostitution laws.

The decision is currently being reviewed while all possible options are being explored in order to ensure that our laws continue to address the threat that prostitution poses to communities, sex trade workers, and those vulnerable. Our Government is firmly committed to protecting Canadian communities from the

effects of legalized prostitution, including the impact of illegal drugs and the vulnerability of women. These effects will be taken into account while our government works diligently to implement a new legal framework to govern the sex trade. The Supreme Court has stipulated a one-year window for the task.

While our Government is focused on defending our communities from this threat, the Liberal party intends to legalize prostitution and marijuana. While we look to defend Canadian families and the safety of our communities, the Liberals seek to ensure that those who profit from the sex trade are able to maintain "successful business," to be taxed in the tax-hungry Liberal tradition like any other enterprise.

The Prime Minister has made it clear that our Conservative Government knows prostitution is detrimental to so-



Parm Gill, M.P. for Brampton-Springdale

ciety and we view its effects as harmful for our communities and women, and particularly for vulnerable women, and we will continue to oppose prostitution in Canada. The Liberals fail to protect

Canadian communities and values, and choose instead to discuss the merits of legitimizing the sex trade, which will make prostitution more widespread in Canadian communities.



The World Is 70 Years Behind Schedule on Education

By Joshua Keating

The second Millennium Development Goal, approved by U.N. member states in 2000, pledged that all children in the world would have access to primary education by 2015, but a new report from UNESCO makes clear that that was wildly optimistic.

“The number of children out of school was 57 million in 2011,” the report notes. At current rates, the goal of universal primary education won’t be achieved until 2086.

The world’s poorest girls—wide gender disparities still remain in these numbers—won’t achieve universal secondary education until 2111. Adult literacy improved only 1 percent since 2000.

Understandably, countries with armed conflict tend to have made the slowest progress.

A more optimistic way of looking at this is that the number of children out of school has declined by 50 percent since 2000. But progress is still being made much slower than expected, and it’s another factor to keep in mind when considering some of the more Pollyannaish development predictions out there.

Joshua Keating is a staff writer at Slate focusing on international affairs and writes the World blog.



Moroccan women learn how to read write and calculate. There aren’t as many schools like this one, in the Azilal province of the Tadla-Azilal region of Morocco, as U.N. members thought there would be by now.

Photo by Fadel Senna/AFP/Getty Image

Deepa Balachandran, B.A. (Hons.), B. Ed., J.D.
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Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's Chinese New Year Message 2014

The Year of the Snake has been eventful. We made good progress, despite some difficult moments. I am confident that we will continue to move forward in the Year of the Horse. The global economy is looking up. At home we still need to improve public transport, but housing queues have shortened and low-wage workers like cleaners are getting more help. The festive mood is all around us. I visited Chinatown two weeks ago and was cheered to find the shops bustling with families shopping for Chinese New Year decorations and goodies.

IMPORTANCE OF FAMILIES

Chinese New Year is a time to strengthen our family bonds. Families are the foundation of a cohesive, harmonious society. Our families anchor our identity and sense of belonging. They inspire us to reach for the stars, and support us when we are down. Our extended

One group of elders that deserves special recognition is our Pioneer Generation. They saw Singapore through our most difficult times. They worked hard to build Singapore, and transform it from Third World to First. All of us today benefit from their efforts and achievements.

It is right and fitting to honour this special group as Singapore approaches our 50th birthday. We are preparing a Pioneer Generation Package to thank them for all they have done. I am also holding a special event at the Istana on 9 February to honour members of this Pioneer Generation, and hope to present them a little hongbao!

FUTURE GENERATIONS

While we honour our seniors, we must also keep Singapore the best home to raise our children and fulfil their aspirations. We love our children unconditionally and place great hopes in them. We

day of Chinese New Year. Almost 300 couples have registered to marry on this auspicious day, so we are off to a galloping start. I hope to hear more wedding bells and newborns' cries throughout the year.

One important factor when couples decide to start families is access to good childcare and pre-schools. We are creating more places as quickly as we can. We added 7,000 new childcare places last year, and will reach our target of 20,000 new places in all by 2017. MOE has started running five kindergartens, and will expand this to 15 over the next few years. We have just identified three more pre-school Anchor Operators, to add to the two existing ones – PCF and NTUC (My First Skool). We must create a pro-family environment which gives families the confidence and support to raise their children.



**Hon. Lee Hsien Loong,
Prime Minister of Singapore**

STRENGTHENING OUR SINGAPORE FAMILY

Beyond our own families, we should also strengthen the larger Singapore family. Do look out for the less fortunate and lonely, especially the elderly, during this festive occasion. Also let us nurture our ties with fellow citizens of different races. We live in peace and harmony because we have strived to overcome differences in our ethnic or religious backgrounds, and expand the common space where we all interact comfortably. We must continue to make this effort, to protect what we have achieved and build upon it.

Visitors from other countries are often amazed at what we have achieved, but we ourselves sometimes take our religious harmony for granted. In our multi-racial, secular society, we must all live and let live, and be willing to compromise for the common good. As the majority race, Chinese Singaporeans have to be sensitive to the needs of the minorities, and give them ample space to practise their cultures and ways of life. Minorities too must give and take, and work with other communities to make progress together.

CONCLUSION

Strong families and close ties with our fellow Singaporeans have underpinned our success, and will continue to be the foundations for a brighter future. Next year we celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday. It is a time to celebrate our achievements, and rededicate ourselves to building a better Singapore. The SG50 campaign which we have just launched engages Singaporeans on this shared endeavour. Do join the SG50 campaign, and share your ideas on how we can celebrate our golden jubilee together.

Let us stick together as one family, and work with one another to build a brighter future for all. Together we can ride into the Year of the Horse with confidence. Together we can create an even better Singapore for ourselves and our loved ones.

I wish all Singaporeans a very Happy Chinese New Year!



Chinatown, Singapore-Jan 18, 2014

families too provide a valuable network of kinship and mutual support. We are raised to respect our elders, and do our best for our children.

THE PIONEER GENERATION

As a society, we are making a special effort to take care of our elders. Many elders lead active and fulfilling lives. We are promoting healthy living and lifelong learning, and helping those who wish to work do so, so that more people can age happily. We are also addressing retirement and healthcare needs, by increasing medical subsidies, building more hospitals and nursing homes, and expanding home care services. Beyond infrastructure and financial help, we are creating a social environment where people can age with peace of mind, and be valued and respected for their contributions.

want to pass on to them a better Singapore than the one we inherited. We hope that our children will build on what they will inherit, and will create a brighter future for themselves and their children, just as the Pioneer Generation did for us.

For this to work, we do need enough children to form the next generation. Unfortunately, despite our efforts to promote marriage and parenthood, our birth rates are still too low. Singapore's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) was 1.19 last year, far below our replacement rate of 2.1. The TFR for Chinese Singaporeans (1.06) was even lower. We must try our best to do better.

I hope the Year of the Horse will see some improvement. This year we will have a "double spring". Valentine's Day coincides with Chap Goh Mei, the 15th

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY

This year we celebrate the "International Year of the Family". We have planned many family-friendly activities, including at the River Hongbao and Chingay Parade. The response has been enthusiastic – many families will perform in the "Singapore Celebrates Family" float in Chingay, including 3-G families, families with disabled members and extended families with aunts and nieces. They have spent many weekends practising their dance moves, and treasure the special family moments they have shared together. The events continue throughout the year, including Family Days at places like the zoo and National Family Celebrations. You can find out more at www.iyf2014.sg.



India Hopes for Financial Revival

BY Anjana Pasricha

India is hoping for a financial revival after economic growth slipped to decade-low levels in the last two years. But there are few signs of a return of the robust growth that catapulted India into the ranks of the world's fastest growing economies.

Gurdet Singh, who farms about 100 acres of fertile land in Wazidpur village in northern Punjab state, a prosperous agricultural region, plans to buy a bigger, new tractor to ease his work on the farm.

He says his two tractors have become old and require a lot of repair. Singh even hopes to buy a car after he pays off the loans for the tractor.

The automobile sector, which witnessed a huge slowdown in the last two years as the economy slumped to a decade low, is pinning its hopes on consumers like Singh in the country's vast rural areas.

Vishnu Mathur, who heads the Society of Automobile Manufacturers of India, says that while demand in urban areas for passenger cars continues to be sluggish, the upbeat rural economy provides a silver lining.

"The recession we have been seeing is largely an urban phenomenon," Mathur noted. "The monsoons have been good



and the harvest season is now round the corner, so if we have a good harvest, then I am sure there will be a further buoyancy coming out of the rural market."

The optimism in the automobile industry signals that the worst could be over for the Indian economy, which is expected to clock growth of less than five per cent when the 2013 fiscal year ends in March.

Experts are pointing to the so-called "green shoots." The farm sector, which sustains two thirds of the country, has posted healthy growth. The rupee, which lost more than 20 per cent of its value versus the dollar last year, has recovered some ground and stabilized. Exports have revived.

Rafique Ahmed, head of the Federation of Indian Export Organizations, says exports are being boosted by a cheaper

rupee and better global economic conditions.

"The prospects are good. Our rupee has helped us," Ahmed said. "Secondly the market also has stabilized in Europe and America and even in ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) countries it is better. So, exports should grow in a positive tone...slowly it will come to double digit."

But even as growth is widely expected to pick up from the low point it hit last year, economists say it is unlikely to climb back to the heady numbers which had put India among the world's fastest growing economies. Just three years ago (2011), India's economy expanded by more than nine per cent.

Now the expectations are much more modest. Finance Minister P. Chidambaram has said growth will accelerate

to more than six per cent in 2014, and return "step-by-step" to its potential of eight percent.

Economists say the key to boosting India's economy is to revive confidence among investors, both domestic and foreign. Worried by lack of reforms and bureaucratic roadblocks, private investment has reduced to a trickle. Most businesses are now waiting on the sidelines for the outcome of national elections to be held by May.

Chief economist at credit ratings company, CRISIL, in Mumbai, D.K. Joshi, says the pace of economic recovery critically hinges on the outcome of those polls.

"If you get a fragile mandate and a coalition of not so like minded people, under these conditions sustaining high growth is very difficult," Joshi explained, "and if you get a decisive mandate and you get one single political party who is able to push the projects much faster, it will lift the sentiment of the private sector. If those things happen, we do believe growth can lift to a little over six and a half percent."

The decade-long spell of high growth which India experienced until 2011 had catapulted millions of people into the middle class and created new jobs which the country needs for its huge, young population. But economists are not so sure that India can achieve that again.

- VOA News

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A round the World

Books Publisher Satchithanathan receives Award in Chennai

Maravanpulavu Satchithanathan who is of Sri Lankan origin received an Award recently from the Tamil Nadu Book Sellers & Publishers Association for his efforts and achievements in the Tamil Book Publishing trade over the past 30 years.

Satchithanathan is the owner of Kanthalaham, a Tamil Book Publishing Company in Chennai and had been instrumental in publishing nearly 400 books on different subjects. One of the most recognized books was a compilation of a 12 series Murugan Songs he published for the Ginthupittiya Murugan Temple in Sri Lanka. Satchithanathan has received several Awards for his Book publishing efforts and achievements over the years.

Mr. R. Muthukumarasamy (Director of Chennai Saiva Sidhantha Book Publishing Society and former President of BAPASI) presided over the Award function. Honourable Justice Ramasubrama-



nian (Chennai High Court) was the special guest and Nalli Kuppusamy Chettiar offered felicitations. The Award presentation took place at the recently held Book Fair in Chennai.



Thalif Deen, Inter Press Service (IPS) news agency UN Bureau Chief and Regional Director North America, wins gold medal for excellence in UN reporting

Sri Lankan born Thalif Deen, UN Bureau Chief for Inter Press Service (IPS) news agency and Regional Director North America, won one of the highest honours for excellence in UN reporting at the annual awards ceremony hosted by the UN Correspondents' Association (UNCA) in New York.

Deen shared the top prize, a gold medal, with Reuters UN Bureau Chief Louis Charbonneau, for coverage of the humanitarian and development work of the United Nations. The prize was sponsored by the United Nations Foundation, a non-governmental organisation which is a strong advocate of the world body and its development agenda.

The winners were picked from over 120 entries from journalists worldwide. Last year, Deen was part of an IPS team that won the gold for reporting on the global environment. The annual UNCA awards go back to 1992. Deen won a bronze medal in 1997, sharing the award with the Washington Post, and received a honourable mention for his UN coverage in 1996.

Thalif Deen is a former senior editorial writer on the Hongkong Standard and Military Editor/Middle East/Africa at Jane's Information Group, Deen was a one-time UN correspondent for Asiaweek, Hongkong and Jane's Defence Weekly London. A former staffer of the UN Secretariat and twice a member of the Sri Lanka delegation to the General Assembly sessions, he is a Fulbright scholar with a Master's Degree in Journalism from Columbia University, New York. The award



Thalif Deen with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

ceremony, which took place on December 18, was followed by a black-tie dinner at the Cypriani Restaurant and attended by over 600 guests, including UN ambassadors, senior UN officials, journalists, New York city's glitterati and A-list celebrities in show business.

The Correspondents' Association also gave two special awards: one to Hollywood movie icon Michael Douglas — the Global Citizen of the Year award — for his commitment to nuclear disarmament, and to singer, musician and song writer Stevie Wonder — the Global Advocate of the Year Award — for his commitment to humanitarian causes. Thalif Deen worked for the Associated Newspapers (Lake House) as a journalist when he was in Sri Lanka.

Google Tests 'Smart' Contact Lens that Monitors Blood Sugar

Internet giant Google says it's testing a 'smart' contact lens that could visually alert patients when their blood sugar level drops.

Diabetics struggle daily to monitor and control their blood sugar level which, if left uncontrolled, can lead to long-term damage to their eyes, kidneys and heart.

Most test their glucose level by drawing a tiny drop of blood, but scientists are trying to find easier ways to do that by experimenting with other body fluids, such as tears.

On its blog, Google says that tiny chips and sensors, and antennas thinner

than a human hair, could be embedded into the soft contact lens material. Placed on the eye, it could monitor sugar levels as often as once every second.

Google says it has completed multiple clinical studies and is now testing prototypes with tiny LED lights that flash when the glucose level drops. Researchers also envision new apps that would make that information available online to both patients and their doctors.

Google says the technology is still being testing but hopes it will one day lead to better and easier management of diabetes. — VOA News



February 4th Marks World Cancer Day



By: Jeavana Sritharan,
BHSc, MHS, PhD Student



The fourth of this month marks World Cancer Day to raise awareness on prevention and treatment of cancer

Cancer, an ever intriguing disease, begins in our cells causing the formation of lumps or tumours and spreading to other parts of the body. These lumps and tumours can be malignant (cancerous) or benign (non-cancerous). The difference between these two is that malignant cells can invade other organs and tissues in the body and metastasizes. Whereas, benign tumors remain in one part of the body and are usually not life threatening. This is why treatment is imperative to survival because if an individual is treated prior to the malignant cells spreading to other parts of the body then the chances of survival increase.

Cancer is the leading cause of death in Canada. The most common forms of cancer in Canada are lung, breast, prostate, and colorectal cancer and individuals aged 50 years and older are at the highest risk. These 4 forms of cancer account for over 50% of new cancer cases.

In Canada, over 500 individuals will be diagnosed with cancer every day and over 200 individuals will die from cancer every day.

Lung Cancer

As we breathe, air passes through our nose or mouth and flows down our windpipe also known as a trachea. The trachea divides into the left and right lung.

Air passageway: Nose and mouth trachea bronchi bronchioles (inside the lungs)

There are two main forms of lung cancer which are known as non-small cell lung cancer and small cell

lung cancer. The former is the most common form and grows quite slowly whereas the latter tends to spread to other parts of the body and grows much quicker.

If cancer starts in the lung then it is known as primary lung cancer but cancer can also spread to the lungs from another part of the body.

Common signs and symptoms: coughs that worsen over time, constant chest pain accompanying coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, fatigue, loss of appetite, weight loss, constant severe shoulder pain, collapsed lung, and coughing up blood.

Diagnostic testing: different tests may be used depending on the stage of cancer and depending on what your physician recommends. Tests used are also similar for different cancer sites. Possible diagnostic tests include an x-ray, CT scan,

PET scan, MRI, sputum test, ultrasound, bone scan, complete blood count (CBC), pulmonary function tests, and/or biopsy. Physicians will also complete a medical history to identify risk factors related to smoking, family history of lung cancer, and exposure to second hand smoke or other substances. This is accompanied by a physical examination.

Breast Cancer

Breast tissue actually covers a large area of the body from the collarbone to the armpits and down to the chest area. During a lifetime, a female may go through different stages including the menstrual cycle and menopause which can affect the breast tissue differently. The breasts are made of ducts and fatty tissue while the lobules help create milk. Milk passes from the lobules to the ducts and eventually to the nipple. This is also where lymphatic vessels are located which are useful when fighting infections or trapping harmful substances like bacteria. Cancer of the breast area can begin within the lobules or ducts, the second being the most common.

Common signs and symptoms: consistent lump anywhere in breast tissue area, hard and irregular lump, breast shape and size changes, unusual skin changes, unusual nipple changes, nausea, weight loss, loss of appetite, and muscle weakness.

Diagnostic testing: mammography, ultrasound, biopsy, ductography, lymph node biopsy, chest x-ray, MRI, bone scan, hormone receptor tests, medical history,



and physical examination.

Based on physician recommendation, a mammography may be requested especially for females 50 years of age and older. A mammography is an x-ray that examines the breast area and can help to identify abnormal tissue.

Prostate Cancer

The prostate is only present in the male reproductive system and the purpose of the prostate is to make part of seminal fluid that helps make semen. The prostate is located below the bladder and in front of the rectum. Prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer in men in Canada and it can be difficult to identify as prostate cancer grows very slowly.

Common signs and symptoms: frequent and intense need to urinate, uncontrollable urine flow, pain during urination, blood in urine or semen, bone pain, weight loss, fatigue, weakness, and loss of bladder or bowel control.

Diagnostic testing: prostate specific antigen (PSA) test, biopsy, bone scan, CT scan, MRI, complete blood count (CBC), medical history, and physical examination.

For prostate cancer, a physical examination and PSA test are both important. A physical examination known as a digital rectal examination (DRE) is when the physician will place a gloved finger on the rectum to feel the prostate gland to identify any lumps and changes in size or shape. The prostate specific antigen (PSA) test determines the level of PSA in the blood. PSA is a prostate protein that acts as a tumour marker and when it is present in abnormal amounts it can indicate prostate cancer. PSA levels increase with age and are important to monitor as men get older.

Colorectal Cancer

This form of cancer begins in the colon or rectum, both of which make up the large intestine in our body. The large intestine is important for the digestive system as it helps absorb nutrients, break down food, and pass waste. The colon helps to absorb water as waste passes through it and the rectum holds the waste that is ready to be released through a bowel movement.

Colorectal cancer may not produce any signs or symptoms in the early stages and even after, it can be difficult to identify. In many cases, colorectal cancer can go unnoticed until severe symptoms develop.

Common signs and symptoms: red or blood spots in bowel movements, black bowel movements, constant diarrhea or constipation, constant urgency with bowel movements, problems with bowel emptying, abdominal pain, cramps, feelings of bloating or fullness, nausea, loss of appetite, weight loss, fatigue, weakness, anemia, and frequent urination.

Diagnostic testing: fecal occult blood test (FOBT), complete blood count (CBC), colonoscopy, flexible sigmoidoscopy, CT scan, PET scan, MRI, ultrasound, biopsy, medical history, and physical examination.

One of the most commonly used tests would be the fecal occult blood test which looks at a stool sample from the individual to identify the presence of blood that cannot be seen with the naked eye. This will confirm that further tests are needed as this fecal occult blood test does not solely confirm colorectal cancer. There are other conditions that can cause blood to be present in the stool. Another important test is a colonoscopy which allows the physician to use a flexible tube to view the entire colon area. The physician will insert the tube through the anus and move to the colon and rectum. The procedure may be uncomfortable but is a necessary tool to identify any obvious problems with the colon or rectum.

Remember, these forms of cancer can be treated successfully if identified early through screening.

Jeavana Sritharan is a PhD Student in Medical Science at the University of Toronto. She is currently working with Cancer Care Ontario with the Occupational Cancer Research Centre and is the Co-Founder of the webpage, Health Perspectives.

Contact email:

info@healthperspectives.ca



Rouge Valley's regional cardiac program grows

New cardiac cath labs to provide greater access for Scarborough and Durham patients

New, state-of-the-art equipment and quicker access to life saving care closer to home. These are just a few of the benefits cardiac patients across Scarborough and Durham Region will experience with the completion of three new cardiac catheterization (cath) labs at Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS), home to the Central East Regional Cardiac Care Program – Scarborough-Durham.

This is the first time that there are three new cath labs at Rouge Valley Centenary hospital campus in Scarborough, including: one, which opened in 2012; and two replacements in 2013. Each cath lab features new, modern equipment that can be used to perform multiple cardiac procedures — including catheterizations, angioplasties and ablations. Additionally, a new procedure room was created in early 2012.

The three new cath labs are part of an ongoing project to renovate, improve and greatly expand the regional cardiac centre at Rouge Valley. The final phase of the project will see the extension of the cardiac cath short stay unit, where patients are taken to prepare for and recover from their cath lab procedures. This is expected to be completed by the spring.

Improved access to cardiac services

RVHS is the designated regional centre for cardiac care along the 401-east corridor, from Scarborough through to Durham Region. Each year, more than 4,000 patients are seen at Rouge Valley's cath labs, and with the addition of the third lab, it is expected that this number will grow. Angiograms, angioplasty, emergency cardiac procedures, device implantations (pacemaker and implantable cardioverter defibrillator) and complex ablations are just some of the specialized services provided in the Rouge Valley cath labs.

"Having three cath labs at Rouge Valley increases our ability to provide life-saving care to our patients. This means greater access for our patients," explains Dr. Saleem Kassam, medical manager of cath lab services at Rouge Valley. "With the addition of 33 per cent more space, our team is now able to meet patients' needs with a shorter wait time. In the end, our patients benefit from having more of the life-saving care they need available to them, right in their community."

The new cath labs also mean that patients can now receive treatment for more complex treatments, and electrophysiological procedures at Rouge Valley. In the past, patients would have to travel to downtown Toronto in order to receive such procedures.



"Our new, updated cath labs allow for improved quality and efficiency. The investment that we have made means that our patients, from Scarborough to Durham Region, can have even better access to critical life-saving care, close to home, within our regional cardiac centre," explains Glyn Boatswain, director of the Rouge Valley regional cardiac care program.

Features and expanded services

Other features include:

- New cath lab systems and equipment that allow cardiologists to provide treatment in an environment with the lowest possible radiation dose, making it safer for patients and staff;

- The cardiac cath short stay unit will be expanded to include 21 beds and 10 recliners (up from 15 beds and 8 recliners);

- Enhancements to angioplasty procedures thanks to new equipment that will help regional program cardiologists to treat blockages in patients who were previously sent to downtown hospitals;

- Advances in electrophysiology made possible with new equipment and funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and Rouge Valley's cardiologists/electrophysiologists;

- A designated procedure room for pacemaker implantations and other arrhythmia operations;

- New equipment that allows diagnostic images to be integrated with other cardiac tests being done in the hospital, and can be seen from computers anywhere in patient units;

- A new media room outfitted with telemedicine videoconferencing equipment that enables cardiologists to connect in real-time with patients and physicians at other hospitals and facilities for consultations and to review cases;

- A new waiting lounge for families of patients seen at the regional cardiac centre.

Official Grand Opening Event

An official grand opening at Rouge Valley Centenary to celebrate the completion of the new Central East Regional Cardiac Care Centre is expected to take place in the spring. This event will feature keynote addresses from the regional program and its health partners; a ribbon-cutting ceremony; as well as VIP

RVHS and TSH form Joint Transition Committee to continue work on proposed merger

The Board Chairs of Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) and The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) have announced the formation of a Joint Transition Committee (JTC) to continue work on a proposed merger of the two corporations.

Co-led by the Chairs of RVHS and TSH, the Joint Transition Committee membership is comprised of Board Directors of the two hospitals, their CEOs, medical Chiefs of Staff, physician leaders of the hospitals' Medical Staff Associations, and by the CEO of the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN). The JTC is committed to the principles of openness and transparency, and updates on its work can be found at the Leading for Patients website, www.leadingforpatients.ca.

"Following the decisions in November by each hospital board to approve, in principle, proceeding with the next steps toward a merger, the Joint Transition Committee will lead us through the next phase of our process. We look forward to continuing to work with our peers at The Scarborough Hospital to better address the growing needs of our communities in Scarborough and west Durham (Ajax, Pickering and Whitby)," said Joan Wideman, Chair, Board of Directors, RVHS.

"We have a wealth of leadership at both hospital corporations and will build on the considerable work of the two Boards, staff, physicians and community members, as led by our Integration Leadership Committee in the summer and fall of last year. We look forward to bringing better, more accessible hospital services to our growing communities," said Stephen Smith, Chair, Board of Directors, TSH.

The work of the Joint Transition Committee will focus on:

- Understanding the current state of the hospitals;
- Identifying gaps and barriers for proceeding with a merger;
- Considering options for the governance design;
- Engaging governors (Board Direc-

tours of the new cardiac centre.

About the Central East Regional Cardiac Care Program

The Central East Regional Cardiac Care Program consists of a highly qualified and experienced team of more than 20 cardiologists and more than 100 health professionals, who serve the communities of the Scarborough-Durham area. The regional program delivers a wide range of cardiac services, includ-

ing life-saving cardiac catheterization and intervention procedures, arrhythmia studies, management and treatment,

- Identifying risks and mitigation strategies; and

- Implementing a communications and community engagement strategy.

The Joint Transition Committee reports to the Boards of Directors of RVHS and TSH and cannot approve a merger. The Joint Transition Committee will:

- Share information about their organizations' services, governance, management and operations;

- Recommend, on behalf of their organizations, plans and actions associated with the planning activities;

- Establish sub-committees, as required, to explore specific issues related to the integration activities.

This next phase is expected to be completed over the next 60 to 90 days, at which time the two hospital Boards will reconvene to make a final decision on whether or not to proceed with a merger. At that time, the Boards will consider the outcome of the due diligence, stakeholder input, level of financial support secured and the status of the capital planning grants.

Should the hospitals recommend proceeding with a merger at that time, the matter would then be considered by the Central East LHIN Board and the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Both hospital corporations have committed to continue to inform and engage all stakeholders throughout the process, which began on March 27, 2013.

Membership of the Joint Transition Committee (JTC)

The Joint Transition Committee members are:

Stephen Smith (JTC Co-Chair) - TSH Board Chair

Lyn McDonnell - TSH Board Director

Valerie Carter - TSH Board Director

Janet Dalicandro - TSH Board Director

Christian Buhagiar - TSH Board Director

Robert Biron - TSH President and CEO

Contd. next page ...

ing life-saving cardiac catheterization and intervention procedures, arrhythmia studies, management and treatment, and cardiac rehabilitation and education. Rouge Valley Health System is the designated cardiac care centre for the regional program, delivering care in partnership with The Scarborough Hospital, Lakeridge Health, and the Central East Local Health Integration Network.

Hospitals file formal notification of intent to merge

Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) and The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) have filed formal notification of intent to merge to the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN).

The formal notification of intent to merge, as required by the Local Health System Integration Act, was filed on Friday, the Board Chairs of RVHS and TSH announced. The formal notification follows up on the approvals made in principle by each of the hospitals' Boards of Directors in November 2013 to proceed with the proposed merger.

"This notification is an important milestone in our ongoing work toward merging both hospital corporations. It reaffirms both hospitals' commitment to proceeding with the proposed merger, with a focus on improving health care and putting patients first," said Stephen Smith, Board Chair, TSH.

"The proposed merger presents a significant opportunity to provide our west Durham and Scarborough communities with greater access to services and improved quality. We believe that it also provides us with the ability to attract more physicians and to make better use of limited health care dollars," said Joan Wideman, Board Chair, RVHS.

Earlier this month, the Board Chairs of RVHS and TSH announced the formation of a Joint Transition Committee to continue work on the proposed merger of

the two corporations. Co-led by the Chairs of RVHS and TSH, the Joint Transition Committee membership is comprised of members of the Boards of Directors of the two hospitals, their CEOs, medical Chiefs of Staff, physician leaders of the hospitals' Medical Staff Associations, and by the CEO of the Central East LHIN, who is a non-voting member.

As well, RVHS and TSH submitted a pre-capital planning application, which was endorsed by the Central East LHIN Board of Directors. The application was submitted in order to secure the grants necessary to proceed with the feasibility, planning and design for two facility projects – one for Scarborough and one for west Durham (serving Ajax, Pickering and Whitby).

The current phase of the proposed merger process is expected to be completed during the next 60 to 90 days, at which time the two hospital Boards will reconvene to make a final decision on whether or not to proceed with a merger. At that time, the Boards will consider the outcome of the due diligence, stakeholder input, level of financial support secured and the status of the capital planning grants.

Should the two hospital Boards recommend proceeding with a merger at that time, the matter would then be considered by the Central East LHIN Board and then the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.



Both hospital corporations have committed to continue to inform and engage all stakeholders throughout the process, which began on March 27, 2013.

The benefits of a merged hospital corporation include:

- Improved access to health care services and improved quality, which means:
 - o More clinical expertise available to residents locally in Scarborough and west Durham;
 - o Repatriation of patients, who currently receive care outside of our communities, to our local hospitals;
 - o Ability to attract more specialist doctors for advanced care through the four hospital campuses;
 - o Improved patient coordination and transitions of care among the hospitals, with community services and in home

care;

- o More centres of excellence (specialized services) and regional programs in years to come; and;

- o Development of ambulatory centres/clinics for same day care.

- Benefits of a merger will especially be realized in the longer-term as the hospitals position themselves to better serve their communities, create a shared vision for a transformed local health care system, address fiscal challenges together, and take advantage of the fast changing health care environment.

- The new hospital corporation will be more resilient and better positioned to take advantage of the province's new patient-based funding formula, by focusing on increasing both quality and efficiency.

Contd. from previous page ...

Dr. Tom Chan - TSH Chief of Staff

Dr. Tim Sproule - TSH Medical Staff Association Representative

Dr. Dov Soberman - TSH Medical Staff Association Representative

Joan Wideman (JTC Co-Chair) - RVHS Board Chair

Jay Kaufman - RVHS Board Director

Fred Clifford - RVHS Board Director

Doug Melville - RVHS Board Director

Graeme McKay - RVHS Board Director

Rik Ganderton - RVHS President and CEO

Dr. Naresh Mohan - RVHS Chief of Staff

Dr. Henry Huang - RVHS Medical Staff Society Representative

Dr. Amir Janmohamed - RVHS Medical Staff Society Representative

Deborah Hammons - Central East LHIN CEO (non-voting)

Commitments

The hospitals have jointly made the following commitments in this process:

- All four hospital campuses will stay open and continue to be viable, relevant and essential parts of the hospital system for Scarborough and west Durham;

- All four of the emergency departments will stay open;

- Patient care services currently provided at the Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering campus will continue to be delivered there regardless of the outcome of



the process; and

- All four hospitals will continue to provide high-quality and safe care during any health care system transformation.

Profile

A merged RVHS-TSH would have more profile and impact in Ontario. It would rank -

- 1st in day surgical cases: 75,000 (per year)

- 2nd in emergency visits: 235,000

- 2nd in acute separations: 57,000

- n the top 10 for intensive care days (25,000), ambulatory care visits (728,000) and average beds staffed and in operation (1,046)

- In the top 25 for inpatient days for mental health (32,000), rehabilitation (18,000) and complex continuing care (26,000)

Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) is an excellent acute care community hospital with many programs, including 24/7/365 emergency, obstetrics, paediat-



rics, surgery, mental health and regional cardiac care. Rouge Valley consists of several health sites, including two community hospital campuses: Rouge Valley Centenary in Scarborough; and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering in west Durham.

Situated in one of the most diverse communities in Canada, The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) delivers compassionate, patient-centred care at two hospital campuses (Birchmount and General) and six satellite sites. TSH is a regional centre for dialysis and is renowned for its mental health, orthopaedic surgery, paediatrics, chronic disease prevention and management, and cancer care programs. Affiliated with the University of Toronto, TSH is also a referral centre for vascular surgery, pacemakers and cataract surgery.

For more information, visit www.leadingforpatients.ca

Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS)

- The best at what we do.

Rouge Valley Health System is an excellent acute care community hospital with many programs, including 24/7/365 emergency, obstetrics, paediatrics, surgery, mental health and regional cardiac care. Rouge Valley consists of several health sites, including two community hospital campuses: Rouge Valley Centenary in east Toronto; and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering in west Durham. Together, a team of physicians, nurses and many other professionals care for a broad spectrum of health conditions. Working in consultation and partnership with community members, other hospitals, health care organizations, the Central East Local Health Integration Network and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Rouge Valley continues to improve its programs and cater to the needs of the growing communities of east Toronto, Pickering, Ajax and Whitby.



Candles of Care shine brightly for Providence Healthcare

In December 2013, Providence Healthcare's long-term care home, the Cardinal Ambrozic Houses of Providence, ran a month long Candles of Care campaign, selling paper ornaments and LED votive lights. Spearheaded by the Houses' Family Council, a forum for residents' families to share ideas, the campaign raised more than \$10,000 to support staff education and training.

"The quality of life for our residents in the Houses of Providence is directly related to the quality of care," explains Kathy



The Candles of Care paper ornament



(L-R) Providence Healthcare's President and CEO, Josie Walsh, at the 2013 Cuisine & Cuvée with Carmelanna and George Ruggiero and Providence Healthcare Foundation President and CEO, Jennifer Stewart.



Family Council members with Providence Healthcare staff at the Candles of Care launch.

Doherty, Chair of the Houses' Family Council. "This campaign showed the Houses' staff that the care they provide is valued and important, and continuing to improve this level of care is a priority for all families. This was clearly demonstrated by our families' amazing generosity."

The launch event on December 10 was a warm and welcoming occasion for residents, families and staff. The commemorative ornaments and LED lights lined

the walls of the Houses' Great Room, a common area for entertainment and other activities. Ornaments contained a special, hand-written message from a loved one.

"It definitely was a special event," says Pat Scatozza, Interim Administrator for the Houses of Providence. "Guests enjoyed a special Advent service and sang Christmas carols. It was nice to see the Houses' Great Room 'lit' up for the holidays for everyone to enjoy."

Special thanks to the Providence

Healthcare Family Council members, donors and Houses of Providence families for helping to make the Candles of Care fundraiser a success.

"By supporting education for our Houses of Providence staff, they, in turn, will be able to pay it forward to our residents and their families season after season," says James Fox, Vice President of Programs for Providence Healthcare. "Initiatives like this one are how we foster the culture of excellence that makes Providence such a special place."

For more information about the Houses of Providence, visit www.providence.on.ca or book a tour by calling 416-285-

3666 x4433.

On May 2, 2014, experience the finer things in life at Providence Healthcare's 14th annual Cuisine and Cuvée food and wine fundraiser. Enjoy panoramic views of Toronto's skyline and waterfront at Atlantis Pavilions while sampling gourmet food and beverages from around the world. Tickets are \$175 and are available by calling 416-285-3666 x5025 or email bzarka@providence.on.ca.

Looking for a ticket or sponsorship opportunity?

Contact 416-285-3666 x5025 or bzarka@providence.on.ca.

Hands-on Health Care Meet Providence Healthcare's resident chiropractor

Providence Healthcare is a leader in providing rehabilitation, palliative care, long-term care and community programs. Our clinics offer a range of services that promote recovery and well-being, including chiropractic care.

For seven years, our resident chiropractor, Dr. Robert Baruch, has been providing relief for people suffering from back and neck pain, headaches, migraines and other discomfort.

WHAT ARE YOUR AREAS OF SPECIALTY?

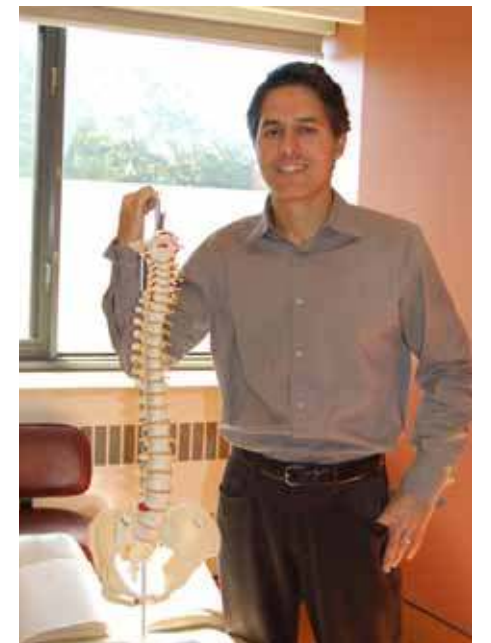
"I use a diversified approach to providing care, integrating three different therapies during treatment – joint therapy helping to improve movement, flexibility and good postural alignment, soft tissue therapy helping to reduce inflammation, muscle spasm and scar tissue from muscles, nerves, tendons and ligaments, and exercise therapy that focuses on improving core and body strength, endurance and flexibility with the use of a variety of exercise techniques."

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM CHIROPRACTIC CARE?

"Chiropractic care can help anyone who suffers from neck and low back pain, muscle spasms, tension headaches, pinched nerves, shoulder and knee pain, sports injuries, carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, arthritis and other injuries. It can also help to correct poor postural alignment."

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BE A CHIROPRACTOR?

"When I was younger, a chiropractor helped me alleviate severe low back and sciatic (nerve) pain. I had tried different treatment approaches over a period of 18 months, but none helped. My uncle suggested I see his chiropractor. Over six



Dr. Rob Baruch

weeks, the chiropractor figured out what was causing my problem and helped me to get rid of my pain. I was so amazed by his hands-on approach that I decided I wanted to help people that way."

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT YOUR FIELD?

"The interactions and relationships I've made with my patients and other health professionals are what I really enjoy. It's great to help people feel healthy and have an opportunity to work with medical professionals who bring a different but complimentary perspective to improving a patient's well-being."

Dr. Baruch is available Mondays and Wednesdays at Providence Healthcare, 3276 St. Clair Avenue East at Warden Avenue. You do not need a doctor's referral for chiropractic care. To book an appointment, call 416-285-3619.

For more information, visit www.providence.on.ca.



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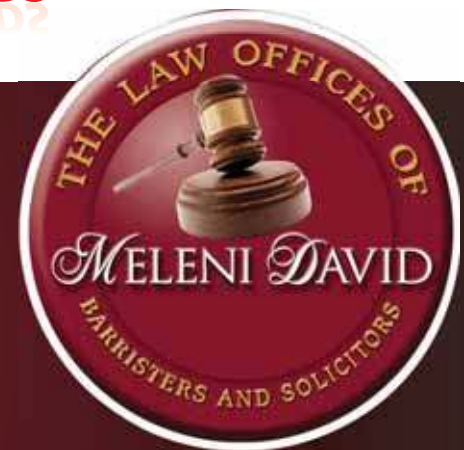
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Empowering and Strengthening Communities in Sri Lanka

through Health, Livelihoods, and Other Development Efforts



Shoes distribution at Mahadeva Achchirama Children's Home in Kilinochchi



Paraplegics were given Rickshaws - specially equipped three-wheelers with hand control modifications

For the past 11 years, the International Medical Health Organization (IMHO) has been serving communities in need globally. Most of IMHO's development activities, however, have focused on strengthening and developing health care systems in Sri Lanka that promote healthy, productive, and empowered communities. To-date, more than \$3.4M has been invested in development projects, benefitting tens of thousands of lives. Yet, there is still so much to be done.

Much has been accomplished over the past year. We have been inspired by the stories of resilience and hope of so many...the paraplegic individuals who received a specially equipped trishaw from IMHO and are now leading self-sufficient lives; the selfless and tireless actions of local physicians and health authorities who consistently go above and beyond in serving their patients and communities; the many families who have endured great hardship and are now rebuilding their lives through livelihoods support and vocational training programs. These are just a few examples of the many people who make everything we as a community have done worthwhile. None of this, of course, would have been possible without the thoughtful consideration, compassion, and generosity of individuals across North America and elsewhere who have enabled our work. We thank you for choosing to be a part of the solution and investing in those who need our continued support.

More than 2 years ago, a major undertaking was initiated in partnership with local physicians to establish a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital. With the advancement of medical sciences in much of the world, Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka continue to lag behind. In support of committed local leaders and visionaries seeking to bridge these gaps, IMHO committed itself to the establishment of this new facility. Lack of space, proper facilities, equipment, and trained doctors & nurses were all problems putting a strain on the available care for premature babies and their mothers. With IMHO's support the facility was renovated and developed, equipment was procured, and the required personnel were retained. This new center, which will help provide life-saving support to premature babies, was officially opened at a ceremony in January.

Over the past several years, IMHO has also supported the economic rehabilitation of hundreds of individuals and their families throughout Sri

Lanka, particularly the resettled and war-affected communities where livelihoods, infrastructure, and daily routines were severely disrupted. As a continuation of this effort, 54 new beneficiaries from Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaithivu, and Vavuniya received livelihoods support in January at a ceremony at the Rural Development Society building in Anandanagar, Kilinochchi. These recipients are clustered into small groups, each with a team leader, and receive monthly training and assistance from the local partners implementing this project. Efforts like these have not only pulled people out of extreme poverty, they have positive impacts on the beneficiaries' health, mental health and overall sense of well being.

Another major undertaking has been extending life-altering support for 30 paraplegics and their families in Vanni, Northern Sri Lanka through providing specially equipped three-wheelers with hand control modifications. These efforts have benefited spinally-injured paraplegics who have been rehabilitated through the hard work and dedication of local partners, physicians, and rehabilitation experts. They have been trained, empowered, and given the necessary resources to drive these modified vehicles. All of the beneficiaries were in a desperate socio-economic status at the outset, being excluded from holding a job and participating in many daily activities on account of their lack of mobility, poor infrastructure, stigma, and more. An initial batch of 18 received their vehicles last year, and the second batch of 12 paraplegics received theirs earlier this month. This support both enables individuals to earn an income and become self-sufficient, while also providing a renewed sense of dignity and purpose to their lives. As one beneficiary noted, "I feel like I got more than just my legs back...I got my life back." Since undertaking this initiative, many more paraplegics have emerged as the success of this project has become more well-known. The list of persons in need has grown to more than 100 names. While it may not be possible to reach them all, IMHO has so far impacted the lives of 30 such individuals and their families. And with your help, we hope to do more...

Aside from the above activities, we have made incredible progress in the past few months, including the following:

*A new entertainment park for patients at the Mental Health Rehabilitation Center in

Mavaddivembu, Batticaloa, Eastern Sri Lanka was officially opened at a celebratory event on January 12th. This is just another example of IMHO's commitment to developing mental health infrastructure in Sri Lanka. Nearly 200 people, including staff, clients and their families, and community members attended the festivities. Also, at the event, the first publication of a quarterly mental health magazine by the Regional Directorate of Health Services named "Nanal" was released, and a vehicle donated by the UN for patient transportation was handed over.

■ Earlier this month, shoes and socks were distributed to 326 children (179 girls and 147 boys) at the Mahadeva Achchirama Children's Home in Kilinochchi, Northern Sri Lanka thanks to support from IMHO.

■ Additional livelihoods support was provided for chronic mentally ill patients from the St. Benedict Menni residential rehabilitation center in Batticaloa.

■ A grant was given to purchase sealer for gas sterilization of hardware at the Cardiac Catheterization Lab at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital.

■ Ongoing support for mobile clinics in Sandilipay was provided, bringing mobile care to thousands.

■ Support for elderly patients at the Grace Care Center Senior Home in Trincomalee was provided to help pay for medications and doctor visits.

Looking to the future, we have many projects lined up already, as well as many ongoing efforts. In particular, we are reaching out for your support to bring two projects to fruition. Firstly, we are seeking to provide a bus to transport cancer patients from Jaffna to Tellipalai for treatment services (at an estimated cost of \$50,000). And secondly, we hope to provide ultrasound scanners for obstetric patients in Vanni and Jaffna (at an estimated cost of \$25,000). These two projects represent our current most crucial needs, but there are dozens of other initiatives that are ongoing or in the works.

Together we are making a difference. Will you join us in our mission?



TSH SELECTED AS ONE OF FEW COMMUNITY HOSPITALS IN CANADA TO PARTICIPATE IN MENTAL HEALTH STUDY



The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) is one of only a small number of community hospitals in all of Canada selected to participate in a unique three-year case study on a new national standard on psychological health and safety in the workplace.

Last month, TSH received word that it has been selected to participate in this case study – a natural evolution of our Wellness Strategy, according to Rhonda Lewis, Vice President, Human Resources and Patient Relations.

Mental health problems and illnesses are the leading cause of short- and long-term disability in Canada.

“In fact, statistical data indicates that mental illness represents 33 per cent of TSH’s employee sick benefit cases,” Rhonda explains. “We recognize that psychological well-being is a priority for us as an organization, and that we need to focus on having a psychologically safer and healthier workplace.”

One year ago, the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) launched the National Standard of Canada entitled, ‘Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace – Prevention, promotion and guidance to staged implementation.’

The MHCC’s research project is designed to follow the journey of several Canadian employers as they become industry leaders in workplace mental health. The plan is to work through a staged implementation of the one-year-old standard while MHCC provides observations and insights at no cost to TSH.

“This is exciting news and will go a long way towards TSH being recognized nationally for the good work we are doing to foster a healthy workplace, and position us as a health care industry leader,” says Rhonda. “Participation in this study will not require any additional resources from TSH, and it will greatly assist us in identifying and evaluating relevant indicators against measurable data and national benchmarks.”

TSH is an excellent selection as a research participant for several reasons, including the following:

- We are in the process of integrating with Rouge Valley Health System, and will be embarking on a merger journey that will provide a unique opportunity to study the impact that a merger will have on the psychological health and safety of a major employee group.

- Our holistic wellness strategy – Balance: Make Health Happen – addresses the physical, psychological and environmental well-being of our staff. We established Fitness and Wellness Centres (Exhale) at both campuses and provide a variety of activities to promote employee wellness and fitness.

“We hope that through our participation in this project, TSH will influence the successful integration of this national standard into workplaces and that the employee benefits will be measurable,” Rhonda adds. “We plan to pull together working groups with wide employee involvement as we move through the various stages of the project.”

The National Standard creates a systematic and sustainable approach to address psychological health and safety in the workplace, similar to how physical health and safety is managed. It includes information on:

- The identification of psychological hazards in the workplace;

- The assessment and control of the risks in the workplace associated with hazards that cannot be eliminated (e.g. stressors due to organizational change or reasonable job demands);

- The implementation of practices that support and promote psychological health and safety in the workplace;

- The growth of a culture that promotes psychological health and safety in the workplace;

- The implementation of systems of measurement and review to ensure sustainability of the overall approach.

TSH opens new Mourning Rooms to serve our diverse community

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) has officially opened a new Mourning Room at each campus for families to grieve the loss of a loved one immediately after they pass away in hospital.

The Mourning Rooms are meant to provide families with a private space to spend an extended period of time with their loved one immediately after death and perform any religious rites and rituals (in accordance with hospital safety guidelines).

“These new Mourning Rooms are an important way we are responding to the spiritual and cultural needs of our diverse community during a most difficult time,” said Deris Fillier, Director of the Spiritual and Religious Care department at The Scarborough Hospital.

Each Mourning Room has been furnished with chairs, couches and tables, thanks to a donation from Klaus Nienkämper of Nienkämper Furniture and Accessories. “We are extremely grateful to Klaus for his generous donation,” said Michael Mazza, President and CEO of The Scarborough Hospital Foundation. “The beautiful and contemporary furniture he has provided for each Mourning Room makes them a space where families can feel comfortable grieving the passing of their loved one.”

The Mourning Room locations at each campus are as follows:

- Birchmount campus – Level Three across from the service elevators



From left to right Mohammed Atieque, Father Pappas Pianourious, Father Spyrio Vitouladitis, TSH President and CEO Robert Biron, Klaus Nienkämper, Pandit Darshanand, Rev. Yen Jen Sik, and TSH Director of Spiritual and Religious Care Deris Fillier at the opening of the Mourning Room at the Birchmount campus.

- General campus – Ground Floor, East Wing, first corridor south of the Auditorium next to the Volunteer Lounge For more information on how to access the Mourning Rooms, contact the *Spiritual and Religious Care department at ext. 2535*(Birchmount campus) or ext. 6270 (General campus).

VIRTUAL WARD EASES TRANSITION HOME FOR RECENTLY DISCHARGED PATIENTS



Every Tuesday, TSH’s social workers conduct a videoconference meeting with social workers at Carefirst to discuss patient status. Left to right: TSH social workers Liza Cohen and Shannon Munroe and far right, Alice Mui from Carefirst.

The goal of any patient-centred acute care facility is to provide quality inpatient care and then discharge healthier patients in a manner that reduces or avoids readmission.

In collaboration with Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association and the Central East Community Care Access Centre (CCAC), The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) launched a ‘Virtual Ward’ program last May that successfully transitions a targeted group of our patients from hospital back home upon discharge.

Patients on our hospitalist units that are identified to be at high risk for readmission are referred to the Virtual Ward. These patients are eligible for the six-week Virtual Ward program.

“Through feedback from our patients, staff and leaders, we identified key gaps in the transition from hospital to home that inspired this collaboration between acute care and community organizations,” explains Nancy Veloso, Patient Care Director, Medicine, Geriatrics and Oncology at TSH. “We identified opportunities to tighten the link

back to the family doctor for follow-up, ensure patients are linked with the appropriate community support to review their medication questions and receive ongoing health education about their medicine condition. The result of these gaps is that they often become ill again and are readmitted to hospital.”

Here’s how it works: Social workers from both TSH and Carefirst act as ‘Navigators’ who reach out to discharged patients to ensure they have filled their discharge prescriptions, and attended follow-up appointments with their family doctor or specialists. They also point discharged patients in the right

direction for ongoing health education available in the community, because the “system” may be difficult to navigate following a discharge from hospital.

“Patients who are at high risk of re-admission or who may fall through the cracks in the community benefit from the Virtual Ward because the program ensures patients get the information and follow-up they need,” says TSH Social Worker Shannon Munroe. “It’s a wonderful feeling to know that I am able to assist patients who may have difficulty managing at home, or who may have limited support.”

“My role as a Social Worker enables me to speak with patients throughout their transition home and ensure that they are connected to appropriate community services, as well as encourage them to attend their follow-up appointments.”

One of Shannon’s clients, Hyacinth Black – whose husband Herman was discharged last fall – says the Virtual Ward was excellent.

“After discharge, we did receive follow-up from the hospital staff; they kept in touch with us to find out how he was doing, and to recommend community services,” Hyacinth says. “It was really good; they were all so cooperative. And my husband hasn’t had to go back to hospital since.”

“I followed up with Hyacinth for six weeks after her husband’s discharge and was able to help her with questions about his follow up appointments, supports in the community and homecare,” Shannon adds. “My experience with assisting the Blacks has been so rewarding. It’s great to know that with the assistance of the Virtual Ward, he and his family has been able to manage in their own home and have not return to hospital since.”

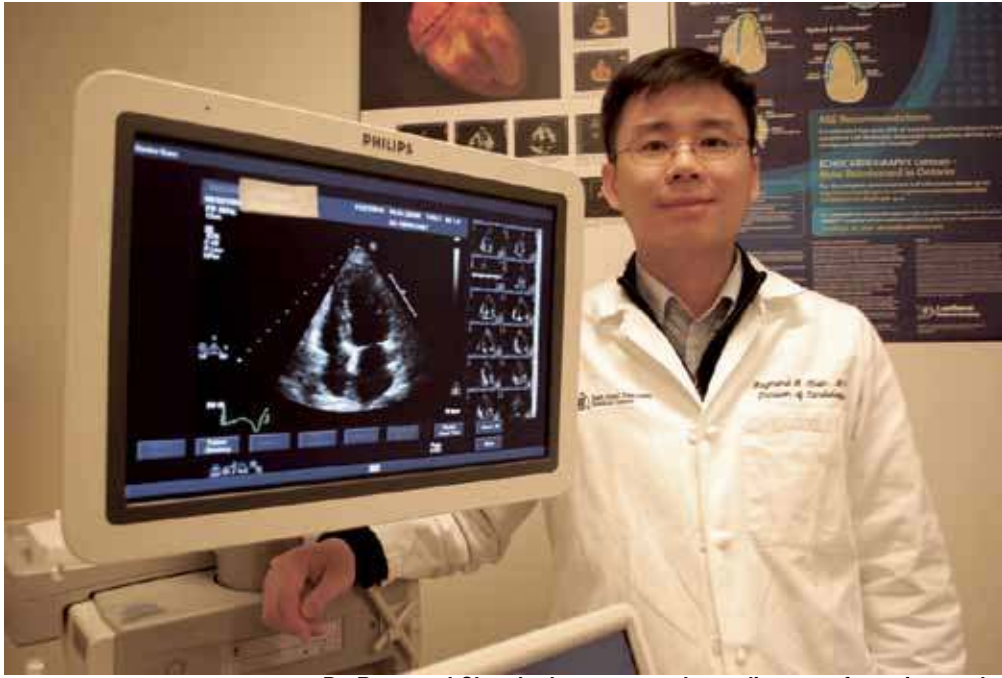
The initiative is also an excellent example of how TSH is working with its community partners to ensure patients are receiving ongoing care following discharge.

“The Virtual Ward is a good start in providing integrated care to our clients and demonstrates how Carefirst and TSH are working together in a coordinated way so that clients receive the care they need in the community,” says Alice Mui, Program Director at Carefirst. “It demonstrates how the needs of the client are identified from the very beginning and how their needs are met through the pathway home.”

“It is very important that TSH and community organizations have an ongoing communication and collaboration, and we’re continuing to build on previous working relationships with TSH for the benefit of the community and patients.”

Over the next several months, the virtual ward program will expand across both campus within the Medicine program to broaden the number of patients we can further support in the transition home.

HARVARD-TRAINED CARDIOLOGIST BRINGS NEW NON-INVASIVE TECHNIQUES TO TSH



Dr. Raymond Chan looks over an echocardiogram of a patient at the Birchmount campus of The Scarborough Hospital.

The Birchmount campus of The Scarborough Hospital recently enhanced its cardiac testing program with the addition of a Harvard-trained non-invasive cardiologist.

Dr. Raymond Chan started with TSH last September, bringing with him the most up-to-date training in cardiac MRI, echocardiography and CT angiography.

Born in Hong Kong, his family moved to Toronto in 1987, "within five minutes from the Birchmount

campus. I used to ride my bike around here."

"I finished my general cardiology residency in Hamilton in 2010, then spent three years at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, a teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School in Boston for a clinical and research fellowship in advanced cardiac imaging. At the same time, I completed my Masters of Public Health (MPH) at the Harvard School of Public Health," Dr. Chan says. He also spent some time in Leeds, United Kingdom last summer to

learn cardiac MRI stress testing.

Since arriving last year, Dr. Chan has been the lead in bringing to the Birchmount campus the ability to do new, more advanced cardiac investigations, such as outpatient and inpatient transesophageal echocardiograms, something that has not been available at the Birchmount campus.

"In the right patient population, stress echocardiography is more accurate than a basic treadmill stress test," Dr. Chan explains.

The first patient to undergo a stress echocardiogram at the Birchmount campus, Kayhan Mortezaei, was impressed with the enthusiasm and care he received by Dr. Chan.

"I don't know much about the technical part of it, but as a patient, it was comforting to see Dr. Chan and his team work so well together," Kayhan says. "I understood the importance of the test, because I have had simple stress tests before. But this was a more involved test with a treadmill and an echocardiogram machine, and constant monitoring of my heart."

"It is very important to a patient to not have to travel far to get these kinds of tests, so I am happy this test is available locally. And I am happy to learn from the test that my heart is fine."

Dr. Chan is also excited about introducing more cardiac testing, including the possibility of using CT angiography to diagnose chest pain patients in the emergency department.

"We know this modality is able to discharge cardiac patients quicker and safer, and has been proven to significantly reduce emergency admissions and wait times," he says. "The Emergency Department physicians are certainly excited about this capability."

His ultimate goal is to fully utilize Birchmount's new MRI scanner, which was installed two years ago after a successful fundraising campaign, where additional hardware and software was purchased separately specifically to perform cardiac testing.

"Right now, we send our patients downtown for cardiac MRIs, which adds to wait times (current wait time is 3.5 months) and is inconvenient for Scarborough patients, particularly for our elderly patients," Dr. Chan says. "We are trying to expand our scope of services to the outpatient community in an effort to support our referring family physicians."

"The key for us is to make a business case to support the expansion of services to include cardiac MRIs."

TSH radiologist solves patient's decades-long fear of MRIs

It was a request that Elizabeth Rowland always feared from her doctor: "We'd like you to have an MRI scan." However, Elizabeth's decades-long fear of MRIs came to an end when she visited the Diagnostic Imaging department at The Scarborough Hospital (TSH).

"I have received medical care in various countries and when I received an MRI in Curacao, and later in Venezuela, I panicked," said Elizabeth. "Since then, I've used various methods, including sedation, to try to get through any MRI scans, but without success."

Early last year, Elizabeth's physician discovered an abnormality and scheduled a pelvic MRI to confirm results from an ultrasound. Elizabeth, who lives in downtown Toronto, first went to Toronto General Hospital for the MRI, but again panicked during the procedure. A nurse at the Medcan Clinic where she receives care suggested she be referred to The Scarborough Hospital as the MRI machine has a larger aperture.

But despite the difference in the technology, it was the assistance of Technologist Alias Saadat which truly made a difference to Elizabeth.

"The manner in which he talked to me, telling me what to expect and talking me through the whole procedure, it was the first time I didn't feel like I was abandoned in total darkness during an MRI" she said.

Elizabeth adds that Alias "was so patient and so communicative and logical that I even avoided sedation."

Luckily, Elizabeth's MRI results were clear. And although she was impressed with all the care she received at TSH, she will naturally always have exceptionally high praise for Alias.

"The man is a treasure!"



Elizabeth Rowland

HOSPITAL STAFF TAKE HEART HEALTH MONTH TO HEART



Cindy Chappell, a fitness instructor at TSH, offers a great program called 'Cardio, Weights and Abs.' She shares some excellent advice for TSH staff, physicians and volunteers who may want to take advantage of the hospital's excellent series of fitness programs.

Sitting is the new smoking. So this month – Heart Month – TSH staff, physicians and volunteers are encouraged to do something healthy for their heart and get down to The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) gym to try Cindy Chappell's Cardio, Weights and Abs fitness class. No more ex-er-cuses!

The Harvard Business Review reported that 'sitting' is the new 'smoking' of our generation. While smoking has been tied to about 3.5 million deaths in the U.S., the rate of deaths associated with obesity is 35 million.

TSH is committed to supporting its staff, volunteers and physicians achieve overall health and wellness. And the gym, which is conveniently located onsite at both campuses, is a great way to start.

"The Cardio, Weights and Abs class combines a little bit of everything to get your whole body moving," says Cindy, fitness instructor at TSH. "The interval training gets our participants working at their best for short periods of time, which gets their heart rate up and helps burn more fat."

The 45-minute class is made up of four-minute sections of cardio, weights and abs with each exercise performed at a high level of intensity for one-minute intervals.

"Interval training has proven to burn more fat than moving on a treadmill for an hour," says Cindy. "This class is total variety so it's an overall workout, and we're always changing it up so the body doesn't adjust and is always working."

With the music turned up, friendly faces all around and customized moves to suit all levels – beginner to advanced – Cardio, Weights and Abs is for everyone. Some participants even just pop in for the first 20 to 30 minutes and still reap the benefits of a heart-healthy workout.

Cindy adds that the class is also a lot of fun, not intimidating and the exercise mix is beneficial for osteoporosis, bone density, building long, lean muscles, heart health and stress reduction.

"It will also increase your energy to help with mid-afternoon fatigue," says Cindy, who has been a fitness instructor for about 14 years, and has taught at TSH for more than 10 years.

"I stay because I love the people," she says. "Some staff have been with me since the beginning and it's so rewarding to see how much they get out of it."

Use and Abuse of Alcohol in Sri Lanka



A Sri Lankan man drinks toddy, the sap of coconut palm, in a improvised neighborhood bar in Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- Pic: AP-Via VOA News

By Jim Stevenson

People drink alcohol for many different reasons, and its consumption and often abuse crosses socio-economic boundaries. In some areas, alcohol consumption can mark specific delineations of society. The subject becomes very interesting in Sri Lanka, where the apparent high level of illegal alcohol consumption relates to distinctions in religion, family structure, and economic status.

Michele Ruth Gamburd has spent much time studying local society in the small village of Naeaagama, about 80 kilometers south of the capital Colombo. She is Professor and Chair of Anthropology at Portland State University in the northwestern U.S. state of Oregon. She told VOA's Jim Stevenson her findings in the book *Breaking the Ashes*:

GAMBURD:

Breaking the ashes refers to what housewives do when they get up in the morning. They get the hearth going again. They break up the ashes from last night's fire and they get the wood in for this morning's fire so they can brew up a cup of tea. But the "ashes in the fire" that drinkers talk about is the warmth they get from a shot of liquor.

STEVENSON:

Buddhism is obviously the main religion there and there are prohibitions against the consumption of mind-altering substances, but the young men in the area are drinking more and more.

GAMBURD:

In the village and in much of Sri Lanka I think, the distribution of drinkers is very gendered. Women often do not drink at all, whereas men do drink, can drink and sometimes must drink in particular social contexts. I think both men and women would consider themselves Buddhists. But when I asked why women do not drink, often Buddhism was raised as a reason, whereas when I asked what men do drink or do not drink, other reasons were raised instead.

STEVENSON:

Did you notice a large underground economy for liquor?

GAMBURD:

Absolutely. And this is I think a place where ethnographic qualitative research

can illuminate what is going on and make sense of some of the statistics that people read about alcohol use in Sri Lanka and elsewhere. Estimates vary about the percentage of liquor consumed in Sri Lanka that is licit and illicit, and those percentages vary up to 90 percent being illicit. In the village where I did my research, my informant suggested it was probably most of the liquor that was consumed was locally distilled and not manufactured and taxed in legal ways.

STEVENSON:

The local police obviously must be aware of it, but there must be an interesting dynamic going on there if the percentages remain so high.

GAMBURD:

The reason that illicit liquor is profitable is because it is cheaper than licit liquor. This legal liquor is taxed so much that it becomes almost unaffordable for working class people. What we have then is a sort of a distinction in social groups arising from who can afford what type of liquor, and then a criminalization of anybody who is poor, or most men who are poor. But at the same time, that is what everybody locally drinks. So there is a duality going on here that everybody drinks it but it is illegal. And the local police I think understand that dynamic. Are they being compassionate, or are they being bribed, or are they being realistic? It is a hard call to make. The larger issues really are questions of health. Illicit distillate can sometimes be poisonous; people can go blind or die if they drink it.

STEVENSON:

How do Sri Lankans look at the problem of alcohol abuse?

GAMBURD:

I think it is good to make a distinction between normal social drinking and problem drinking. And local people do make that distinction just as we do in the west. Mostly, people [in Sri Lanka] do not hold with the disease concept of alcohol. They recognize that drinking alcohol can be addictive. They do not see liquor addiction as a mental illness so much as just really bad choices that people make consistently and they hold them responsible for that.

(Voice of America-VOA News)



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2014 RBC Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Awards opens call for nominations

WE ARE LOOKING FOR THE MOST INSPIRING IMMIGRANTS FROM ALL ACROSS CANADA

Canadian Immigrant magazine is pleased to announce the call for nominations for the RBC Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Awards of 2014.

For the sixth year, Canadian Immigrant magazine and title sponsor RBC want to recognize and celebrate the stories and achievements of outstanding Canadian immigrants who inspire newcomers and Canadians alike. Associate sponsor Chevrolet is also back on board for the second year.

"Who inspires you? That's the question we're asking," said Margaret Jotelina, editor of Canadian Immigrant. "We want to share the stories of immigrants from every corner of the country who have chosen Canada as their home and made it better for being here. We need your help in uncovering these inspiring people."

Some of the winners from previous years include dancer/choreographer Wen Wei Wang, entrepreneur and community leader Zahra Al-Harazi, NBA superstar Steve Nash, former Governor General of Canada Adrienne Clarkson and many more, including entrepreneurs, artists and community volunteers.

This national people's choice award is unique in that it allows Canadians to first nominate and then vote directly for



individuals who have made a difference since their arrival in Canada. More than 31,000 votes from across Canada were cast in the 2013 awards program.

"Nominating someone as a top Canadian immigrant provides people with an opportunity to recognize role models who have made a difference in, or who have made a significant contribution to this country," said Christine Shisler, Direc-

tor, Multicultural Markets, RBC. "We have seen some incredible past winners who have made significant contributions, and we can't wait to hear this year's motivating and inspiring stories."

A nominee can be someone who has moved to Canada and, since immigrating, has contributed to the diversity and success of this country and/or its people.

Achievements can be either professional or personal. Nominees must hold landed immigrant (Permanent Resident) or citizen status in Canada, and must reside in Canada.

"The RBC Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Awards recognize people who have shared their passions for Canada as they earned significant achievements and realized their dreams," said John Roth, Vice President for Chevrolet in Canada. "The Chevrolet Ingenuity Award will fur-

ther recognize the efforts of a truly inspirational individual."

Nominations can be made by visiting canadianimmigrant.ca/rbctop25 until February 27, 2014, 11:59 pm EST. A distinguished panel of judges will review all nominees and present a list of 75 finalists who will be profiled online in March, after which all Canadians can vote for their favourite nominees.

The 25 winners will be announced in June 2014, and will be recognized in the July print edition of Canadian Immigrant magazine and online at canadianimmigrant.ca. Winners will also receive a commemorative plaque and \$500 towards a charity of their choice provided by RBC. Chevrolet will once again be selecting one winner for its special recognition: the Chevrolet Ingenuity Award.

Changing Perceptions of Homeownership in Canada

For newcomers, the Canadian banking system can sometimes be unclear – and nowhere is this more true than when purchasing a home. While many newcomers believe they understand the process for securing a mortgage and closing a deal on a new home, many are dismayed to find how complicated the process can be.

RBC surveyed Chinese and South Asian newcomers who have been in Canada for less than a year, and compared their findings to those who have been here for between 2 and 5 years. The poll unveiled some rather interesting results – including a number of myths and realities about homeownership and what it means to newcomers.

#1: The Buying Process

What they thought: Buying a house in Canada will be similar to buying a house in my home country

Reality: As they become more tenured, newcomers are more inclined to agree that it is more complicated to buy a home in Canada than in their home country (57% of 2-5 year tenure group vs. 44% among <1 year tenure)

#2: Buying in the Suburbs



What they thought: Despite high gas and transportation costs, buying a house on the suburbs will save you money.

Reality: 52% of newcomers who have been in Canada for 2 – 5 years believe that gas and transportation costs can cost more than the prices savings of buying a home in the suburbs.

#3: Investment Opportunity

What they thought: Buying a home in Canada is a good investment

Reality: This statement held true

for newcomers of all tenures. While the majority of newcomers believe this statement to be true, the longer they've been here, the more they believe it. 73% of 2-5 year tenure group vs. 58% <1 year tenure)

#4: Interest Rates

What they thought: Getting the best interest rate is important, but not THE most important thing to consider when buying a house.

Reality: In reality, 77% newcomers

who have been in Canada between 2 and 5 years believe that getting the best interest rate is the MOST IMPORTANT consideration when buying a home vs. 52% of those who have been here <1 year.

"It was great to understand what the perception is of home ownership in Canada by newcomers," said Christine Shisler, director, cultural markets, RBC. "The more that we know about the needs of newcomers, the better able we are to provide guidance and advice as they start to settle themselves in Canada. The best advice is to come into a branch and speak to someone for tailor-made advice, get in touch with a mobile mortgage specialist, or to visit our online Advice Centre to help answer any questions you may have."

To learn about banking and starting your life in Canada, visit rbc.com/canada. This site provides checklists, tools, banking tutorials and resources to help make your move to Canada easier. You can also download your very own guide to "Understanding banking in Canada". Our website is also available in French at rbc.com/francais/canada.



Special Feature

SADHGURU:

The peninsula of Southern India is home to one of the most unique and powerful forms of mysticism. The yogis of this land created many tools for human beings to reach their ultimate nature. The magnificent temples of the south are the most obvious and powerful of these tools.

These temples were not created as places of worship, but as energized spaces that touch a human being at the most fundamental level. This creates tremendous possibilities. The impact of their energies has a lasting presence that stays with an individual long after leaving the space.

Isha offers you the rare privilege of exploring the beauty and sacredness of some of South India's most renowned temples. Powerful processes and satsangs ensure that you are receptive to the explosive power of these spaces.

Today, we give you a quick glance of the places lined up on the Southern Sacred Walks itinerary. This sojourn is the latest offering from Isha Sacred Walks, held between the 20th and 26th of February, 2014.

Thiruvannamalai



Thiruvannamalai Arunachaleswara Temple

Located on the foothills of Annamalai hills, Thiruvannamalai is a popular pilgrimage town in Tamil Nadu. The history of this place revolves around the Arunachaleswara temple, which is our first stop. The temple, inhabited by saints and sages for 1000s of years, is one of the Pancha Bhuta Stalams (five ancient shrines built for sadhana around each of the five elements – fire, earth, water, air and space). The Arunachaleswara temple was built for the element of fire.

A sojourn at Thiruvannamalai is incomplete without a short trek up the Arunachala hill, leading to the Ramanashram and Virupakshi Malai caves. It is in these caves that Ramana Maharshi had spent over a decade in meditation, and came to be known as Bhagwan Ramana Maharshi.

Thiruvanaikaval

Thiruvanaikaval, a suburb of the city of Tiruchirappalli (Trichy) in Tamil Nadu, is home to the famous Jambukeshwarar temple. Also a part of the Pancha Bhutas,



Thiruvanaikaval - Srirangam Jambukeshwara Temple

this temple is built for the element of water. An underground water spring at the temple fills up the sanctum where the linga stands. Another unique aspect is that the priests dress up as women before performing the afternoon rituals. It is believed that Parvati had performed penance on the spot of the Jambukeshwarar temple, and created a linga from the waters of the nearby Cauvery River.



Sadhguru Vasudev is a realized master, yogi and mystic, who has founded Isha Foundation, an international public service organization that strives for ultimate human well-being. For world-wide program information, visit www.ishafoundation.org

Tiruchirappalli

At the city of Trichy, we stop for a visit to Sadhguru Sri Brahma's ashram, where he spent some time in a state of



Tiruchirappalli - Sadhguru Sri Brahma's Ashram

Samadhi. The powerful energy that reverberates in this place simply cannot be missed.

Thanjavur

The Brihadeeswarar temple at Thanjavur is not a Pancha Bhuta shrine. Yet, we will be stopping at this 1000-year-old temple that is considered the pinnacle of Chola architecture. The most famous feature of this temple is the im-



Thanjavur Brihadeeswara Temple

mense 66 meter tall shikhara, or central tower. The tower is capped by a single stone weighing almost a 100 tons.

Thanjavur is also famous for its cultural heritage. So we won't miss getting a taste of the city's indigenous handicrafts at the local arts and crafts center.

Rameshwaram

The next stop is Rameshwaram, also in Tamil Nadu, but not before visiting the Ariyaman beach a few kilometers be-

fore the town. The pristine blue ocean and white sand make this beach picture-perfect.

Rameshwaram is well-known as the place where Rama built a bridge across the sea to Lanka, to rescue his wife Sita from her abductor, Ravana. The connection exists between Rameshwaram and Varanasi, a city in Northern India. Sadhguru explains the significance of this connection:



Rameshwaram Ramanathan Temple

There are thousands of sadhus and sanyasis, who, during the winter months, walk down 3,200 kilometers from the Himalayas to Rameshwaram. They collect water from Gangotri and walk all the way down to offer it to the linga at Rameshwaram. They complete this process, and by the time they are back at the Himalayas, it's summer again.

- Sadhguru

The linga that Sadhguru refers to is at the Ramanathan temple, which is our next stop. It is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas located in various parts of India. There are other lingas at this temple too, each made of different materials like salt, crystal and sand. The temple also has 22 sacred water bodies that were consecrated by Patanjali – the father of modern yoga.

Dhanushkodi

This small village at the southern tip of Rameshwaram island is famous for being the exact point where Rama's bridge to Lanka begins. Rama is said to have marked the



Sunrise at Dhanushkodi

spot for the bridge here with one end of his famous bow.

Dhanushkodi was once a bustling town, but it was completely destroyed by a cyclone, half a century ago. A few remnants are left behind today. Train tracks, a railway station, a school and a few other buildings stand amidst the shifting sands and winds of the beach, giving the place an other-worldly feel.

The program culminates with Guru Pooja – an offering of gratitude to the great beings of the past, who have made available the powerful possibility of self-transformation.

Editor's Note:

Southern Sacred Walks is being offered for the first time in the year 2014. The sojourn will be held between the dates of 20th and 26th of February. The last date to register for the program is the 15th of January, 2014. For more information, please visit sacredwalks.org.

4 day Teacher-led Inner Engineering Program in Toronto from April 3 to 6, 2014.

For more information and to register, please visit: www.innerengineering.com/live/toronto

Local contact: 416 300 3010 or email: toronto@ishafoundation.org



Telepathy is the transmission of information from one person to another without using any of our known sensory channels or physical interaction. The term was coined in 1882 by the classical scholar Frederic William Henry Myers, a founder of the Society for Psychical Research, and has remained more popular than the earlier expression thought-transference. It was derived from an ancient Greek word $\lambda\epsilon$, tele meaning "distant" and $\pi\acute{\alpha}\theta\omicron\varsigma$, pathos or -patheia meaning feeling, perception, passion, affliction, experience etc.

Scientific consensus does not view telepathy as a real phenomenon. Many studies seeking to detect, understand, and utilize telepathy have been done, but according to the prevailing view among scientists, telepathy lacks replicable results from well-controlled experiments.

Origins of the concept



← **S. Pathmanathan, B.A. (Hons) Cey**

Revised and translated by

S. Raymond Rajabalan, B.Sc. (Hons) Cey →



explain how some people have come up with the idea of telepathy. Thought insertion/removal is a symptom of psychosis, particularly of schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder. Psychiatric patients who experience this symptom falsely believe that some of their thoughts are not their own and that others are putting thoughts into their minds (thought insertion). Some patients feel as if thoughts are being taken out of their minds or deleted (thought removal). Along with other symptoms of psychosis, delusions of thought insertion may be reduced by antipsychotic medication.

removal or unconscious memories of psychological symbiosis may have led to the invention of "telepathy" as a notion and the belief that telepathy exists.

Many researchers of Telepathy and its effects feel there are many components such as Mental Projection, Mind Exchange, Telepathic Radiation, Conscious Transfer, Mind link, Psychic Wave Manipulation, Telepathic Speaking, Dark side view, Body language etc involved in this phenomenon.

In our own life we experience various situations that are interpreted by some

had advanced knowledge of events such as the death of Michael Jackson, breakdown of the marriage of Tiger Woods, Tsunami in Indonesia and the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan. However, there is no recorded evidence of these events being predicted before they occurred.

Apart from occurrences of Telepathy in humans number of scholars have done research in animals, to confirm the existence of this phenomenon among animals.

Raphaella Pope from Davis, California a well known animal Communicator claims that based on her experience Telepathy is an international language among animals. In her book Wisdom of the animals, Raphaella has mentioned many examples of the dialogues she had with animals. Last year, neuroscientists

Telepathy



According to British psychical researcher Roger Luckhurst, the origin of the concept of telepathy in the Western civilization can be tracked to the late 19th century. In his view, science did not frequently concern itself with "the mind" prior to this. As the physical sciences made significant advances, scientific concepts were applied to mental phenomena (e.g., animal magnetism), with the hope that this would help understand paranormal phenomena. The modern concept of telepathy emerged in this context.

The notion of telepathy is similar to two psychological concepts: delusions of thought insertion/removal and psychological symbiosis. This similarity might

Psychological symbiosis, on the other hand, is a less well established concept. It is an idea found in the writings of early psychoanalysts, such as Austrian-born British psychoanalyst Melanie Klein. It entails the belief that in the early psychological experience of the child (during earliest infancy), the child is unable to tell the difference between his or her own mind, on one hand, and his or her experience of the mother/parent, on the other hand. This state of mind is called psychological symbiosis; with development, it ends, but, purportedly, aspects of it can still be detected in the psychological functioning of the adult. Putatively, the experience of either thought insertion/

as various forms of telepathy. Sometimes we receive a phone call from someone exactly at the same time as we have been thinking of calling the very same person. Similarly many of us have experienced a situation where a friend or a relative arrives at the very same time we have been thinking of that person. Such instances are the result of Super Consciousness or Extra sensory perception (ESP). There have been a number of instances where people have had premonition of events happening in their own life or in the lives of their loved ones. However, until now there seems to be no acceptable explanation for these occurrences.

There are many who claim that they

in Duke University, North Carolina claimed that they have invented an implant that allows rats — and maybe monkeys — to communicate telepathically, even across great distances. Meanwhile many bioscientists believe that killer whales are able to send undersea signals to other whales swimming hundreds of miles away.

Generally speaking, there have been many attempts to determine if there is any truth in this phenomenon called telepathy but none has produced any credible results. In the absence of any reliable evidence Telepathy may continue to remain as an unsolved mysterious phenomenon.



DESERTED VILLAGE

By: C. Kamalaharan



....Sweet smiling
village, loveliest of
the lawn,

Thy sports are fled,
and all thy charm
withdrawn;

Amidst thy bowers
the tyrant hand is
seen,

And desolation
saddens all thy
green...

Apologies to Oliver
Gold Smith

Returning after a lapse of fifteen years
To my village, where reigned wholesome fare,
Without hindrance whatsoever to nature,
With lush green vegetation all around,
And plenty to suffice for a peaceful living.

Lo and behold! the entire village completely ravaged;
A village where once flowed milk and honey
Is now in wilderness, a scene of utter desolation.
A tensed silence prevailed all over,
As I wandered with mounting apprehension.

No more could be heard the timepieces of nature;
The crowing of roosters and the pealing of bells.
The rattling of landmasters and the grinding of bullock carts.
The whirring of water pumps and the jarring of loud speakers,
And the clattering of the 'kottu rotti' eateries.

The only sound heard was the chirping of birds,
The cawing of crows,
The cuckoo of the cuckoos,
The buzzing of flies and bees,
And the barking of stray dogs.

As I wandered along the dusty lanes,
My heart sank at the sights of devastation;
Dilapidated buildings among the dense foliage,
Rows of shops as piles of rubble,
And topless palmyrah palms as erect pillars.

The 'haves have fled to safe havens,
While the 'have nots' remained to languish,
And fend for themselves, doing manual labour.
Only a few retail outlets remained open,
To feed the hapless 'have nots'.

Arriving tired and weary at the junction,
A one time hive of activity,
A few middle aged rustics puffing cigars,
Mistook me for an outsider,
Held me captive and questioned.

"Who are you?" the harsh tone stunned me!
"Asking me, a native of this place such a question!
Feeling offended, "Who are you?" I retorted.
"We are natives of this place."
"Me too, a son of the soil", I hit back.

"We have not seen you before," they persisted.
"Was out of the country."
"What brought you here?" "Came to see my home."
"Where is it?" "Over there in the thicket."
"O.K, you may go but return soon."

Trudging through the overgrown thicket,
I was taken aback to see strangers in my home.
The same question, "Who are you?" they demanded.
"This is my home, I came to see it."
"Your home!, It's ours now," a lady lambasted.

"What nonsense are you talking?" I raised my voice.
"Are we talking nonsense?" the lady yelled.
"Yes you are! unlawfully trespassed on my property."
"We'll beat you, get lost" the men joined the brawl,
Threatening me, clenching their fists.

Thoroughly shaken and in a state of hopeless despair,
I stood thunderstruck not knowing what to do.
"Why are you waiting?" a man shouted in a fit of rage.
Realising the impossibility of evicting them,
I left my home disheartened, disappointed and disgraced.



WORDS OF PEACE



A Question of Recognition

These days, courses and books and lectures promoting self-improvement can be found everywhere, suggesting that many of life's problems are the fault of the individual. If only we were better people, they imply, we wouldn't have all these troubles.

"I know people go to different seminars and lectures, read different books, because they want to be better," says Prem Rawat, known worldwide as an ambassador of peace. The real issue, he says, is not about becoming better, but about "realizing who you are"—how can anyone improve if they don't know who they are in the first place?

Mr. Rawat travels the world speaking about peace and offering a practical experience of it. Real joy and peace exist in the heart of every human being, he says: "No one is void of these most essential human treasures." So, he says, there is no need for improvement. We only need to know how to recognize what we already are—vessels for the most extraordinary peace.

Why, Mr. Rawat asks those who come to listen to him, is self-recognition so important? He recently told an old folktale to answer this question.

"There once was a lion who was king of the jungle," he began. "He was ruthless. He would kill many animals, and

then just eat one. All the animals realized that soon there would not be many of them left, so they went to the lion and said, 'We will voluntarily send you one animal every day. You won't have to go hunting. An animal will come to the mouth of your cave every day, and you can eat it and be happy.'

"The lion said, 'Okay, that sounds pretty good.' It was very sad for the rest of the animals, but it was better than what had been happening.

"One day, it was the turn of a little rabbit to go to the cave. As he walked, he thought to himself, 'This lion must have a weakness, and I must exploit this weakness.' He was walking as slowly as he could, taking his time, so he arrived hours late.

"The lion was furious. 'Why did they send you? You're not even a mouthful—and you are late!'

"The rabbit said, 'Let me explain what happened. All the animals realized I was only a mouthful, so they sent five of us rabbits for you. As we were coming here, there was another lion, and this lion said he was going to eat us. We all explained that we were for the big lion, but this lion was even bigger than you are. He said he didn't care about you. So he ate four of us, and I ran for my life. Here I am. Eat me.'

"The lion was even more furious. He said, 'Where is this lion? I'm going to settle the score before I eat you.' The rabbit led him to a well. He said, 'He's in there.' The lion looked down and roared. The echo from the well was very loud, and his reflection in the well looked huge. He immediately backed off and said, 'This is a bigger lion!'

"The little rabbit said, 'See, he's bigger and more ferocious than you. You'll have to run.' The lion said, 'No, I'll fight! There can only be one king, and I want to be the king.' Immediately the lion jumped into the well.

"What was the weakness that the rab-

bit exploited?" Mr. Rawat asks. "The lion did not recognize his own reflection.

"I'm not trying to change you. I'm trying to tell you that what you are looking for is inside of you—always has been and always will be. Peace is the only thing you cannot search for. Joy is the only thing you cannot bring in—because it's already inside of you."

To learn more about Prem Rawat visit:

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INDIA REPUBLIC DAY PARADE:

CULTURAL HERITAGE, MILITARY MIGHT ON DISPLAY AT RAJPATH

Kids seen with the Indian flag ahead of Republic Day celebrations in Nischantapur, Agartala on Jan 18, 2014. Pic: by PTI



Multi-hued images of India's rich cultural heritage, its achievements in diverse fields and military prowess were on majestic display at the magnificent Rajpath, the ceremonial boulevard, here on Sunday, January 26th as the nation celebrated its 65th Republic Day amid tight security.

Marching down from the seat of power at Raisina Hills to Red Fort, the parade showcased India's 'unity in diversity' and defence capability as thousands of spectators along the 8-km-long route cheered the contingents and the mechanised columns.

The well-turned out and synchronised military and police contingents led by General Officer Commanding (Delhi), Lt General Subroto Mitra, marched proudly to the lilting tunes of bands through Rajpath where President and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Pranab Mukherjee took the salute.

The march past was watched by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the chief guest of the Republic Day celebration, Vice President Hamid Ansari, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi and the country's top political and military brass, besides the diplomatic community. Braving the winter chill, a large number of enthusiastic people came to witness the parade that culminated at the historic Mughal monument of Red Fort.

Minutes before the parade began, the Prime Minister, Defence Minister A.K. Antony and chiefs of army, navy and air force laid wreaths at 'Amar Jawan Jyoti', the war memorial at the India Gate where an eternal flame burns in memory of those who laid down their lives defending the frontiers of the nation. A massive ground-to-air security apparatus was put in place in the national capital to ensure an incident-free Republic Day celebrations.

Snipers of National Security Guard were deployed at all high-rises along the parade route. Around 25,000 security personnel were deployed across the city while the commandos of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police and Delhi Police kept vigil at important locations.

The unfurling of the tricolour by the President and playing of the national anthem were followed by a customary 21-gun salute. Among others who witnessed the parade at Rajpath was Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

The parade began shortly after Mukherjee and Abe arrived at the saluting base at Rajpath escorted by the President's bodyguards riding bedecked horses.

Before commencement of the parade, Sub Inspector K. Prasad Babu of Andhra Pradesh's counter-Maoist force was posthumously conferred the highest peacetime gallantry award Ashok Chakra.

Babu was honoured for an anti-Naxal operation during which he led an assault unit of Greyhounds (anti-Naxal force of Andhra Pradesh) near Andhra-Chhattisgarh border.

The main attractions of the parade were scintillating show of air power, fascinating tableaux depicting the diverse culture and dance by colourfully dressed schoolchildren.

A highlight of this year's parade was the display of India's first indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft Tejas.

Tejas is a fourth generation, supersonic, multi-role combat aircraft designed and developed by DRDO. Main battle tank Arjun MK-II, the first indigenously designed and developed tank, also referred to as 'Desert Ferrari' for its excellent mobility, was also on display.

The recently inducted transport aircraft C-130J Super Hercules, which is optimised for undertaking special operations, and the gigantic C-17 Globemaster, a heavy lift, long-range aircraft, were major attractions of this year's flypast.

DRDO displayed the 'Astra' and 'Helina' missiles, models of an underwater vehicle, mini UAV-NETRA, tracked surveillance vehicle Muntra S and unmanned aerial vehicle-'Nishant'. The weaponry put on display by the Indian Army included T-90 tank 'Bheeshma', multi-launcher rocket system Smerch, Brahmos weapon system and transportable satellite terminals.

A flypast by the Advanced Light Helicopter 'Dhruv' of the Army Aviation Corps drew loud cheers from the spectators.

The marching contingents of the army included horse-mounted columns of the 61st Cavalry, the Parachute Regiment, Punjab Regiment, Madras Regiment, Rajputana Rifles, Mahar Regiment, Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry Regiment, 9 Gorkha Rifles and 103 Infantry Battalion.

The Indian Air Force tableau presented the story of its transformation over the past eight decades, highlighting its fighting prowess.

The leap in sophistication of IAF's training aircraft from the early Tiger Moth to the latest Pilatus PC-7 was also on display. Another exhibit depicted the transformation in the fighter fleet from a Wapiti biplane to the state-of-art, air dominance fighter Sukhoi-30 MKI.

Similar transformation in the transport fleet of IAF from the Dakota DC-3 to the C-17 Globe Master was also shown. The navy's tableau depicted a scaled-down model of a submarine, one of the most potent and deadly military platforms in its arsenal.

Over the years, the submarine operations have grown in scope and complexity and today the Indian Navy operates nuclear-powered submarines which have greater punch and reach and can remain under water for longer durations.

The marching contingents of the navy was led by Surgeon Lieutenant Ambika Nautiyal while the air force contingent was headed by Squadron Leader Manvender Singh.

The marching contingents of paramilitary and other forces included those from BSF, Assam Rifles, Coast Guard, CRPF, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, CISF, Sashastra Seema Bal, Railway Protection Force, Delhi Police, National Cadet Corps and National Service Scheme.

The camel-mounted band of BSF and the ex-servicemen marching contingent was another major attraction. After the armed forces and police formations came the country's rich cultural part which was depicted in 18 tableaux — 13 from states and five from ministries.

From the construction of the Pir Panjal Railway Tunnel in Kashmir to a tribute to Assamese singer Bhupen Hazarika, and from the story of the valiant Tipu Sultan to celebration of Pongal, the themes of the tableaux reflected the country's cultural heritage, diversity and its achievements.

The first tableau to roll down the Rajpath was from Uttar Pradesh, titled 'Subah-e-Banaras'.

It showcased the rich heritage of the holy city of Benaras (Varanasi). The tableau from Meghalaya highlighted the importance of arecanut, the popular cash crop of the state and its role in boosting the

livelihood of the locals.

The Jammu and Kashmir tableau displayed the multi-cultural landscape and conflux of nomadic communities. The tableau carried a reference to the world's first cloned pashmina goat, 'Noori', and the pashmina-making process.

The Assam tableau highlighted contribution of Bhupen Hazarika, the 'Golden Voice of Assam' while the tableau from Tamil Nadu celebrated Pongal, the harvest festival. The tableau from Maharashtra was a life-size boat celebrating 'Narali Poornima', the coconut festival of the Koli (fisherman) community.

One of the engrossing concepts this year was from Karnataka, which through its tableau paid tribute to Tipu Sultan, who was also called 'Mysore Tiger'. Known for being a treasure house of medicinal herbs, Uttarakhand's tableau recounted the role of herbal medicine dating back to the 'Sanjeevani Booti' from the Hindu epic Ramayana.

'Purulia Chhau', the dance form using masks, featured on West Bengal's tableau while Rajasthan highlighted 'Terah Taali' dance, which is performed in the Mewar and Marwar regions of the state.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences showcased Indian scientists carrying out research work in Antarctica while Ministries of Agriculture and Tribal Affairs highlighted their achievements.

Twenty of the 25 children selected for the National Bravery Award-2013 also participate in the parade. Five children were awarded posthumously.

In the children's pageant section, nearly 1,000 boys and girls drawn from four schools in Delhi and one from North-East Zonal Cultural Centre, Arunachal Pradesh, presented dances and other items.

A breath-taking performance by BSF's motorcycle team 'Janbaz' enthralled the spectators as they performed 'side riding', 'ladder double', 'neck riding', 'harmony', 'human pyramid' and other exercises.

Fly past by the Indian Air Force planes and 'daredevil' motorcycle performance by BSF men were the high points of the parade.

As the parade was coming to a conclusion, 162 personnel from BSF's motorcycling team displayed their skills, from saluting the President while standing on the bikes to forming a human pyramid on moving motorcycles.

The jawans, riding 30 bikes, displayed their acrobatic skills while making various formations such as 'Guldasta', 'side riding', 'ladder double', 'neck riding' and 'harmony', while passing through the Rajpath.

Following it was the fly past by planes and attack helicopters of Indian Air Force. The grand finale of the parade was a spectacular flypast by IAF. The flypast commenced with 'chakra' formation, comprising three Mi-35 helicopters in 'vic' formation.

It was followed by another 'vic' formation by three C-130J Super Hercules aircraft. Trailing them was a 'globe' formation comprising one C-17 Globemaster flanked by two Su-30s fighter aircraft.

Then came five Jaguars flying in 'arrowhead' formation, another five Mig-29 air superiority fighters called 'tridents' flew in 'fulcrum' style.

The Mig-29s were followed by three Su-30 MKI which, while flying over the saluting base split the formation, making a 'trishul' in the sky. The finale to the flypast was a 'vertical charlie' manoeuvre by a Su-30 MKI over the saluting base.



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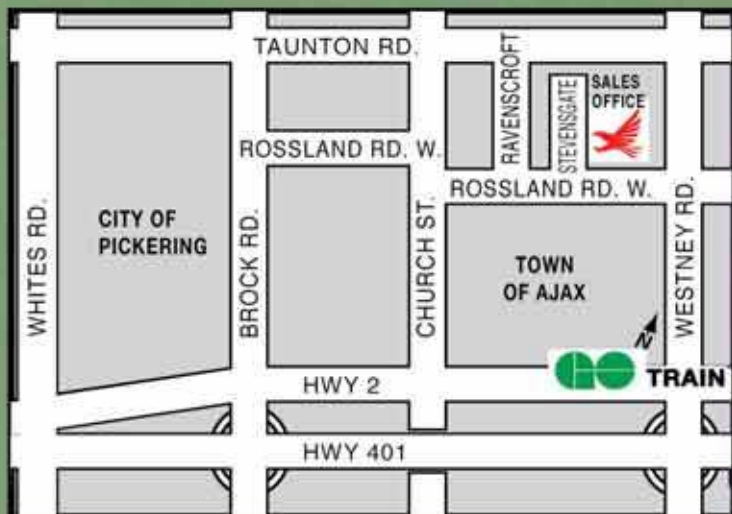


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Love's Lingo by Tamil poet Kaviyarasu Vairamuthu



Translated by K. Thirukumaran

Wishing Everyone a Happy Valentine's Day, February 14, 2014:

lingo of the wind
is it tune or sound

lingo of flower
is it scent or color

lingo of shore
is it surf or wave

love's lingo
is it what
glows in the eyes
or that
smothers in a kiss

getting to know nature's lingo
makes no need of humanity's lingo
getting to know heart's lingo
humanity no longer needs lingo (lingo of the wind)

blows around wind
sans any bound

love's spoken convo
sans any lingo

unlike a word giving reliance
perplexing is silence

eyes render spoken word
perplexing even god

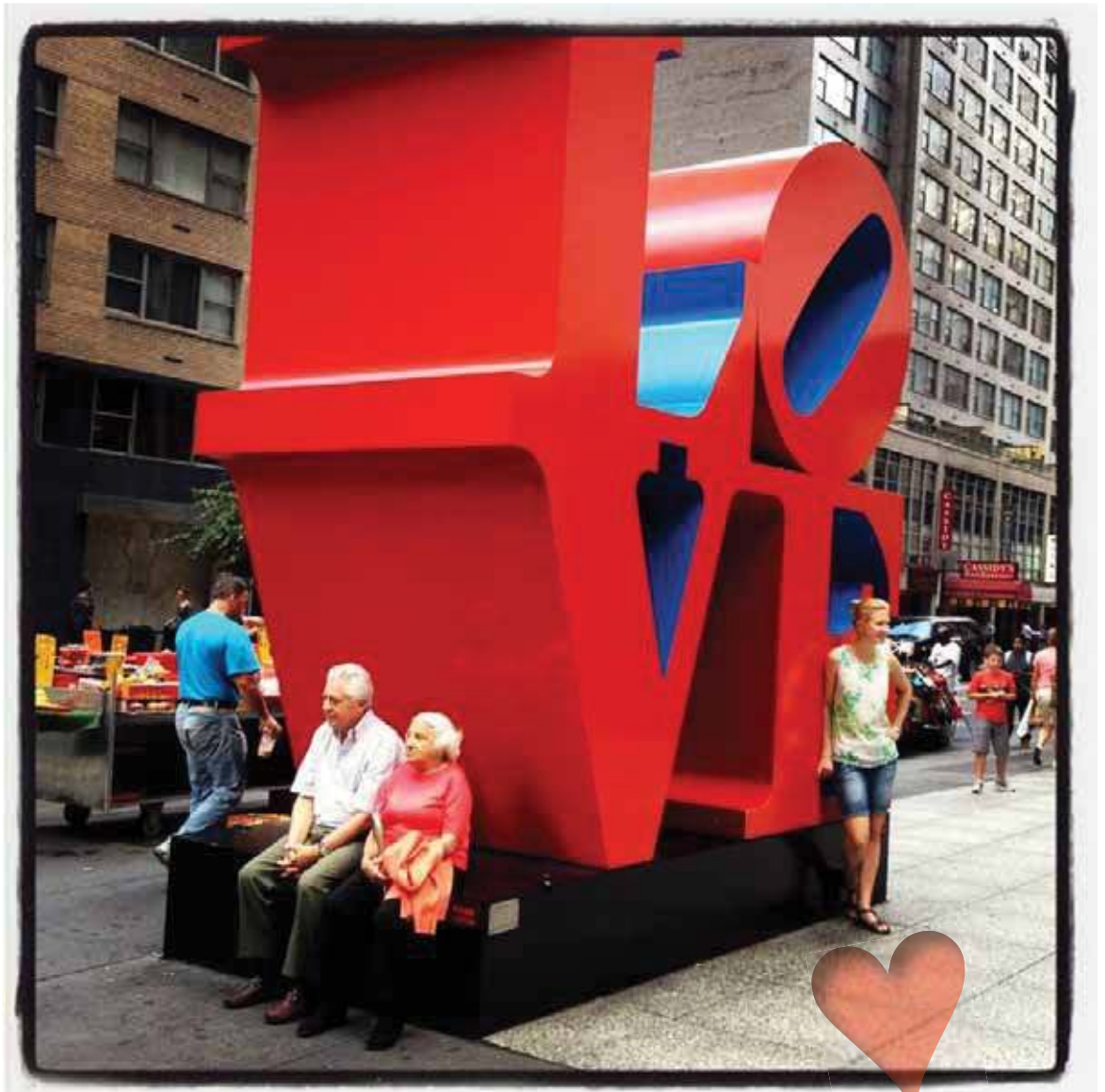
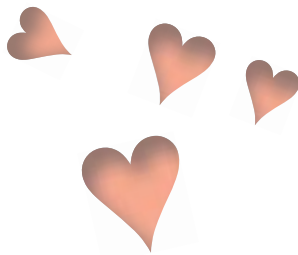
roaming winds cannot be plotted
loving words rendered all not fit notes

getting to know nature's lingo
makes no need of humanity's lingo
getting to know heart's lingo
humanity no longer needs lingo (lingo of the wind)

lingo of sky sprinkle as downpour
lingo of rainbow unveil as color

truth silenced lingo in tear
womanhood in silence lingo its pride

nights where sounds slumber
sky-risen lingo are stars



"Love" - Sculpture by Robert Indiana-at 55th Street & 6th Avenue, NYC - Pic by: K. Thirukumaran

love slumbering hearts
therein its lingo are beats

getting to know nature's lingo
makes no need of humanity's lingo
getting to know heart's lingo
humanity no longer needs lingo (lingo of the wind)

lingo of the wind
is it tune or sound

lingo of flower
is it scent or color

lingo of shore
is it surf or wave

love's lingo
is it what
glows in the eyes
or that
smothers in a kiss

getting to know nature's lingo
makes no need of humanity's lingo
getting to know heart's lingo
humanity no longer needs lingo



iNFORCE LIFE Financial Services hosts 1st Awards Gala Night



President & CEO Chandran Rasalingam with the display of various services offered by iNFORCE Group of Companies

President & CEO Chandran Rasalingam delivering his speech

President & CEO of iNFORCE with guests



Staffs & Consultants of iNFORCE



iNFORCE for Humanity presenting the cheque to SAAAC



Dance performance



Toronto's iNFORCE LIFE Financial Services Inc. hosted its First Award Gala Night for the winners of 2013 on Friday, January 10th, 2014 at Chandni Banquet Hall.

Nishani Joseph emceed and conducted the event. She started with a brief introduction about iNFORCE LIFE and followed by Salil Chatrath's Welcome Speech.

The audience were entertained with a Fusion dance that was performed by Thakshika Sritharan.

The Public Relations officer Vijitha Mylvaganam joined the emceeing along with Nishani Joseph and Mr. Reh Bhanji from Desjardins was called on stage to give a motivational speech about business.

First there were 6 award winners for producing annual premiums above \$10,000 and have successfully contributed to the production growth of iNFORCE LIFE were presented with Mementos. The recipients were Rajini Jospheh, Bhamathi Ramdas,

Jovyna Manuyag, Rathina Arun, Karthika Gnanachandran and Demison Alwin.

iNFORCE LIFE didn't stop just selling insurance, it has taken a wide step to give back to the community through iNFORCE for Humanity. iNFORCE for Humanity went on a trip to Costa Rica to build a house for the needy and on the day of event iNFORCE for Humanity also donated \$2014 to South Asian Autism Awareness Center. (SAAAC)

Rookie of the Year award was presented to the individual who joined iNFORCE last year (2013) and stood out by performing exceptionally and contributed to the growth of iNFORCE. This award was presented to Mrs. Bhamathy Ramdas by a well known Dentist from the community Dr. Nalini Sutharsan of NS Dental.

The Advisor of the Year award was given to the individual who committed full time and contributed highest volume of business

in 2013. And the award was handed over to Mrs. Rajini Joseph by a well known family doctor from Markham Dr. Komathy Jayshankar.

The CEO and President of iNFORCE Mr. Chandran Rasalingam delivered a speech mentioning the mission, vision and the future goal of iNFORCE Group of Companies.

He also delivered the message that iNFORCE LIFE is looking to hire dedicated and talented individuals to become successful in the financial services industry.

To sum up the event Vijitha Mylvaganam gave the Vote of Thanks and the agents and guests were served with drinks and dinner.



JOHN BODDY HOMES PRESENTS 'EAGLE WOODS'

THE EAGLE GLEN B LR



THE PRESCOTT A LR

John Boddy Homes, voted 'Best Home Builder' in Ajax/Pickering for the seventeenth year in a row for this year's Readers' Choice Awards, has broken ground in its newest community in south Ajax, "Eagle Woods". Located just minutes east of Toronto, and within walking distance to shores of Lake Ontario, "Eagle Woods" combines the closeness and convenience of city living with the beauty and tranquility of the neighbouring lakeshore. "Eagle Woods" currently offers spacious two-storey freehold townhomes and will feature later semi-detached homes as well as detached homes in two-storey, back-split and side-split designs. Homes start at 1,700 square feet and will range up to 3,534 square feet in size. John Boddy Homes offers full-depth traditional size lots with a minimum of 110 feet in depth and "Eagle Woods" will offer a great selection of extra deep lots, pie shaped lots, pond lots, conservation area lots, golf-course lots and walk-out basement lots. With such a broad range of house sizes and styles, "Eagle Woods" has the ideal home to suit every preference. From the unique exteriors and charming streetscapes, to the elegant interiors, various John Boddy Homes include impressive standard features such as vaulted ceilings, double door entries, décor columns, mirrored sliding closet doors, ceramic kitchen backsplashes, double basin bathroom vanities with make-up counters and so much more. Their gourmet kitchens, welcoming great rooms, cozy gas fireplaces and elegant dining rooms with coffered ceilings are all spacious and comfortable, making them the perfect location to enjoy time together with family or entertain friends. In addition, some models include impressive extras such as classic French doors, transom windows and custom octagonal skylights allowing light to travel throughout the home for a bright and spacious feel.

For their homeowner's convenience, most homes from John Boddy include main or second floor laundry rooms, kitchen breakfast bars, walk-in pantries, private water closets, interior garage access, high efficiency furnaces and basement rough-ins for future bathrooms. Other features include arched entryways, moulded polyurethane millwork - which will not rot,

twist or warp - window mullions on all front and rear facades and decorative garage doors featuring appealing window lites. Custom landscaping packages and paved driveways are also included in all homes providing the renowned curb appeal that enhances the entire "Eagle Woods" community.

Innovative floorplan designs combined with an extensive array of standard features included with every new home have become a corporate trademark of John Boddy Homes. Not only does a John Boddy home offer such striking standard features, there are also a wealth of opportunities to upgrade, making their homes as unique as each individual homeowner. The "Eagle Woods" Sales Office will feature a Décor Centre that contains a wide range of upgrade items to select from in order to customize your home. Their knowledgeable décor consultants allow home buyers to make upgrade selections on site, enabling them to conveniently personalize their home.

When you purchase a new home in "Eagle Woods" there are no hidden closing costs. John Boddy Homes pays foreducation levies, development charges, water and hydro meter hookup fees, boulevard tree planning, a landscape package and paved driveway.

Currently John Boddy Homes is offering an incentive package of \$2,000 in free upgrades plus 5 appliances or Builder's Premium Hardwood 3" by 5/8" in the Great Room and Dining Area, as well as a 6 months Roger's Package which includes free internet, phone, cable and a HD PVR.

John Boddy Homes now offers exclusive in-house financing and mortgage services through JBH Financial Services Ltd. At JBH Financial Services we are able to provide you with the convenience of purchasing the new home of your dreams and qualifying for a mortgage all in the same place - it couldn't be any easier! JBH Financial Services works with most major banks and lending institutions and offers a six-month rate hold. These six-month rate holds allow you to lock in the lowest rates available while guaranteeing you the security and peace of mind of knowing that your rates will not increase before your house closes. In fact, if at the time of closing interest rates are lower than what

you signed at, we will provide you with the lower rate! Discover the JBH Financial Services advantage.

The "Eagle Woods" community offers many important neighbourhood amenities such as places of worship, fully equipped parks and easy access to both Ajax and Go-Transit Services. Toronto is easily accessible from nearby Highway 401. Located just south of a host of shopping and recreation centres, "Eagle Woods" allows residents all the amenities of the urban lifestyle while providing the serenity of the neighbouring lakeshore.

Since 1955 John Boddy has been involved in the construction of thousands of new homes throughout Ontario and has earned a reputation as an accomplished builder of fine residential communities. Of significance are the award winning 1000-acre "Bridlewood" Community developed during the 1960's and 1970's in Scarborough; the "Forestbrook" Community in Pickering developed in the 1980's; "Willowcreek" in Peterborough; and, more recently "Eagle Ridge on the Green" and "Eagle Glen" in Ajax developed from the 1990's until present day.

The John Boddy Homestead of experienced management, planners, designers, supervisors, marketing and sales personnel has distinguished itself by creating innovative and unique designs in truly outstanding communities that meet the needs and desires of today's families.

New model homes for the "Eagle Woods" community are under construction and will be open in early 2014. Drop by the current Sales Presentation Centre located on Stevensgate Drive, north of Rossland Road West, one half kilometre west of Westney Road and three kilometres north of Hwy. 401. Sales Presentation Centre hours are Monday through Thursday 1:00pm to 8:00pm; Saturday, Sunday and Holidays 11:00am to 6:00pm; closed Friday. Let their friendly knowledgeable staff help you determine which John Boddy home is perfect for you and your family and get set to join the ever growing "Eagle Woods" family community. For more information, please call (905) 619-1777 or visit their website at www.johnboddyhomes.com.

CHINA - ON THE ROAD TO WORLD SUPREMACY?



By: *Jesudason Atputharajah*

China is on the verge of ascent to a new level world power. History has witnessed the rise and demise of so many nations especially that of the Holy Roman Empire. As the USA is appearing to be on a stage of rapid decline, China may well be able to take its place if the current trend continues. China is now working hard to progress economically and militarily and expected to be the dominant power of the 21st century.

China has a population of 1.4 billion and is the most populous country in the world. It has financial reserves more than U.S\$ 3.5 trillion. Its military and naval forces are developed systematically. Its annual economic growth of roughly over 9 % during the last 20 years has led to a ten-fold increase in its per capita Gross Domestic Product. Its purchasing power for military expenditure has increased 21 fold. Besides China has dominated 18 out of the 20 centuries of the world's recorded history. Hence China is well on the way to world supremacy.

China's economy has increased by leaps and bounds. It lags behind only the US-which it will overtake soon. Most electronic appliances in the world like computers or smart-phones are made in China. In 2012 alone Chinese factories made more than 314 million computers, 116 million monitors, 120 million tablet PCs and 114 million television sets. It is also making prompt headway in the automotive industry too.

A. Its Economic Growth and recent Developments:

A few decades ago, articles manufactured were not considered world class. Made-in-China was a by-word for poor and shoddy workmanship. Now Chinese industry is at the forefront of world economy. Chinese goods are much wanted in world markets for their reasonable prices and fitting workmanship. However Chinese influence was not felt much in the world scene despite its past glories and achievements

until the turn of the 20th century. China was constantly finding itself being dominated by the U.S and the British. The Chinese began to have a sense of pride in their own government after the communist revolution. China's senior leader Xi Jinping now talks of the "Two Hundreds"- the goal of making the nation's entire vast population moderately well-off by 2020, and the goal of making China a fully modernised and developed nation by 2049, the 100th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. Xi's vision for China is essentially four fold.: Strong China (politically, diplomatically, scientifically, militarily), civilised China (equity and fairness, rich culture, high morals), Harmonious China (amity among social classes) and Beautiful China (healthy environment and low pollution)

B. Towards Modernization:

Chinese leaders want to move 250 million Chinese citizens from ancestral farmlands into new urban residences where they will work in factories or offices instead of on the land. China will have numerous megacities where there may be many high rises in place of rural homes. By 2025, 70 percent of the Chinese population of 900 million will be living in cities. The Chinese communist party has now shifted its priorities from the peasant economy to an urban economy. An urbanised economically powerful will definitely be able to outclass the US and the U.K sheerly through its immaculate numbers.

C. Soft-Power Advances:

However China is a developing nation and US is still the world's largest developed nation. The future of China was spelled out by president Hu Jintao when he invoked "work hard to make our country more politically influential, more economically competitive, build more congenial image and make it more morally inspiring." China has extended its influence near and far. It has tried to wield its influence in the South Pacific through its culture, political values and foreign policies. It is very active in Western,

Central and South Pacific projecting public diplomacy. It provides loans to governments and infrastructure in return for influence. China has enclaves in most south-east Asian countries-especially Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. It has also fruitful relationship with Australia. The iron ore from Australia helped Chinese industrialisation. Chinese now tops the list of new Australian settlers. Forty percent of all Asian settlers are from China amounting to 1.3 million mainly in Sydney, Victoria and Melbourne. Chinese immigrants now make up 3 % of Australia's population. China is making their headway in Africa too especially in Ghana, Angola, Uganda and Mozambique. Their soft-power intrusions take the form of investments in the oil and gas sector. Recently they have also shown interest in Sri Lanka with providing infrastructural assistance in the matter of road and railway construction in the war affected areas. Many of them have come in as technical experts in development programs.

D. The Canadian Connection:

Chinese started coming to Canada in the 19th century with the construction of the Canadian -Pacific Railway. More than 50 % of the Canadian settlers came in 2000/2001. Their concentrations are found mainly in the GTA (537,060), Metro Vancouver (402,000), Greater Montreal (120,000), Calgary (75,410) and Edmonton (53,670). Chinese are naturally very industrious persons and they know how to make the best use of the resources and opportunities available for them. There are several Chinese malls in Toronto where they indulge in all sorts of activities. One should only visit the China town in Spadina and College to see for themselves how active and industrious they are. They do not neglect their education, instilled into them by the ancient philosopher, Confucius. One could visit a library like Fairview and Woodside to see that Chinese kids and adults making the best use of the facilities. Chinese presence in Canadian megacities are on the rise. Chinese are not only populous in their own country, their global influence is progressing at a rapid rate.



SRI LANKA:

Wigneswaran and intellectuals call for Diaspora help in rebuilding the Northern Province, Sri Lanka

By Thulasi Muttulingam

The brain drain that affected the Northern Province is continuing to hold sway and needs to be addressed, said Chief Minister C.V Wigneswaran at a conference held in Jaffna recently. The conference, titled 'Democratizing the North: A Dialogue on Governance, Development and Vulnerability', organized by the non-governmental organization, The International Center for Ethnic Studies (ICES), saw a number of provincial councillors, professionals and intellectuals from the Northern Province taking part.

All three issues: Governance, Development and Vulnerability in the North were much discussed. According to the ICES, the dialogue was organized in Jaffna because the election of the Northern Provincial Council had created the space to explore such issues more closely.

On Governance, it noted, "Governance' was a key driver of the conflict and continues to remain a highly contested concept. Now for the first time, the North has a democratically elected legislature co-existing with a Governor appointed by the Centre. This session on governance will explore some of the complexities of these changing relationships, look at the strengths and weaknesses of the current Provincial Council system, explore the impact of a strong military presence, and explore alternative and more effective models of governance."

On Development: "After the end of the war, the government launched a development initiative in the North and East. Large amounts were invested in the Uthuru Wasanthaya and Nagenahira Navodaya on infrastructure development, resettlement, livelihood development and welfare programmes. These development initiatives were carried out mainly by the Ministry of Economic Development, with military involvement in several of the development initiatives in these areas. Civil society actors have critiqued the use of these highly centralised development initiatives and questioned if these initiatives have helped re-establish real sources of livelihood for people in the North and the East."

And on Vulnerability: "The war created a number of issues surrounding access to land, loss of economic assets, edu-



Opening of Spinal chord injuries treatment center, Pampaimadu, Jan 17, 2014

cation and livelihood opportunities. This has been accompanied by multiple displacement, forced resettlement, deaths, abductions and disappearances. It has generated a large numbers of war widows, single headed households and disabled. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the levels of gender based violence have increased. This session will look at different aspects of vulnerability in the North and try to understand if the existing programmes and support networks have been adequate to help people transit from war to peace."

It promised to be an interesting forum so many made the trip from Colombo too, to see what the newly elected council had to say. They had plenty to say. Chief Minister Wigneswaran made the opening address on governance and the specific challenges in governing that the NPC was facing. Though he was circumspect in his criticism of the military governor, Major Chandrasri in his speech, he was more forthcoming in the Q&A session, where he said it was very difficult to work with someone with an attitude that had gone unchallenged before of "I am the King of all I survey."

On his own views on governance, he

explained that he believed firmly in 'dialogue, duty and discipline' whereby the masses that were being governed were asked on how they wanted to be governed and were answerable to by the government. To this end, he said that he had initiated a sweeping needs assessment of the people in the North, on what their issues were. "Some farmers in Vavuniya said that this was the first time that those who govern had asked them what their wants and needs and problems are. In other words our governing entities hitherto had foisted their selective decisions on the people," he said.

He also noted on the central government's policies: "It will not be therefore surprising that the polity will not appreciate investment in certain areas when its priorities lie elsewhere. For instance, for a Northern populace that yearns for security, freedom of movement and expression, educational facilities, the opportunity to make a living and health facilities will not be in a position to appreciate highways or hotels. Good governance would mandate that there is two-way communication and that the needs of the people are first ascertained."

He said that one of the biggest chal-

lenges to working thus on proper governance in the North was the lack of professional man-power, and the current system of obtaining government employment in the North through a system of political influence instead of merit. He said that the people he had to work with were used to a certain way of doing things which was not productive and in addition there didn't appear to be qualified enough human resource in the North to achieve the daunting task of building back the province into a vibrant economy. "For this reason we have initiated dialogue with the government to facilitate the return of Sri Lankans who have obtained foreign citizenship. As part of our aim to ensure that dialogue is a two-way process, we have expressly noted that there is a possibility that the Government may have security concerns and have welcomed the establishment of a fair security procedure to screen those who wish to return and help those who are less fortunate," noted the Chief Minister.

Economist Muttukrishna Sarvananthan (who could not attend but whose paper was read out) had the same view on engaging the Diaspora. "The most important prospect for the Northern econ-



omy (particularly in Jaffna) is the large pool of Diaspora spread throughout the world; especially in Australasia, Europe, and North America. Although remittances from abroad are the largest source of foreign exchange earnings to the country during the past decade, it has not resulted in investments that could create employment opportunities locally. At least around 500,000 first and second generations Tamil Diaspora (who are originally from this region) are out there, which is equivalent to half the current total population of the NP (1,058,762). However, we cannot find any significant amount of human capital, portfolio, or direct investments by the Diaspora in the aftermath of the civil war. Unlike many other post-conflict countries around the world, Sri Lanka, Northern Province in particular has failed to tap the enormous human and financial resources of the Diaspora."

Economist Ahilan Kadirgamar noted that there was a continuing problem of people migrating out of the country due to a lack of employment opportunities and socio-economic development, with specific issues that the Northern Province needed to address internally on caste and class hegemony, resulting in continued oppression of sub-sects of the population. He also brought up inter-ethnic rela-

ever said the trouble was being caused by Muslim Ministers in the Government going out of their way to look into Muslims' welfare at the expense of the other people living in the area on why Muslim-Tamil relations were still fragile in the North.

Raga Alphonsus, an economic and development advisor for ZOA, a Netherlands based humanitarian organization working in the North, noted that the people of the North needed heavy restructuring in policies and attitudes. "Here pre-schools tend to be run by young ladies who have no other employment options. In developed countries, it is recognized that this is a formative age for the child and thus more emphasis is placed on pre-schools than on high-schools."

He said that while agriculture was massive in the North, it had never been the traditional source of riches; in once highly-educated Jaffna, that had been the service sector. "We cultivate mostly basic food crops not cash crops and other than in the Srimavo Bandaranaike government, these crops never brought in much money. This kind of cultivation is prone to weather damage; in recent years they have been damaged due to either flood or drought consecutively, leading to a cycle of debt for the people."

According to him, the North had al-



Discussion on Solid Waste Management - Jan 22, 2014

BPO service sector."

He too advocated that Diaspora help be obtained to build up cheap but effective tertiary educational institutes and qualifications for tertiary education starved Northern youths.

A former member of the Diaspora, Engineer Suri who had returned from the UK to serve his people, took part as an active member of the audience. He said that he taught English and communication skills free of charge at the Ramana-

sentation in the North in the labour force, which he said was a major cause for the high unemployment percentage from the North and East, as opposed to the rest of the country, which was inexcusable as women made up 52.8% of the population in Jaffna (highest in the country).

"Throughout Sri Lanka females outnumber males among the entrants to the fifteen universities in the country. As a corollary, girls perform relatively better than boys at schools, which has become a global phenomenon. Except the engineering faculty and physical sciences academic streams, all other faculties and academic streams (including agricultural, architectural, dental, legal, medical, and veterinary sciences) are dominated by female students in all the universities including the University of Jaffna. Furthermore, major professional courses such as accountancy, banking, and law are sought-out by more females than males. In addition vocational education and technical colleges are also female dominated institutions.

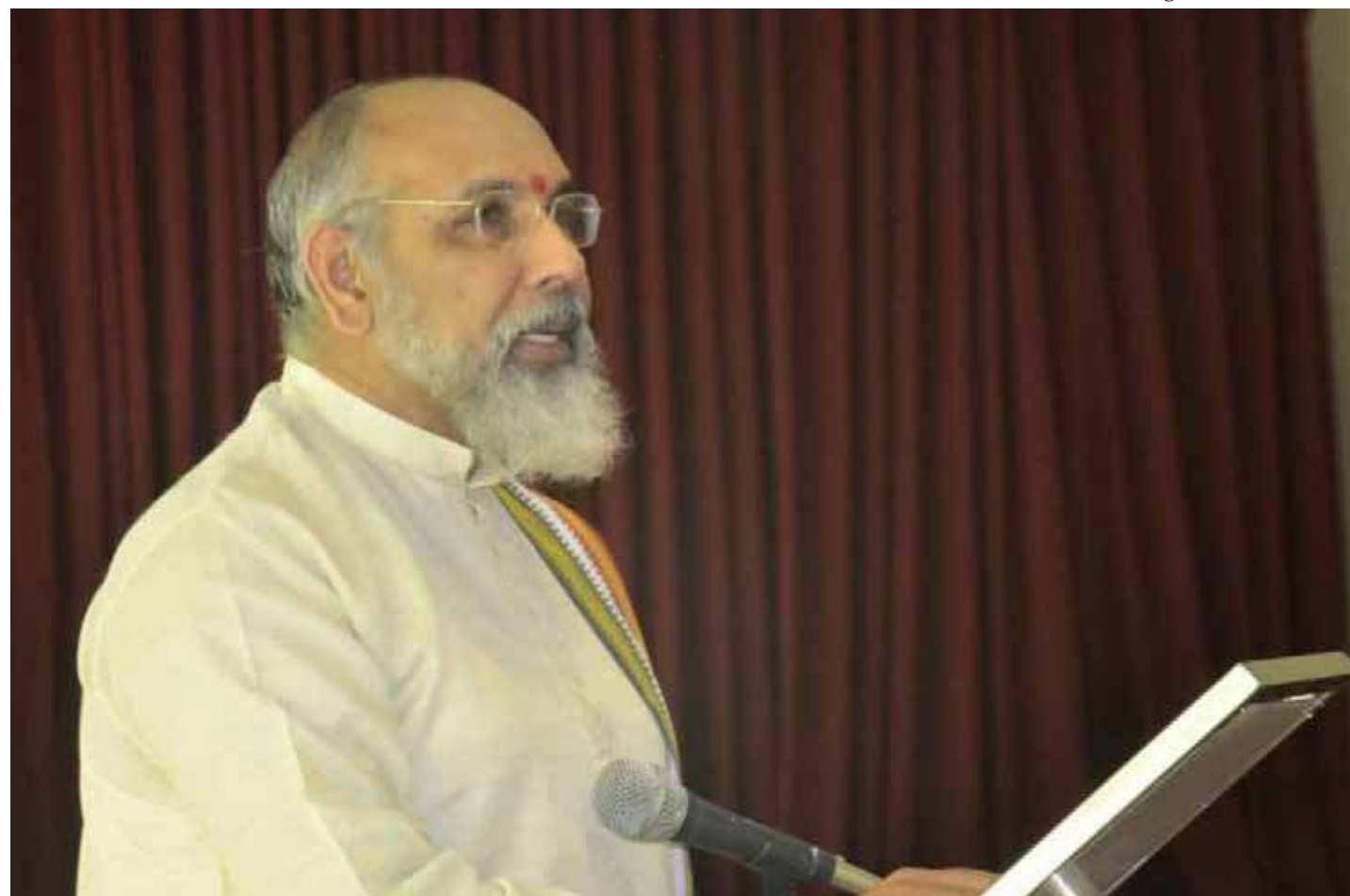
It is high time the Northern Province tapped the dominant womanpower in the labour force," his paper read.

The conference had other relevant presentations as well, such as one on the state of education in the province from provincial education minister Gurukulajah and the state of mental health in the population by psychiatrist Dr.M Ganesan.

It was noted at the conclusion that while the conference had helped to identify the various issues facing the Northern Province, not much had been discussed about the solutions.

One of the recurring solution options brought forward though, by more than one speaker and participating audience member was the need to engage the Diaspora. It is firmly believed by many a person in the North, that their Diaspora have the ability to help them back on their feet. And the provincial council too has recognized the need and promised to help facilitate it as best they can.

(This article is exclusively written for Monsoon Journal)



tions, specifically the Tamil-Muslim one and said it was not an issue to be left to the politicians; that the civil society had to work on strengthening it themselves. To this end, he queried why there weren't yet any interethnic Tamil-Muslim societies in Jaffna.

On the Muslim issue, Wigneswaran when queried said that Muslims were considered by his provincial council as part and parcel of the Tamil-speaking people and not as foreigners to be treated differently. He said that he had a set up a commission to look into the specific problems of the Muslim IDPs. He how-

ways earned its income through foreign remittances but not through 'coolie' labour as was now the trend. "We never had the system of exporting labourers and maids to the Middle East as we do now. We exported highly skilled professionals such as engineers and doctors. The Chief Minister said that he was unable to find a skilled work force to serve his own provincial council. This was once a province that served not only the whole country with such a work-force but other countries as well. We need to invest in building that up again and when we do, we can have a thriving economy in the

than Academy and was surprised by the intelligent but disempowered young ladies studying there. "There are many good things in our culture but others have to be binned. Especially parents' attitude to their children and girls in particular." He also noted the vital need to give career guidance at a young age. "In developed countries, 15 year olds are given career guidance. Here, there are graduates who have no idea why they studied what they did and what they want to do with their lives."

Economist Sarvananthan too noted the point of under-utilized female repre-



Mr. R. Sampanthan's message on the occasion of Thai Pongal - by CTC

"We need to work together to ensure Tamil people live as equal citizens with self respect and dignity and in security, fulfilling their legitimate political, economic, social and culture aspirations"

Message from Rajavarothayam Sampanthan on the occasion of marking "Thai Pongal" by Canadian Tamil Congress, January 18, 2014:

It gives me much pleasure to send this message of felicitations to the Canadian Tamil Congress on the occasion of their annual Pongal festival 2014. I am informed that this is an event in which Tamils participate in large numbers and which is also attended by democratically elected representatives of the three levels of government in Canada. This event provides an opportunity for close interaction between all its participants.

Canada and Sri Lanka have important common structural features. Distinct people with distinct identities, who speak different languages, populate the two countries: in the case of Canada - English and French and in the case of Sri Lanka - Tamil and Sinhala. These distinct peoples have largely inhabited different areas in their respective countries.

Substantial differences, however, exist in the structure of government in the two countries. Canada has a federal structure of government where substantial self-rule is granted to territories enabling the people who speak different languages to exercise and enjoy the right to self-determination in their respective areas they occupy within the framework of a united Canada. Both English and French languages have equality of status and the policy pertaining to such equality is rigorously and successfully



Tamil National Alliance leader R. Sampanthan meeting UK Foreign Secretary William Hague in Colombo on 14th November 2013 - Pic: UK in Sri Lanka

enforced. Canadian citizens irrespective of whether he/she is English speaking or French speaking has a sense of belonging and feels that he/she is an equal citizen in their own country.

Very unfortunately, the position in Sri Lanka is quite different. Sri Lanka still has a unitary structure of governance. An inevitable consequence of which is that, the community, which is numerically in a majority, enjoys political supremacy. Attempts to resolve this conflict through devolution of power to provinces have proved to be inadequate, deficient, not workable and not durable. Attempts have

also been made by the State to undo such devolutionary arrangements. Elections have been held to the provincial councils. The Tamil National Alliance despite these deficiencies has participated in these democratic processes and the verdicts of the Tamil people have been overwhelmingly in favour of genuine and adequate sharing of powers of governance. There is clearly a lack of willingness on the part of the State to recognize and implement the democratic verdicts of the Tamil people.

A civil war that lasted for nearly three decades came to an end a few years ago.

An end to armed conflict provided an opportunity for lasting political and constitutional arrangements that could give an equal status to all its citizens. Despite the cooperation extended by the Tamil people and their democratically elected representatives, this opportunity is being frittered away by the Sri Lankan State.

Violations of International Human Rights Laws and Humanitarian Laws have been rampant. Lands belonging to the Tamil-speaking people in the Northern and Eastern provinces are being grabbed by the State and its armed forces on various pretexts. There is a deliberate policy being rigorously pursued by the State to change the demographic composition of the northern and eastern provinces and the linguistic and cultural identity of Tamil speaking areas.

It is in this background that this issue is now before the United Nations Human Rights Council. We need to work together to ensure that the Tamil people who have lived in Sri Lanka as long as anyone else or even longer are able to live as equal citizens with self respect and dignity and in security, fulfilling their legitimate political, economic, social and culture aspirations.

I wish to convey to the Canadian Tamil Congress and all participants at this event my warm regards and best wishes.

R Sampanthan MP

Member of Parliament

Leader of Tamil National Alliance

Annual Pongal Event: President of Canadian Tamil Congress outlines CTC accomplishments and looks forward to opportunities and challenges ahead

Full Text of Address by Raj Thavaratnasingham, on the occasion of marking "Thai Pongal" by Canadian Tamil Congress, January 18, 2014:

On behalf of the Canadian Tamil Congress, I am pleased to wish you all a very Happy Thai Pongal and welcome you to our 7th Annual Dinner. Just like "Thanksgiving" is celebrated in North America, Thai Pongal marks the harvest of crops and is a time to give thanks to the sun, nature and livestock, as well as the hands that cultivate the bounty. Thai Pongal also marks the beginning of the Tamil New Year observed by 80 million Tamils around the world.

As I look back at 2013, I see a year that was simultaneously very challenging and incredibly fulfilling. We reached new heights: this past summer, for the first time in its history the Federation of Tamils of North America (FeTNA), held its 26th Convention in Toronto! The pres-

tigious FeTNA 2013 was hosted by CTC at the Sony Center in downtown Toronto, and was attended by nearly 3000 guests from all over the world.

We also continued old traditions of volunteerism, community outreach and advocacy. In an effort to ensure a productive society that upholds Canadian and Tamil values, CTC actively encourages community service and youth participation. This year, we raised over \$65,000 for the Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital in our 5th annual walk-a-thon. To this date, we have raised over ¼ million dollars for 5 different charities in just 5 short years!

We are also incredibly proud of our Centre for Leadership and Innovation (CFLI), youth ranging in ages from 9 to 16, who partnered and hosted a successful tree planting event in October. Whether it may be donating blood, meeting School Boards or Police Boards to offer community sup-



President of CTC Raj Thavaratnasingham

port, CTC remains at the forefront of volunteerism and good citizenship in Canada. We also continued to be concerned for the human rights of Tamils everywhere. CTC has always advocated domestically and internationally for our brothers and sisters. From meeting government officials in Ottawa, to hosting key players and news-

makers in the international human rights arena such as Frances Harrison, Callum Macrae and Benjamin Dix, CTC kept our international advocacy work front and center in 2013. We were well represented at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva, Switzerland in March, June and September 2013, and will be there again in March 2014.

The work we do at CTC would not be possible without the generous support of our members, friends, advertisers, sponsors and the community at large. Each and every one of you have helped us in some way - volunteers who dedicate countless hours to complete our projects, members who generously finance us to keep the CTC engine running every month with an office and dedicated staff, the advertisers who grace our magazine every year and the sponsors who make large donations for various special projects.

Contd. on page 39...



We look forward to this year's Thai Pongal ushering in better times for us:

Message from C.V. Justice C.V. Wigneswaran, Chief Minister, Northern Province on the occasion of marking "Thai Pongal" by Canadian Tamil Congress, January 18, 2014:

We are indeed happy to hear that Canadian Tamil Congress is celebrating Thai Pongal in Toronto. Thai Pongal is thanksgiving to the Sun who enabled the farmer to successfully harvest his crop around this time. It synchronizes with the beginning of the movement of the Sun southwards from the Tropic of Cancer. The journey now onwards takes the Sun towards the Tropic of Capricorn south of the Equator.

It is said among Tamils that the birth of the month of Thai ushers in new vistas and hope. We at the Northern Provincial Council are truly looking forward to a new lease of life in the coming months.

Firstly we had a constructive meeting with the President of Sri Lanka on the 2nd of January to ease out certain restrictions that held us administratively. We could now presumably function with a team of public officers prepared to recognize the People's needs and aspirations.

Secondly we are to soon identify our needs and wants from all our Provincial Council Members both governing Party as well as the Opposition. It might be remembered that recently we passed our Budget despite its many insufficiencies without a division. In that regard we are thankful to our Chairman Mr.C.V.K. Sivagnanam who will be attending your Function, for having forged a consensus among the ruling Party and the Opposition though the latter are few in number.

Thirdly we are in the process of exploring possibilities to engage and seek assistance from several sovereign Countries as well as INGOs to coordinate our efforts to provide alleviation to the People and their Province in need.

Fourthly we anticipate greater understanding by the Government in power towards our predicament and needs which would enable the passage of largesse from outside the Country to reach us with less red tape and delay. In this respect we have been directed towards the senior officials of the Treasury and others to work in cordiality to usher in a better future for our war affected citizenry.

Fifthly we anticipate certain changes in the Administrative set up. May be we would have a Civilian Governor to replace the former Commander of the Northern Province soon. We have brought to the notice of the President, even though we have absolutely nothing personal against the present Governor we prefer to work with a Civilian Governor. As I said elsewhere we prefer to have a Mathematics' teacher teaching Mathematics to our children rather than a Chemistry Teach-

er doing so!

Lastly but not as a Provincial Council but as members of the larger world wide Tamil speaking population we are looking forward to the fulfillment of the Biblical saying 'Ye shall reap what you shall sow' at Geneva.

Thus we look forward to this year's Thai Pongal ushering in better times for us.

Of course Nature has not been too kind to us this season rains having failed. We might have to therefore expect difficult times ahead. Adversity helps us to join in unity at a time of calamity. Let us hope we would face all adversities with fortitude and courage and be joined as a Nation. We are conscious that our Tamil speaking Nation includes our brethren from the East as well as our Muslim brothers and sisters. May this year cement a relationship of brotherhood among all sections of the Tamil speaking people oblivious of Party, caste, creed and religious differences. Unity is the need of the hour. There is no doubt that infiltrations are being undertaken surreptitiously as well as openly to change the demographic pattern of the Northern Province. Unless we stand together it is a matter of time when the North would be transformed into an East to pave way for a non Tamil administration at the Provincial Council level.

In this respect the diaspora has a role to play. Apart from the financial and infra structural benefits which no doubt we do expect from all of you, we would want you to adequately educate our people on the dangers of disunity. While we stand disunited our detractors would have their opportunity to transform the Tamil speaking areas into backyards of majoritarian manipulations.

This disunity seems to be the hallmark of Tamils all over the World. We are divided into three main groups. The first have a quid pro quo attitude. 'If we help them we could get what we want', seems to be the idea. But it has not worked so far to the benefit of the community. You may get something personally for your own personal glorification, gratification and benefit. But the community will suffer.

The second carry the unfulfilled dreams of a by-gone age. The dream no doubt was comforting until we were asked to wake up. While we do not criticize their desire to continue with their dreams conscious of the fact that dreams do sometimes get fulfilled in reality, let them not openly take to task others with popular support trying to forge ahead along a different route. Gandhi and Subash Chandra Bose come to mind. The metamorphosis of Nelson Mandela comes to mind. The second group unfortunate-



Prime Minister David Cameron is the first world leader to visit the north of Sri Lanka since 1948 (November 2013)—Crown copyright

ly also are disunited among themselves which is a tragedy.

The third have taken the reality into consideration, worked out a solution possible to obtain and are treading the path of law and order not for a moment searching for devious methods and means but steadfastly holding on to what they believe is the best way for the Tamil speaking Nation. Rightly or wrongly the people have endorsed their decision. We expect the people's decision to be respected.

Your Associations should explain the need for unity at this critical stage of our political struggle. May be there could be electronic and other medias which could help in this regard. The message must reach our people both within Sri Lanka and abroad.

We are now preparing an assessment of our needs. They would need to be couched in proper technical language and prepared into Project Reports and so on. We have need for technical expertise in this regard. Your members who are adequately qualified in this regard may consider spending some time with us to help us prepare such documents. Presently we are in consultation with UN Agencies to

do this work for us.

Meanwhile micro financing projects could be undertaken after identifying areas of need and wants. Many such activities are presently undertaken conscious of our past that Jaffna has had an admirable history of success in the Cooperative Sector. It is our desire to set up a Trust in this regard to coordinate activities. We are in the process of identifying persons of repute well known for their honesty and altruism.

There is much to be done. Political goals while being at the back of our minds we must nevertheless ameliorate the conditions of our people without delay. By pursuing dreams at the expense of the regeneration of our people we may be left with none in our areas to reap the benefits of such pursuits.

May I wish all of you a very happy, prosperous and contented 2014 looking forward to working in unison and collaboration in this New Year with every single one of you if not directly at least in spirit!

Justice C.V.Wigneswaran
Chief Minister,
Northern Provincial Council.

President of CTC Raj Thavaratnasingham's Thai Pongal Message

Contd. from page 38...

From our humble beginnings in 2000, CTC would not be where it is now were it not for people like you. Thank you!

As we embark upon this New Year, I see many opportunities and challenges ahead for us. If you are a member, we thank you. If you are not a member, please come and join us—and together we will continue to make a strong and positive impact on the future of our community.

On behalf everyone at the Canadian Tamil Congress, I once again wish you a very happy Thai Pongal. In Tamil there is a saying "Thai Perunthal Vali Perukum" meaning 'if the month of January is born, then the way will be shown'. May your 'way' be a 2014 filled with happiness, good health and prosperity. -

Best wishes,
Raj Thavaratnasingham
President, Canadian Tamil Congress

Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Scarborough

Maha Shivarathiri Celebrations



"The Moon is the presiding deity of the mind. The Moon has 16 Kalas (phases). On this Sivarathri 15 Kalas have already merged in God and only one remains. By constant remembrance of God, even the 16th phase merges in God. Can you not spend a single night in the whole year singing the glory of God? So sanctify this night by participating in Bhajan. The bliss that you get from Bhajan, the sweetness in the divine name, the happiness derived from visualizing the divine form cannot be obtained elsewhere." (Divine Discourse: Feb 15, 1999)

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Devotees will get an opportunity to perform milk, vibuthi abhishekam and bilva archana.

All are Welcome



MANAGING YOUR MONEY



The cost of missing the RRSP deadline

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

Yes, it's true that investments held within a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) is the best tax-deferred, income-building way for most Canadians to save for retirement. It is similarly true that missing the RRSP deadline for making your maximum 2013 contribution can be very costly. If you are in a high income bracket this year but will have a lower marginal tax rate in a future year, your tax benefit from that future RRSP contribution will also be lower. The additional tax refund you didn't get because you didn't contribute this year is not available to make investments or pay down non-deductible debt. On the other hand, if you do make your max RRSP contribution and do get an additional refund, you should consider investments appropriate to your diversification requirements and tolerance for risk, rather than depositing your refund into a savings account. If you are claiming a spousal RRSP deduction for a deceased spouse or common law partner, the contribution to the spousal RRSP must be made in the year of death or during the first sixty days after the end of that year or the opportunity for this deduction will be lost.

The RRSP contributions deadline is coming up fast. And while you may have every good intention of matching or increasing your contribution from last year-it can be difficult and stressful to come up with a significant amount of cash in short order. I can show you a number of strate-

gies to consider that can help accelerate your plan using assets you have readily available and key tax planning benefits.

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

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

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

In many cases, borrowing to take full advantage of RRSP contribution room makes sense. Maximizing your RRSP contribution now offers immediate tax

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savings this year and tax-deferred potential growth for many years to come. This strategy works best when the interest rate is low enough and you repay the loan as quickly as possible, preferably in one year or two at the most.

Preparing for retirement should start early with a savings strategy that will make it possible for you to accumulate the most wealth for use (and enjoyment!) through all your retirement years. The best retirement savings strategy for most Canadians is a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) because your contributions and all the income that accumulates in your plan are tax deferred until you start using that money in retirement. Add in the fact that your contributions can be used to reduce taxes and the magic of compounding that enhances RRSP growth over time, and it's easy to see why a registered plan makes such good financial sense. When retirement time rolls around, your RRSP may be a significant source of your retirement income. For example, contributing \$ 5000 yearly into an RRSP earning a compound annual return of 7 %, you will have \$ 316,245 over the span of just 25 years.

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

Disclaimer:

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



Special Feature

Sri Lanka Court of Appeal President Sriskandarajah was a Judge who had the Courage to Stand up to the Powers that be Irrespective of Consequences

By Karu Jayasuriya M.P.

We note with shock and dismay the sudden demise of the President of the Court of Appeal Justice Sriskandarajah on January 23, 2014. He was a judge who believed in an Independent and vibrant Judiciary. He had the courage and the prowess to stand up to the powers that be, irrespective of the consequences.

These qualities were manipulated to such an extent by the Executive, whereby it has become inevitable that some fall prey to such pressures. Justice Sriskandarajah, possessed the intellectual capacity and the courage to steer clear of such pressures and championed the cause of the Rule of Law that he fostered and nurtured at the cost of his life. For this he

sacrificed decades of his professional life and the hard earned opportunity to serve the nation in the Apex Court.

This right of his was denied to him by the arbitrary and dictatorial actions of the Executive in a blatant and heinous manner. Such revengeful actions of the Executive snatched away his life in an untimely manner depriving the society of the luxury of an Independent Judge. The pinnacle of his Judicial Career was the Historical Judgment that was given by him when he presided over the Divisional Bench of the Court of Appeal quashing the arbitrary decision of the Parliamentary Select Committee that sought to punish the 43rd Chief Justice on trumped up charges. This Judgment was totally

ignored by the Parliament and acted in violation of the same setting a black mark in the Parliamentary democracy.

We join the Civil Society to mourn the death of a great judge of our time, who was made to succumb to his death in the midst of a political witch hunt.

(Text of Media Statement Issued by Hon. Karu Jayasuriya MP, Chairman, United Leadership Council, UNP on 24th January 2014)

(Justice S. Sriskandarajah was educated in Manipay Hindu College and Colombo Hindu College. He enrolled as an Attorney - at - Law of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka in 1979)



Stanley Jeyaraj Thambiah

TAMBIAH, Stanley Jeyaraj who was born and raised in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, fifth son of Charles Rajakon and Eliza Chelana Tambiah, died after a long illness in hospice in Cambridge, MA on January 19, 2014.

Raab Professor of Social Anthropology at Harvard University and Professor Emeritus, he is survived by his son, Jonathan, daughter-in-law Tina, grandson, Logan, of Cambridge, son Matthew of Boston, his younger sister, Beechi Apadurai of Colombo, Sri Lanka, numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews living in Australia, England and the United States, and his former wife, Mary H. Tambiah of Cambridge. He was predeceased by seven of his original eight siblings: Dorothy Rajasooria, Satiavati Satianayagam, Padma Rajaratnam, David, Selvaraj, Thangaraj and Dharmaraj.

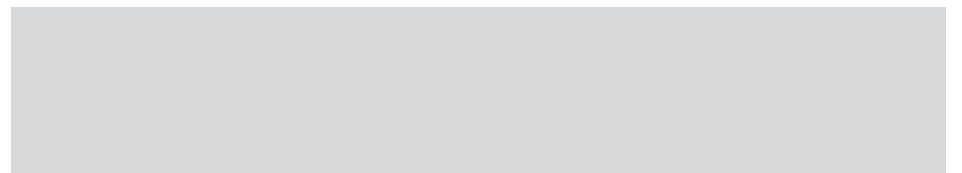
Professor Tambiah was a distinguished social anthropologist and social theorist of South and Southeast Asia. His early work was on the Buddhist and political hierarchy in Thailand. In later years, after the onset of the ethnic violence in Sri Lanka in 1983 he wrote extensively about collective violence in South Asia, culminating in his landmark book, "Leveling Crowds." A man of wit, charm, sophistication and wide-ranging intellectual interests, he will be missed by his extended family, many friends and colleagues. Rest in Peace. His fu-



Stanley Jeyaraj Thambiah (January 16, 1929-January 19, 2014)
Education: Cornell University (1954), University of Ceylon, Harvard University
Awards: Guggenheim Fellowship for Social Sciences, US & Canada (pic courtesy of: fukuoka-prize.org)

neral service and interment are private. A public memorial service will be held in the Church at Harvard Yard at a later date. Arrangements by the Keefe Funeral Home, CAMBRIDGE. To send an online condolence visit www.keefefuneralhome.com

(via bostonglobe)



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"My Life is my message"

Reviewed By Siva Sivapragasam

**A Graphic Novel
written by Jason Quinn
Illustrations By Sachin Nagar
Publishers: Campfire**

"Gandhi: My life is my message" is a graphic novel illustrating the story of a simple, shy and unassuming lawyer who transformed himself as the leader of India's freedom movement motivating and inspiring millions who began to refer him as The Mahatma. You can now read all his life in detail and entertainingly in

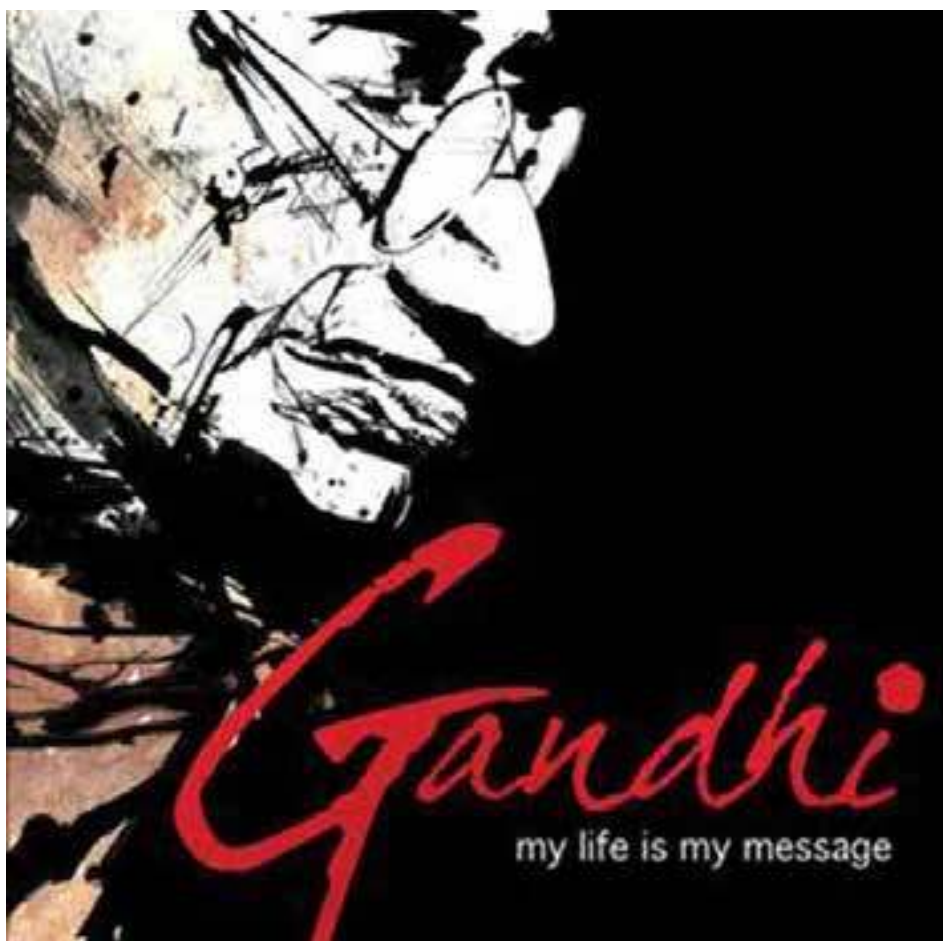
"Generations to come, it may well be, will scarce believe that such a man as this one ever in flesh and blood walked upon this Earth."

- Albert Einstein

this new graphic novel.

The book Gandhi: My Life is My Message by Jason Quinn is an anecdote on the life of Gandhi. It is a combination of novel and comics which is a metamorphosis of Gandhi from a shy ordinary lawyer to the Father of the Nation. Gandhi's journey from his childhood to South Africa and return to India, his fights for freedom, the preaching of Ahimsa and Satyagraha till his assassination is illustrated in the book in the form of graphics, sketches and text.

Gandhi's life is richly covered in this

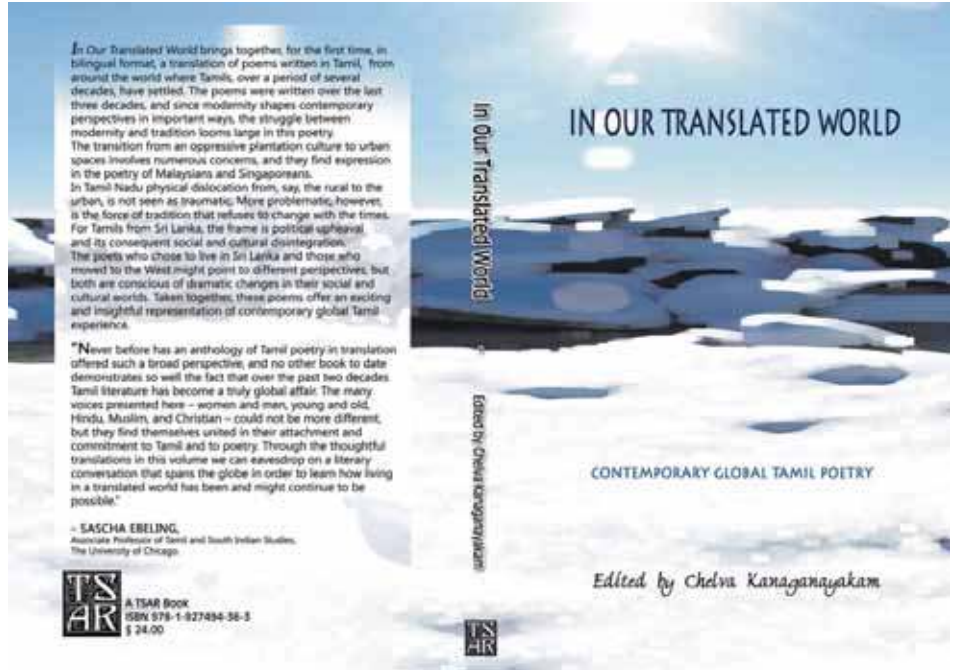


book in colorful graphic format. The language used in the text for the illustrations is simple yet thought provoking. The illustrated panels in the book help the reader understand how Gandhi's concepts and ideas came to be planted in his mind. The book discovers the man behind the legend, following him from his birth in the Indian coastal town of Porbandar in 1869, to the moment of his tragic death at the hands of an assassin in January 1948, just months after the independence of India.

The author of the book Jason Quinn is the award winning author of Campfire's Steve Jobs: Genius by Design. He has worked in publishing for the last twenty

years as an editor and writer. He moved to India in 2012 and currently works as Campfire's Creative Content Head. The illustrations in the book are by Sachin Nagar who has worked on many of Campfire's books. Sachin is one of the most versatile artists working in the graphic novel industry.

As Professor Rajmohan Gandhi has noted "This book will take Gandhi's life and message to a large number of youngsters across the world in an enjoyable format."



Reviewed By Siva Sivapragasam

**Contemporary Global Tamil Poetry
Edited by:**

Published by:

The countries from where the poems have been selected are Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and the Diaspora. The book of poems has been edited by no other than Prof. Chelva Kanaganayagam, Professor of English at the University of Toronto.

Toronto based Tamil Literary Garden are the Publishers of the book which has been made possible through a generous grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation along with the support of certain other institutions and individuals. It must be mentioned that this is the first time that Ontario Trillium Foundation has sponsored a Tamil Literary project.

Tamil Literary Garden was founded in 2001 and registered as a charitable organization in Toronto. It is committed to the promotion of studies and literary activities in Tamil, both nationally and internationally. Its mandate includes promoting creative writing, translations, book releases, awards, conferences, and workshops. In its annual, globally awaited awards ceremony Tamil Literary Garden recognizes significant achievements in Tamil in a number of genres and fields including Lifetime Achievement in Tamil. Donations to the organization are crucial to keep Tamil alive and to bring the best to offer to the world. It is a charitable organization and donations are tax-deductible. It is not possible to review each poem in a short book review but one can only provide glimpses about the book. "In Our

"In Our Translated World" is a selected collection of contemporary Tamil poetry from all over the world, translated into English and the text appearing both in Tamil and English.

"Translated World" brings together for the first time, a translation of Tamil poems from all over the world in a bi-lingual format. The bi-lingual format will take the poems to other cultures and to those who are not familiar with the Tamil language and make them enjoy the concepts, ideas and meanings behind the poems. Such books will help make Tamil language and Literature a global affair.

The poems were chosen by a selection committee while the translation of the poems were done by eminent personalities. The poems are also a reflection of the history of Tamil migration and global Tamil experience. But the experiences naturally differ from country to country. For example the reasons for migration of Tamils to Malaysia and Singapore differ from the reasons for migration of Sri Lankan Tamils to the West.

The book is already available for purchase from Amazon.com.

The official launching of the Book by the Tamil Literary Garden will be held next month on Sunday, March 9th at the Scarborough Convention Centre. The Guest Speaker at the Book Launch will be Professor Sascha Ebeling from the Department of South Indian Studies, University of Chicago.



Community Watch

Markham resident Raj Subramaniam announces candidacy for Ward 5 Councillor position

Markham, Ontario, Jan 2, 2014 – With family, friends, and supporters at his side, Raj Subramaniam formally announced today his candidacy for the Markham Ward 5 Councillor position. In his announcement at the Milliken Mills Community Centre in Markham, Ontario, Raj described his campaign for office and his vision to lead “for the people, for the future”.

“Markham is my home. My family lives with you,” said Raj. “I believe that my life experiences, community activism, professional expertise, as well as my abilities, skills, political philosophy, and understanding of the social issues uniquely qualify me to serve as representative of your local government. I am very passionate about serving our community for years to come, and with your support I can make that dream come true.”

Raj Subramaniam has outlined the following as his priorities:

- To fund and support initiatives that will help preserve and create vibrant parks and recreational centres, and to stand up against any attempts to destroy parks and heritage sites.
- To instill community integration by forming diversity programs that will allow Markham’s inner communities to en-

gage with each other.

- To apply his 15 years of professional experience to design user-friendly IT programs that will automate services for Markham residents.

- To work towards greater transparency and accountability within Municipal operations and remaining active in the budgetary process by ensuring every dollar spent will contribute to Markham residents.

- To provide space in Markham community centres for farmers to sell their home grown products.

- To improve domestic employment by bringing jobs that have been outsourced back to Canada. Our kids grow here, study here, and will need to work here too.

“I have a great deal of priorities for public office, and will focus on these domains. In June 2014, I will share my ideas for improving each domain” Raj stated.

For the next several weeks, Raj will be contacting local supporters to form a campaign team. The next few months are critical and will have campaign events focusing on his running where he hopes to meet with members of Markham’s political community. He believes this opportunity will help to develop cordial relation-



Raj Subramaniam: “As a Markham resident for 10 years & father of 3, I am self-driven by community development goals. I want to build Markham as the place for our children, family members & seniors to shine”

ships for the future.

“The time has come for me to embrace a wider spectrum of public service so that I may be part of the solution for improving and advancing our community. My passion for helping others, for cultivating a thriving, democratic, multicultural society, is what has led me here,” Raj said

when he announced his running.

Raj Subramaniam is a loving husband and father of three beautiful children. Markham has been his home for the past 10 years. For over 20 years, Raj has been an activist for human rights and has always been deeply committed to helping others. – (via: www.raj2014.ca)

“Joseph (Mohan) Remisiar, Community Builder and Social Activist, declares his candidacy for Ward 8, Markham City Council”

Markham, Ontario – Joseph (Mohan) Remisiar, accompanied by his wife Delishia, daughters Melanie, Rachel, and Samantha, and his supporters, registered his candidacy for Ward 8, City Council. Remisiar is the first to declare his candidacy for Council and will work to earn the support of the people in ward 8.

“I am excited to put my name forward to represent the people of Ward 8. This area needs change, and as a long time resident, community builder, social activist and a father of three young daughters, I understand the challenges faced by the people of my Ward. We need a consensus builder that can connect communities together and ensure the long term needs of our residents are addressed in a culturally sensitive manner” stated jubilant Remisiar after filing his nomination papers.

Joseph (Mohan) Remisiar has a B.A. in Business Administration and has worked in industry for over 20 years. He has held various leadership positions in many organizations in Markham, including, President of the Milliken Mills Lions Club, President of the Markham Tamil Organization, Chair of the Parent Council of St. Benedict Catholic Elementary School, President of the Aldergrove Ratepayers Association, Vice President - York



Region Parent Association and Park Ambassador for the City of Markham. Joseph Remisiar has an enviable record in serving his community through his many associations and in bringing different groups and communities together for long term social development. He has raised funds for the Markham-Stouffville Hospital, and has adopted a park bearing his name. He is passionate about his community, and city, and has demonstrated the leadership skills to serve the people of Ward 8 and the City of Markham as a whole.



“Joseph (Mohan) Remisiar is a doer and not a talker. He works hard every day to build our City. He is a neighbor, friend, and above all, a community leader. I am proud to support Joseph and am excited to work with him to get him elected. Our City needs him”, stated ward 8

resident, Manjit Banwait.

The municipal election will take place on October 27, 2014. For more information, please contact, Joseph (Mohan) Remisiar at 416 528 0372 or by email: remisiar@rogers.com. More information can be found at www.josephremisiar.ca



Announcement of Candidacy for Councillor Ward 7, Markham - Sothy Sella



January 2, 2014

Many of you may know me from my work in the community as a business owner and a community activist. For some of you, today may be the first you hear of me. But I am confident it won't be the last.

My name is Sothy Sella and I begin which is one of the most exciting new chapter in my life. I'm proud to announce my candidacy to be the next Ward 7 Councillor from Markham.

Over the past 21 years I have lived among you, worked among you and shared the triumphs and tragedies that all citizens of a community share together. I see the challenges that face by the children of our community every day. I know the hardships families face day-to-day. We will have the opportunity to discuss every issue

facing Markham. I will be actively writing and speaking to express my vision of what Markham can be and how we will get there. I will do so in explicit detail.

For the past 13 years, I've been proud to contribute to the Markham community in many ways in my life and I look forward to joining all of you in seeing Markham not just become what we all know it once was, but to work towards seeing Markham become what we all know it can be.

I hope you and your friends will support my candidacy and I encourage you all to go to my website www.sothy4ward7.com, and join my campaign. I know that if we work together, we can change Markham for the betterment of the tax payers.

For further information,
Contact Sothy - sjsothy@gmail.com

Vino Shanmugarajah Announces His Candidacy for Ward 42 (Scarborough-Rouge River) City Councillor

SCARBOROUGH, Ontario – January 30, 2014 – Today, long time community activist Vino Shanmugarajah confirmed his intention to seek the City Councillor seat for the Ward 42 - Scarborough Rough River.

"Scarborough-Rouge River is home to one of the most diverse communities in all of Toronto, and given my experience and my passion for community building, I am excited to seek this seat," declared Mr. Shanmugarajah after submitting his nomination.

Mr. Shanmugarajah is the founder of Jaff Networks Inc, a software engineering firm focusing on providing efficient business solutions to its clients. For the past 15 years, he has been providing solutions for several Fortune 500 Companies such as Rogers, Telus and Ericsson. He also served as Treasurer managing multi-million dollar budgets and projects for a condominium corporation. He obtained his BEng. in Electrical Engineering and MASc. in Computer Systems Engineering from Carleton University.

Mr. Shanmugarajah spent his formative years in Flemingdon Park, a multicultural neighbourhood that has traditionally attracted many new Canadians in search of affordable housing in Toronto. Being deeply entrenched in the community, Mr. Shanmugarajah quickly came to realize the various issues faced by new Canadians and low



income families, which started his life-long commitment to community building.

Mr. Shanmugarajah has constantly stayed active in his communities through student associations, community organizations, and various political riding associations, including as a Board of Director and as Scarborough co-chair for former mayoral candidate Hon. George Smitherman.

Mr. Shanmugarajah is married to Sahunthala Vinothachandran who is the founder of Active Mind and Body, an affordable summer school program and they have two children, Shananthan and Sahana.

For more information, please contact Vino Shanmugarajah at 647-992-7248.

Campaign for Toronto City Council:

Why I'm Running for City Council

By SaeedSelvam

You grow even fonder of your city when you've travelled abroad, I remember returning from a trip overseas and almost kissing the ground when I landed at Pearson — almost. It's not just our diversity, it's our people that makes Toronto unforgettable. Our potential to lead in arts, technology, business and transit have never been more apparent, but there's always room to turn Toronto the good into Toronto the better.

Often quoted as being "world class" Toronto lacks the political will or infrastructure to support much of that hype, at least at the moment. It's part of the reason why we've slipped from first place to fourth on the world's most livable cities list. With a little less than nine months until the next municipal election in Toronto, local candidates and elected officials including mayoral hopefuls are gearing up for what's sure to be one of the most exciting and hotly contested elections we've seen in decades — and our city's future lays in the balance.

After years of careful consideration and talking with the boss (my fiancé), I've decided to run for city council in the community where I've grown up and currently live — Davenport, Ward 17, which includes St. Clair West and Eglinton Ave.

A large part of why I'm running is because I for one am tired with the lack of vision, leadership and plague of dirty politics that have hindered our collective progress. As an advocate for the past nine years, I've come to realize that those who are not engaged in the political process are treated as afterthoughts. In some cases the so-called divide between the downtown core and the suburbs is one that needs to be addressed and remedied as we need to be one Toronto, united in our differences promoting it as a strength rather than a weakness. Our political culture needs to change.

Not long ago, when seriously considering a run in this year's election I was met with taunts and intimidation from some surprising individuals in the community who wanted to ensure that there was no threat posed to their favoured candidates: you're coloured (thanks, hadn't noticed), you won't win (brought to you by the same people who predict lottery outcomes and natural disasters), wait until it's your time and let the better known candidate run (in politics there's never a right time, there are only choices), you'll split the vote (so will every other individual on the ballot that runs a big campaign), you'll lose support and no one will like you, etc. Without even knowing my platform, my experience, who

I was or what I had to offer, their choice was made, their opinions — set in stone.

The fact is, I'm not the only one who fell victim to such ungrounded taunts; hundreds of others have heard and dealt with worse, including violence and vandalism. Municipal politics includes a long and dark history of discouraging good candidates to run, simply to sustain the status quo or ensure that partisanship reigns supreme. This is a big reason why politics remains the same — why bright, young and diverse candidates don't enter politics and decide to take their talents elsewhere. As Sweet Brown once said, "ain't nobody got time for that" — but we need to make time for that, if we're serious about being taken seriously.

Those that want things to remain the same need to consider that the original foundations of our democracy is to ensure every voice is heard and the ultimate choice lies in voters' hands regardless of what electoral system we have, not political operatives. This election, needs to be won on ideas not slogans, civility not disrespect. It's not idealistic, it's basic.

Modern Toronto, a city ripe with city-builders, is being built by local and community visionaries who are coming together like never before to discuss how we can



SaeedSelvam is an alumni and Fellow of Massey College and holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts in Political Science & Equity Studies and a Masters of Public Policy and Governance from the University of Toronto.

make a good city even better.

Ideas like Ranked Ballots, transit investment, smart financial management and green initiatives are at the core of a movement slowly brewing, waiting for a chance to have a positive impact on the daily lives of Torontonians everywhere. But we can't do it with more of the same. We need new solutions to old problems and in some cases that means completely new candidates who are passionate about their neighbourhoods, communities and their city.

That's the Toronto I believe in, that's the Toronto I know we're capable of and that's why I'm running for office.

(via-saeedselvam.ca)



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TRIBUTE TO LEGENDARY TELUGU FILM ACTOR NAGESWARA RAO

20TH SEPTEMBER, 1923 - 22ND JANUARY, 2014

THIS LEGENDARY ACTOR HAS ACTED IN 256 FILMS IN A CAREER SPANNING OVER 75 YEARS



In Devadas (1953)



President Pranab Mukherjee felicitating ANR at the 4th World Telugu Conference in Tirupati in 2012



The Thespian ended his career with 'Manam', a movie which saw three generations of the Akkineni family – ANR, his son and popular actor Nagarjuna and grandson Naga Chaitanya - sharing screen space. In this picture, Nageswara Rao is seen with his son Nagarjuna

NAGESWARA RAO

“PORTRAIT OF REALISM IN ACTING”



Working Still of “Manam” Photoshoot



His production house, Annapurna Studios, named after his wife. It is considered as Asia's most modern state-of-the-art shooting studio

By: Jesudason Atputharajah

Nageswara Rao (ANR) who died recently in Andhra State of India at the age of 91 was an artiste with great talent to display realism in the films he acted. He was primarily a Telugu film actor but starred in a number of Tamil films too. He was in the field for nearly seven decades and acted in nearly 255 films. He currently completed a film called 'Manam' in Telugu in which he co-starred his son and grandson. Such was his great passion for acting. He vowed to fight his disease cancer - and succumbed to it recently.

He particularly shone as the love-lorn lad in films like Laila Majnu, Anarkali, Kaathal and Devadas. In Devadas, he outshone all the other actors who played this role in films produced in other Indian languages. Dilip Kumar said 'there is only one Devadas' and that is "ANR". He co-starred with Savitri, who gave him excellent support to perform a widely acclaimed memorable film. He is remembered for his role as a drunken frustrated love lorn young man who wanted

to die at the gates of the house where his beloved lived. Audience appreciated every minute of his acting so much so that they said that he would not have died if he had not got out of his carriage in the rain to give a push to the wheel that stuck in the mud. They expressed their agony in tears. The film was enriched by meaningful songs-all of which were well integrated to the story of the film. "Ellam Mayai Thana", Ulage Maayam", 'Uravumillai Pakalum Illai", "Santhosam tharum savaari povom salo salo"- are all excellent lyrics well written by Udumalai Narayana Kavi and sung by Ghantasala and Sushila.

In another film 'Kathal' ANR teamed up with Banumathi to give a sweet expression of a love affair between a gypsy girl and a guy from the town. As usual the songs were well rendered, adding much weight to the story of the film. The songs were sung by Ghantasala and Banumathi - which were a treat to hear and watch. "inpak kaviyamahum vazhlve kathalinalle (life will be a saga of Joy if based

on love)", "Jeevitham ellam sweetakach cheyum premai ding dong bell, piriya rani nightingale"- were some of the sweet, scintillating songs which were well received by the audiences.

ANR shined very well as the Romeo - type hero that he was called 'tragic king'. Besides he is reputed for his cool and calm disposition and gentlemanly conduct. He co-starred with a large array of South Indian heroines which included Banumathi, Anjali Devi, Savitri, Sridevi, Padmini, Vyjantimala, Lalitha, Vanisree, Girija and several others. His Telugu film 'Premabisekam' ran for more than six months continuously in the Andhra State.

He won several awards which were ample recognition for his acting career. He was the first Indian actor to be awarded the Pathma Vibushan award in 2011 for his immense contribution to Indian cinema. He also won the Dada Shaheb Phalke Award and several others. He enacted roles of literary and cultural icons

belonging to different regions of India which made him an instrument of national integration. ANR played the roles of Poet Kalidas of Ujjain, Bhatta Jayadeva of Orissa, Amarsilji Jakkana of Karnataka, Vibranarayana and Vaalmeki of Tamil Nadu. His capacity for versatility enthused him to keep on acting for nearly seven decades which came to an end with his demise on the 22nd of January 2014.

In addition to acting, he had gone on cultural tours to Australia and Mauritius. Besides these, he founded the Annapurna Studios on a 22 acre plot in the heart of Hyderabad. ANR was also instrumental in shifting the Telugu film industry from Chennai to Hyderabad. Furthermore, he gifted a University to Andhra State. Though ANR had small beginnings, he rose to greater heights through his contributions to Indian cinema and acts of philanthropy. He will be reverently and admiringly remembered by his fans in India as well as all parts of the globe.



Tribute

In Memorium



**Mr. Arumugam
Vallipuranathar**

2 June 1916 – 7 March 2011

From Family Members
of Vallipuranathar
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Canada: 1 416 450 5011

In Memorium



**Mrs. Vallinayaki
Velumailum**

Born: 10 October 1927
Demise: 29 January 2011

From Family Members
of Velumailum

In Memorium



**Mrs. Annapackiyam
Santhirasegaram**

Born: 14 June 1934
Demise: 19 February 2011

From Family Members
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CTC 7th Annual Thai Pongal Gala a Huge Success!



Federal Citizenship and Immigration Minister Hon. Chris Alexander



Ontario Premier Hon. Kathleen Wynne



Federal Liberal leader Justin Trudeau

The Canadian Tamil Congress' (CTC's) 7th annual Pongal Dinner was celebrated on January 18th, 2014 at the Hilton Toronto Markham Suites Conference Centre. Tickets were sold out well in advance and the nearly 1000 attendees were treated to an evening of Tamil Canadian arts, culture, and an outline of CTC's impressive achievements in 2013.

The much anticipated CTC dinner drew Federal Citizenship and Immigration Minister Hon. Chris Alexander, Ontario Premier Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Parliamentary Assistant to the Prime Minister M.P. Paul Calandra, Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti, John Tory, York Region Police Chief Eric Jolliffe, as well as numerous other MPs and MPPs, Consul General for India in Toronto Mr. Akhilesh Mishra, U.S. Consulate General Vice Consul in Toronto Mr. David Swalley, academics, members of law enforcement, and business and community leaders gracing the occasion.

Federal Liberal leader Mr. Justin Trudeau was the chief guest, with keynote address delivered by Mr. C.V.K. Sivagnanam, Chairman of Northern Provincial Council in Sri Lanka. Ontario PC and Official Opposition Leader Mr. Tim Hudak made the announcement on the initiative to reintroduce the bill in Ontario to declare January as Tamil Heritage Month. Greetings from all three levels of government were also read at the event.

As in the past, the "Leaders for Change" award honouring the unique contribution of an individual who, through his or her exceptional vision, perseverance and commitment has redefined or strengthened the need for change in our society, was awarded. This year's recipient was Professor Craig Scott, M.P. and founding member of the Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice.

This year's "Service Excellence Award" was awarded to the Sri Lanka based "Uthayan" Newspaper for its courageous reporting and commitment to journalism in spite of intimidation by various forces including the Sri Lankan government. Uthayan is a pillar of remarkable journalism in an environment clouded with a complete disrespect for free, accurate and responsible press. Mr. E. Saravanapavan, Managing Director of Uthayan newspaper Jaffna and a TNA, MP received the award on behalf of Uthayan Newspaper.

As in the past 4 years, in 2013 CTC once again raised money through its annual walk-a-thon for a Canadian charity. With the cheque for \$65,000 presented to Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation, CTC has raised over a quarter of a million dollars for five charities in the past five years.

CTC spokespeople also reminded everyone of the need for Tamils to unite and emphasized the need for huge commitment, finances and hard work in March in Geneva during the UNHRC session.

The event would not have been complete without the captivating performances of the students of Niro Dance Creations and Centre for Leadership and Innovation (CFLI).

Last but not least, the event would not have been financially successful without the sponsorship and support of our major sponsors, table sponsors, advertisers and well-wishers. The Canadian Tamil Congress would like to thank its sponsors, volunteers, members and friends for their generous support, and would like to remind our supporters to always support our contributors.

Photo Courtesy: <http://www.imaginedigitally.com>



Ontario PC and Official Opposition Leader Tim Hudak



Chairman of Northern Provincial Council in Sri Lanka C.V.K. Sivagnanam



CTC President Raj Thavaratnasingham



"Leaders for Change" was awarded to Professor Craig Scott, M.P. and founding member of the Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice



Rathika Sitsabaiesan, M.P. & Professor Craig Scott, M.P. from NDP



A cheque for \$65,000 presented to Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation



Human Rights Activist & Lawyer Gary Anandasangaree, Board of Director, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada



Chief Guest Justin Trudeau & Hon. Kathleen Wynne with teacher & students of Niro Dance Creations



New Cancer Hospital Opened in Jaffna

By Siva Sivapragasam

A fully equipped and modern Cancer Hospital at a cost of 300 million Sri Lankan rupees with funds raised through a private project known as Colors of Courage was officially opened by President Rajapakse last month in Tellipalai which is situated in the Northern province. The hospital has been named as "The Tellipalai Trail Cancer Hospital".

The Cancer hospital was the brain

child of two enterprising men - Nathan Sivagananathan and Sarinda Unambuwa. They raised funds for the hospital through a long Walk which began in Matara in Southern Sri Lanka and ended in Point-Pedro in the Northern peninsula. Contributions came from all communities and from persons of all walks of life. One contribution was from children who were victims of the war and living in a hut in the war ravaged area of Kilinochchi. The land for the hospital was a donation from two local philanthropists E.S.P. Nagarat-

nam and Manikasothy Abimannasingam of Uduvil.

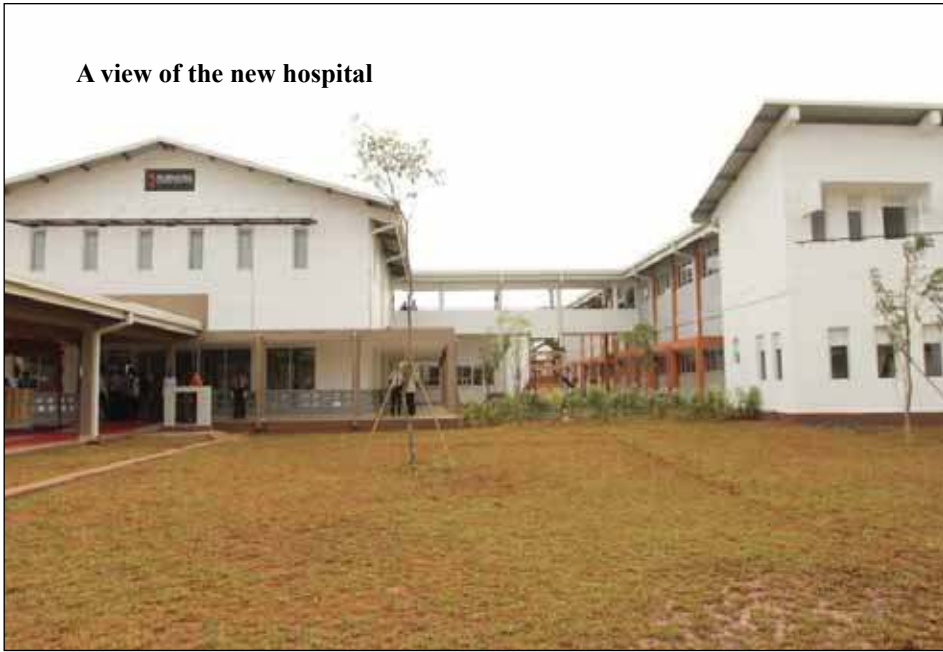
Nathan Sivagananathan and Sarinda Unambuwa who spearheaded the campaign gave details of their project at a media conference held prior to the official opening. Northern Province Chief Minister C.V. Wigneswaran and several Government and Opposition members were among those present at the official opening.

The largest single donation towards the Tellipalai Trail Cancer Hospital

was from Dr Dinesh Sivaratnam of Australia, in memory of his parents Ratna and Meropi Sivaratnam to help patients with Cancer. A part of the larger Tellipalai Trail Cancer Hospital complex will be named "Ratna and Meropi Sivaratnam Ward." The new hospital will be of immense benefit to cancer patients in Jaffna who in the future will not have to go to the Maharagama Cancer Hospital in Colombo for treatment.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the opening of the hospital)

A view of the new hospital

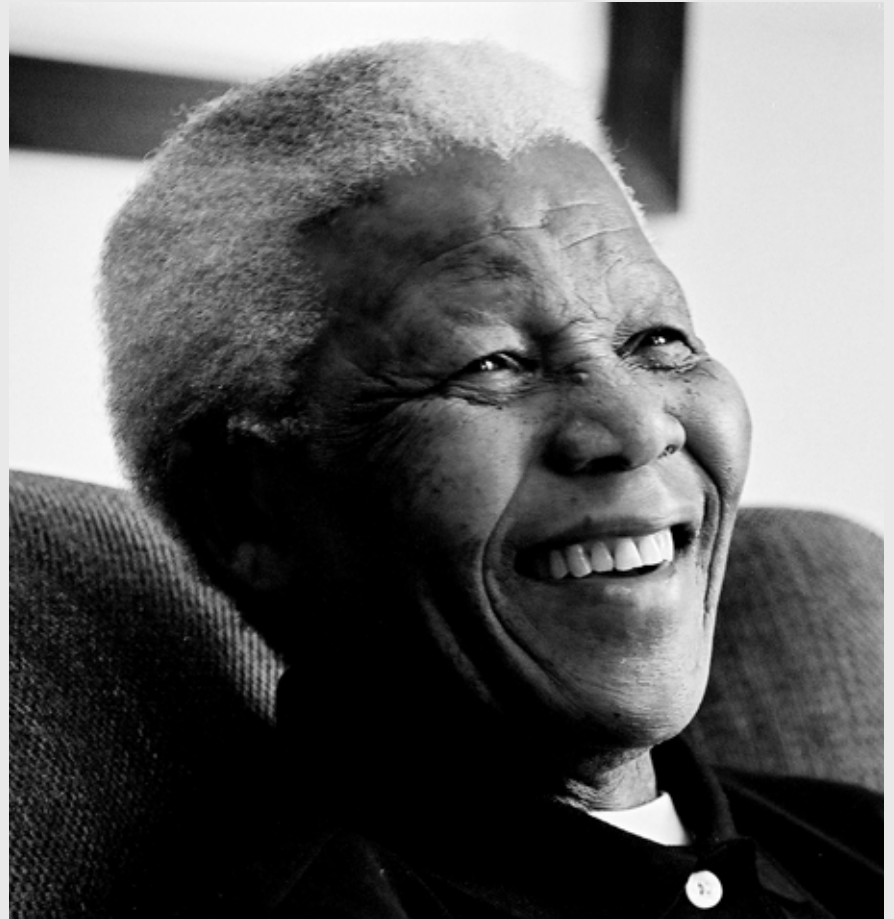


Northern Province Chief Minister Wigneswaran addressing the guests



President Rajapakse cuts the ribbon at the opening ceremony

Nelson Mandela



By: Rafiel V Rajinthrakumar, Gr.7 student, San Lorenzo Ruiz Catholic School, Markham, ON

As a growing twelve year old boy, I have heard about many leaders around the world, and the one that stands out, is Nelson Mandela. He was born on July 18th, 1918 to his mother Nosekeni Fanny. During his lifetime, he had a dream to stop apartheid and change South Africa for better giving equal opportunities to all the people. Although some agreed with him, many others did not. However, Mandela stuck with his dream and tried everything he could to end apartheid. Eventually, Mandela was sentenced to jail for 27 years for civil disobedience and political disorder.

What I am surprised by the most, is that even in prison, he continued what he had started. He knew that he could not rule the country as a normal man, so in prison he studied about politics and even got a degree in law! After a long 27 years, Mandela was finally released due to domestic and international pressure.



He started negotiations and political process to end apartheid, and succeeded in his dream. Soon after, he ran for president of South Africa, and won. Later on in his life, he received countless awards, and gave speeches around the globe. He was known as the "Father of South Africa." Unfortunately, due to a severe illness, Nelson Mandela died at the age of 95 on December 5th, 2013. Our mission now, is to continue Mandela's dream and make the world a better place.

As a small Canadian boy I learn the value of forgiveness and determination from Mandela. He inspires young people to work harder for peace and harmony. Let us commit ourselves to remember Mandela in our words and deeds.



Organized by Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham

When I woke up on January 25th, 2014, I felt the bliss in my heart, I opened the curtain in my room with freshly poured cup of coffee. I looked out into the street watching a snow falling and sunny Saturday morning. Though it is a real winter weather outside, I felt the excitement for the day; it is the Tamil Heritage Month Celebration day at the Pickering Town Centre!

Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham [TCASD] members were planning this event and venue from the beginning of last year. With the great team work spirit, the executive team and members were able to achieve their objective, which is celebrating Tamil Heritage month at Pickering Town Centre!

Beautified myself by dressing in Tamil cultural clothes didn't take long for me, as I was very anxious to be at the Pickering Town Centre to participate in the welcome procession, which was promoted on Facebook and the radio. Drove through slippery roads and the slow traffic, I arrived at the Pickering Town Centre Court, I was amazed how astoundingly beautiful it looked with all the decorations which had been tirelessly assembled on the previous night.

The black stage, beautifully adorned with brightly coloured garlands, with our Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham event banner proudly hanging at its centre. Ten booths and posters displaying the history, traditions and values of our Tamil culture along with the pride of our creation. The kolam and welcome centre at the entrance, creating a warm and festive entrance for the guest. All of a sudden, our extended Tamil families approached from all directions, hubs of activity busy getting ready for our opening grand entrance!

By ten am, there was a crowd of dig-

nitaries, elected reps, guests, media partners and volunteers waiting for the grand entrance. The ceremony started with six person melam and nadeswaram team. The sound of the startling and striking melody could be heard all throughout the mall. Four Kings, each representing a Rajah of our historical Tamil dynasties; Kings of the Chola, Paandyaar, Sera and Vanni, magnificently dressed in bright costumes, welcome the crowd of guests, in respectful royal court fashion, greeting them to walk along in royal procession to the centre stage.

It was a magnificent walk, one which was highly photographed, a memorable walk for many, for years to come. Throes of passer-bys stopped to watch the procession, taking in the beauty of the moment. As the procession approached the registration desk, our MCs took over and provided the warm welcome and introduction, then led the group through the welcome area and stage for further group photos.

With our four kings seated in their Royal thrones in the background, the Royal court session and programs commenced. A multitude of programs were to follow, starting with the National Anthem, sung in English, French and Tamil, followed by the Tamil Thai Valthu, and a Moment of Silence, which was followed by the lighting of the lamps, all led by our own Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham youth. Welcome speeches, an incredible colourful welcome dance and welcome songs, then led to a very special Pongal rice pouring Ceremony, where invited dignitaries participated. Following a warm welcome speech by Tamil Cultural and Academic Society Secretary, Vasantha Vaithilingam. The speech was followed by President, Tom Thiru's, Tamil Heritage month wonderful

message.

The ceremony was uplifted by many of our special guests and Dignitaries speeches of Chris Alexander, the Minister of Parliament of Citizenship and Immigration, City of Ajax Mayor, Steve Parish and City of Pickering Mayor, Dave Ryan. Speeches by our Chief Guests, Dr. Chandrakanthan and Parasaran Rangarajan from the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam, Tamil Heritage Month founder, Neethan Shan followed.

A multitude of songs, dances, plays, skits, musical performances, raffle draws under the energy and inspiring guidance of our MCs, kept the program flowing smoothly one after the other, in steady progression throughout the morning and afternoon. The closing two performances were by Durham's own youth, a seven part traditional dance by the Fine Arts Academy of Durham performed by 20 students, and a fashion show depicting the clothing attire and history of Tamil and how it's evolved over the years, ending with a fashion display of traditional marriage finery a Tamil Hindu, Christian and Muslim brides.

Throughout the day and ceremony, the Pickering mall visitors stopped to watch, sit or stand from the balustrade above, in appreciation of the beauty and messaging of our celebration. Some guests even dressed in saris to enjoy the moment. It was amazing to see our Tamil language, culture, histories, tradition and people be given so much attention and respect.

The Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham, recognized the individuals who made a different in the Tamil community through their outstanding services. I was glad to see Shantha Somaskanther, Vana Dineshkumar, Ganapathy Ravendran

and Neethan Shan receiving these honorable awards from the Organization. The Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham, made History on Saturday January 25, 2014 -Tamil heritage in Durham was truly made and experienced by the Canadian community at large. An incredible effort was made by each member of the organization, mostly volunteer based, showing the hardworking and dedicated nature of the Tamil people who take great effort.

Our thanks go out to our leaders of this event, the driving forces of our organization, tireless workers with a passion and a dream, the inspiration of such a successful event, team leaders Vasantha Vaithilingam, Tom Thiru and Susila Pathmanathan. Their time, energy, management and delivery of this pivotal accomplishment were again proven to the Tamils in Durham.

Our sincere and many thanks to the technical, sound and security team, the stage decor group and to everyone else who contributed so much to the event. Thanks to all the organizational partners, the media partners, sponsors, heritage supporters, volunteers, performers, elected reps and all others involved in the initiative. It was indeed a proud movement for Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham and a wonderful message to pass on to the Durham Tamil youth of TCASD. I am proud and feel privileged to have taken part in this historic event. Above all I truly thank the divine energy throughout the day, which gave a positive vibration to the event!

Written by: Renuka Swaminathan

Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham Advisory Board





23rd Annual New Year's Eve 2014 Kocoba Gala Dinner Dance

Royal College OBA





Community Watch



DTA's Pongalo Pongal

2014

Thai Pongal is one of the most fascinating festivals commemorated with great enthusiasm by the members of Durham Tamil Association, which was hosted in East Shore Community Center on 11th January 2014. This year's theme of Tamil Heritage Month celebration being Ancient Tamil Kingdoms, DTA decorated the venue with a palace back drop and other symbols of pongal. Our Executive Members Hanthan Manickavasagar and Uthayan Manickavasagar disguised as Kings welcomed the dignitaries and guests with Niraikudam, Sandhanam, Kolam and roses. They brought back the memories of ancient kings with the touch of humor.

The program flagged off with the Canadian National Anthem by Geeththanah Gnaneswaran and Vipushiga Gnaneswaran. This was followed by the Thamizh Thai Vaazhthu rendered by students of Mrs. Manorany Thusitharan, which clearly expressed the children's passion in learning their mother tongue Tamil. It was a treat to see the young kids dressed in traditional bright colored traditional outfits.

In order to promote all the kids and youth to verbalize their mother tongue, a beautiful young damsel Salini Sivalingam was introduced to be one of the MCs for the event. She swept the hearts of the spectators by articulating in Tamil with her modulations. Josh Suresh, President of Durham Tamil Association gave an astonishing welcome speech. He explained the reason for this festival to be celebrated in order to thank God and nature for blessing this Earth with all the divine gifts of life. "Talk doesn't cook rice" quoted Josh Suresh and he insisted all our youth to be wise in deeds and not just in words. He thanked all the Youth and parent volunteers, Gurus and sponsors for their untiring support to the organisation.

The first performance was our traditional Bharathanatyam by students of Kalai Natiyalaya Fine Arts. Taught by Guru Mrs. Kalaimathy Vageesan, young children performed for two classical numbers. This polished performance was the highlight of the evening, as it clearly showcased their facial expression, body language blended with the colorful costume. Convincingly and clearly, was a tribute to the exactness of Kalaimathy's training.

"A dream doesn't become reality through wishful thinking; it takes sweat, determination and hard work". It was a huge honor for the Tamils of Canada after the proclamation of Tamil Heritage Month by Durham District School Board in 2013 along with all Durham Cities. The crowd cheered when DDSB was announced as the first school board to proclaim Tamil Heritage Month in Canadian History. The proud moment was crowned when Mr. Martyn Beckett, Director of Education released DDSB's official poster, proclaiming the month of January as



DTA's 2014 Pongal Decoration



Salini Sivalingam, MC for the event



Geeththanah & Vipushiga Gnaneswaran singing O'Canada



Tuthunaya and Svaramy Thusitharan, Crisha Saseekaralingam & Arwin Muraleetharan singing Thamizh Thai Vaazhthu



MP Corneliu Chisu appreciating DTA



Pongal greetings was given by MPP Joe Dickson to DTA's President Josh



Deputy Mayor Doug Dickerson & Councillor David Pickles of Pickering



Councillor Renrick Ashby of Town of Ajax



MP Corneliu Chisu appreciating DTA's long standing sponsor Mr. Ravichandran of AVR Auto



Pizza Pizza's Corado Salonia awarded by MP Corneliu Chisu



Minister & MPP Tracy MacCharles recognizing VP Kanga Sivanathan, Secretary Mano Pancharatnam & Dujavanthi Swiss for their outstanding contribution to DTA



MPP Joe Dickson awarding DTA Teachers along with Inspector Jamie Grant



TEAM DTA's Parent Volunteers awarded by MPP Tracy MacCharles



MPP Tracy MacCharles awarding TEAM DTA's Parent Volunteers



Mr. Anandhan was appreciated for his excellent decorations



Inspector Jamie Grant with DTA's Kings



Some of our dignitaries @ DTA's 2014 Thai Pongal Festival



Dignitaries during DTA's Thai Pongal Vizha



Students of Kalai Natiyalaya Fine Arts performing



DTA's proud MANN VAASANAI dance group



Tribal Treasures Dance Performance



Sarika Navanthan entertaining the guests

Tamil Heritage Month to dignitaries including MP Corneliu Chisu, MPP Joe Dickson, MPP Tracy Mac Charles, Mrs. Hedvig Christine Alexander, Inspector Jamie Grant, Deputy Mayor Doug Dickerson, Councillors of Pickering David Pickles & Peter Rodrigues and Councillor of Ajax Renrick Ashby.

MP Corneliu Chisu appreciated the long time sponsors of DTA ,who made all the events a successful one. He awarded with certificates and encouraged them. We had a Carnatic vocal performance by the students of Mrs. Manorani Thusitharan.

In the midst of every performance we thanked all the dedicated and compassionate teachers and gurus, who trained hundreds of children and youth to perform in 2013 Youth Festival and all year round programs. Our honorable MPP of Ajax-Pickering Joe Dickson appreciated the teachers with a certificate. These teachers ensure that the kids comprehend not only arts, dance, crafts, but also the rich Tamil culture that our ancestors taught us.

Young dancers who danced for "Mann Vasana", Choreographed by Uma Suresh and our youth Abishna Jayasundararajah swept away viewers' hearts with their innocent folk expressions. The dignitaries appreciated DTA's efforts to teach good art forms and values to children that are fading away in children , living abroad. After this folk tapping dance was the certificate presentation by Honorable MPP of Pickering and Scarborough East ,Tracy MacCharles to our dedicated parent volunteers. Josh Suresh, President of DTA added that the parent volunteers are the most valued resource in the community who contributes a lot to this community including their time with patience and passion.

DTA's pride Sarika Navanthan rendered a folk Tamil song to mark the celebration. Another welcomed performance was the Soi Soi dance ,choreographed by Maenusha Raguvarnan showcasing the tribal dance from the film Kumki. Saranya Suresh and Ayesha Ajitkumar brought life to this folk art which is still in practice in Tamilnadu. The opulent varieties of food like sweet Pongal, Sundal, Sweet Aval, Vadai and Paniyaram was served to all the dignitaries and the entire guests, by our TEAM DTA Youth. This "Virunthombal" gesture and the scrumptious food was much appreciated by all. Our heartfelt appreciations to "Children Education Rehabilitation Program", who made the display boards that helped the dignitaries and the youth to capture the meaning of the four day Pongal festival, origin of Tamil literature, Alphabets, Scholars, popular Tamil Kings and Kingdoms. Indeed, it was a useful tool for the members and dignitaries to comprehend and teach the value to the next generation. We also like to show our heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Ananthan for the backdrop for the Pongal. It gave a wonderful feeling of a palace and was much appreciated by the dignitaries and guests. All were clicking pictures in front of the backdrop to relish their memories and sharing the fun with their family members. In addition, we would like to thank Chocolate Margaret the chocolate queen for the being a part of this special occasion by giving out attractive cones of treats to all the kids of Durham Tamil Association.

Finally to wrap up the event as to bring up reminiscence of the occasion & to develop stronger bonds of love and affinity every guest were given a colorful villaku as souvenir. Vote of thanks was given by DTA's Secretary Mano Pancharatnam.



Release of DDSB's Poster for Tamil Heritage Month

Durham Tamil Association was grateful when their request was honored by Durham District School Board in January 2013 to proclaim the month of January as Tamil Heritage Month. The poster depicting the proclamation was designed by Mr. Amutheesan Selvaratnam of ArtLink Multi Media Inc., with both DDSB and DTA logos. During Durham Tamil Association's 2014 Thai Pongal Festival, President of DTA Josh Suresh and DDSB's Director of Education Mr. Martyn Beckett released the colorful poster to MP Corneliu Chisu, MPP Joe Dickson, MPP Tracy MacCharles, Mrs. Hedvig Alexander, Deputy Mayor Of Pickering Doug Dickerson, Councillor David Pickles & Councillor Peter Rodrigues from City of Pickering, Councillor Renrick Ashby from Town of Ajax, Inspector Jamie Grant from DRPS and Keith Falconer of PESCO.



DDSB's Director of Education Mr. Martyn Beckett, MP Corneliu Chisu and Deputy Mayor of Pickering Doug Dickerson releasing DDSB's official poster of Tamil Heritage Month



DDSB's official poster proclaiming January as Tamil Heritage Month was released to dignitaries by President of DTA Josh Suresh



Mr. Amutheesan Selvaratnam being awarded by MP Corneliu Chisu & DDSB Director Mr. Martyn Beckett for designing DDSB's Tamil Heritage Month Poster.

SAVE THE DATE

**Impact of Family Violence Conference:
A South Asian Perspective**



Presented by
**Social Services Network
in Durham Region**

May 14 and 15, 2014
Durham College and University of Ontario
Institute of Technology
at 2000 Simcoe St. N, Oshawa

A community development approach for addressing family violence in South Asian communities

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mali@socialservicesnetwork.org or 905-940-7864 ext. 223



www.socialservicesnetwork.org



Town of Ajax hosts Baseball & Softball for Pan Am Games 2015



Pan Am Ajax Local Host Committee is seen here with Town of Ajax Mayor Steve Parish and members of Ajax Council

The Town of Ajax is proud to be selected as the official host site for baseball and softball during the Toronto Pan/Parapan Am Games in 2015. Baseball and softball are considered to be two of the premier sporting events of the Games. Site preparations and many celebrations have already taken place since Ajax was officially announced as the host site in April 2013. Apart from this once in a life time opportunity, many impressive community benefits will be realized through hosting the Games in Ajax including enhanced sports infrastructure providing a multi-purpose venue that will benefit many sports and community groups; increased social infrastructure through volunteer and community connections; and Ajax will be showcased on the international stage as the world tunes in to watch Pan Am baseball and softball competitions. In addition, hosting Pan Am baseball and softball supports the Town's economic development and tourism strategy with specific emphasis on sports tourism. As the proud host community for baseball and softball, Ajax will welcome approximately 125,000 spectators, 24 teams and 448

athletes during the Games.

To deliver an event of this scale, volunteers are needed to ensure a seamless and successful event. In October 2013, Ajax Council called on residents to be a part of history as the Town prepares to welcome the world to Ajax in July 2015 for the Games. To help deliver this epic event, the Town launched the first phase of the Pan Am Ajax volunteer recruitment program, searching for a diverse group of approximately 30 community leaders with specialized skills and experience to volunteer for the Pan Am Ajax Local Host Committee. The Local Host Committee will serve as Community Ambassadors for the games in Ajax, providing advice to Town staff on Games initiatives, assisting with the Games community excitement campaign and community outreach initiatives, assisting in event delivery during the Games, as well as supporting volunteer recruitment initiatives at a grass roots level. The Pan Am Ajax Host Committee, pictured here, will work together with Town staff, to deliver the best Games experience possible and make our community and Canada proud.

3 Winter Bylaw Reminders



Parking is prohibited on all Town of Ajax streets between the hours of 3 a.m. and 6 a.m., seven days a week. This bylaw is proactively enforced from November 1 to March 31.

On-street parking during a snow event is not permitted at any time of the day or night. If you park on the street during a snow event, your vehicle may be towed. On-street parking during a snow event can severely slow down route clearing, and in some cases, impedes providing any service at all.

Residents are responsible for removing ice and snow from sidewalks front-

ing or adjacent to their homes within a 24 hour period after a snowfall. By keeping the sidewalks clear, it helps to ensure that all pedestrians, especially those using walkers, scooters and strollers, will be safe. Residents should place excess snow from their driveways and sidewalks onto their front yard. Residents should also shovel the snow left by the plow at the end of their driveway onto their boulevards.

For more information on these, or other Town bylaws,

please call 905-683-4550,
e-mail bylawservices@ajax.ca



Canadian job experience

By Frank Valeriotte

For new immigrants, arrival in Canada is always accompanied with hopeful and noble aspirations, most of them for the well-being of their children.

Coming to Canada means new jobs, prosperity, access to education and ultimately security for their family's future. Our country has been greatly enriched by the contributions of new immigrants. The reality is, however, that the promise of jobs is quickly met with the cold, hard

and lengthy journey through credential recognition and the lack of "Canadian job experience."

In fact, the lack of Canadian work experience is the most frequent barrier experienced by new immigrants in our area, as disclosed in a new survey undertaken by the Guelph/Wellington Local Immigration Partnership, a coalition of more than 70 representatives representing groups in our community such as newcomers, ethno-cultural organizations, service providers, businesses and



fact that such expectations of job opportunities were overstated, a detail left out of the brochures and government ads circulated in other countries.

New Canadians and those recently landed face a multitude of challenges, even today, decades after the enormous influx of immigrants from non-European countries began. I am approached daily by incredibly qualified people, new Canadians who attend my office or at events in the community enthusiastic about the chance of finding a job commensurate with their skills and training, yet unable to even get an interview.

This is an incredible squandering of vital human energy, skill, desire and finally the opportunity to get someone to work who will immediately become a contributor to the fiscal well-being of our community.

Among the barriers faced by local immigrants are inaccessible transportation, the silent marginalization arising from discrimination and racism, language barriers resulting from inaccessibility to language training, the anguishing, costly

the public.

Caught in a catch-22 quandary, Canadian experience cannot be obtained without a job and vice versa. Clearly, proper credentials are needed to authenticate the abilities of the job applicant, as is the ability to effectively communicate. But from those many with whom I have met, neither of those were barriers — nor was experience. In most cases, these are people with years of work experience in the very field in the kind of job — and having the very skills — the Canadian position required. Their experience is robust, relevant and has a length of time rivalling any Canadian worker, and it comes from countries whose own economies and institutions are as enduring and developed as our own.

Whether in accounting, research, business or administrative skills, the sciences or even culinary skills, experience is experience, Canadian or not.

In those areas where temporary foreign workers are sought, no one asks for "Canadian experience" — experience yes, but not Canadian. Similarly, many of the

Local woman helps children get safe, comfortable sleep

By: Jennifer Annett

Volunteers are leading social change right before our eyes. While we worry about Christmas shopping, the newest fashion trends and what our weekend plans are, there are 40,000 residents of Cambridge and North Dumfries thinking about how to help someone through their volunteer work this coming year.

Local resident Helen Scutt is a volunteer member of the United Way's Community Impact Council.

She is also a "travelling volunteer" with a Toronto-based charity, Sleeping Children Around the World (SCAW).

Her first trip with SCAW was to Kenya in 2010. She and her husband, Jim Howley, travelled with a team to India this year to distribute bedkits to 7,000 children identified in the greatest need.

The bedkits include a mosquito net to prevent malaria, sleeping mattress, blankets, school supplies and new clothes for the children.

The organization works with overseas partners, such as Rotary Clubs, who purchase the bedkit materials locally, identify bedkit recipients, and arrange volunteers for the distribution days.

Why does Helen volunteer?

"I volunteer with this organization because I see firsthand the positive impact it has, not just for the child who receives it, but the whole family. The smile on each child's face as they receive their gift



Helen Scutt (right) and her husband, Jim Howley, went with a team of volunteers to India during 2010 to help distribute bedkits to children

is such a joy!"

Helen set a personal goal to raise \$50,000 for SCAW — that would be 1,429 bedkits, and in three years, she's almost reached her goal with the support of family and friends.

"Each of us can make a difference — one child, one person at a time."

United Way's Volunteer Centre is here to help you connect to causes that matter to you.

Search our online volunteer opportunities database by visiting www.uwcambridge.on.ca and clicking on the Volunteer Centre tab. Or call 519-621-1030 ext. 253.

Jennifer Annett works for the United Way of Cambridge and North Dumfries. This column shares stories of volunteers who are inspiring positive change in our community.

jobs that Canadian companies outsource are often outsourced to the very countries from which these recent immigrants have emigrated. Yet those who come here seeking to plant very deep roots and raise their families are denied opportunities, with the lack of Canadian experience the reason for denial.

There is no doubt that credentials and experience and an ability to function in the social expectations of a job are important, but in our global community where innovation, technology, intellectual property and job skills are transferred from country to country how is it that suddenly "Canadian" experience has become so important? Do people add differently in China? Are the rigours of cancer research in Canada so much different in India, where their research has merited the same accolades as Canadian research?

Sometimes the distinct impression left is that many of those denied the opportunity to work are more the victim of unspoken discrimination from the prospective employer than any lack of Canadian experience.

Guelph is filled with generous and enabling employers, many themselves with an immigrant background in the last century who faced challenges, but my bet

is that "lack of Canadian experience" was not among them.

If we are to engage new Canadians and new immigrants alike, if their experiences in our country are to similarly benefit them and their families and our community as a whole, if their lives and ours are to be simultaneously enriched, employers must move past their reservations and recognize experience for what it is, whether here or from the country of origin of their applicant.

Finally, with Canada's skilled labour shortage, aging population and shrinking birth rate, our federal government must urgently address this critical issue.

The reality is, the current Conservative government has taken an anti-immigrant approach with its policies and cutbacks and favoured temporary foreign workers over Canadians and new immigrants.

The Conservatives must address the barrier of "arbitrary requirements" for Canadian experience. If this is not done now, Canada will no longer be a desirable place for the world's most skilled immigrants — and they will go elsewhere.

Frank Valeriotte is the Liberal MP for the riding of Guelph.



University of Guelph India Semester Winter 2016

Study and live in India in Winter 2016

India Semester Abroad participants spend a semester living and studying with a group of up to 26 University of Guelph students and a UG professor in India, experiencing the Indian culture, living with a host family and travelling throughout India.

The India Semester provides the opportunity to combine academic work with the exploration of the rich historical and cultural resources of one of the oldest civilizations in the world. It takes place in a wonderfully varied environment that affords the opportunity to study a wide variety of subjects and also developmental issues. Examination of development, environmental and social issues in the local environment allows students to gain maximum insight into Indian society and its development challenges while also earning credit towards their degree at Guelph. On the other hand this is not intended as a program exclusively for students studying international develop-

ment or environmental sciences.

The semester is held in two locations. The first is, in residence, at the the Dvanyalokha Institute of Indian Studies in Mysore (Karnataka, South India) and the second is at the University of Rajasthan, in Jaipur, in the North. An integral feature of the Jaipur program is the requirement that you live in an Indian household. The semester involves travel as a group for 3-4 weeks (in total) and with some lectures en route, is an integral and obligatory feature of the program. There is much to do and see, but the emphasis is on academic studies and seeing India from within: this is not a form of alternative tourism.

India Semester Coordinator for Winter 2016

The Semester Abroad Coordinator, a University of Guelph faculty member, supervises all academic activities, teaches two courses, organizes group activities and field trips and provides information



and support to students prior to departure and during their time in India.

The India Semester Coordinator for the Winter 2016 semester will be Gard Otis from Environmental Biology.

To contact Dr. Otis:
gotis@uoguelph.ca
ECBL Rm:2242
519-824-4120 x52478
519-824-4120 x58548

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Whitby Municipal Election Nominations Open for Candidates



www.whitby.ca/vote2014

The next municipal election in the Town of Whitby will be held on October 27, 2014.

Nominations are now being accepted by the Town Clerk for the following offices: Mayor, Local and Regional Councillor, Trustee for Durham District School Board and Trustee for Durham Catholic District School Board. The term of office is from December 1, 2014, to November 30, 2018.

Nominations will be accepted until September 11, 2014, at 4:30 p.m. and on Nomination Day, Friday, September 12, 2014, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Nomination papers must be filed in person at the Town of Whitby Municipal Building, 575 Rossland Road East, Whitby. Faxed, electronic or mailed nomination papers cannot be accepted as original signatures are required on all election documents filed with the Town Clerk.

A signed consent to the nomination, a declaration of qualification by the candidate, and a filing fee payable by cash, debit, certified cheque or money order are required at the time of filing. The filing fee for the office of Mayor is \$200. The filing fee for all other offices is \$100.

Nomination forms are available online at www.whitby.ca/vote2014 and in paper copy at the address above.

Youth Strategy Progress in 2013

The Town of Whitby is proud to be a Platinum Level Youth Friendly Community. In order to remain a 'Community of Choice for Youth,' the Town has begun implementing its '2013-2018 Recreation Leisure Services Youth Strategy,' approved by Council in April 2013.

The following highlights some of the progress that has been made over the last eight months:

- Communication: enhanced awareness of youth programs and the Youth Council via school bulletin boards, announcements, web links and electronic newsletters
- Youth Council Development: preliminary steps to establish a Junior Youth Council was introduced at the October 2013 Youth Leadership Conference
- Youth Programs and Event Enhancements: expansion of After School Programs through a Provincial Grant; partnership established with Ethno-cultural and Diversity Advisory Committee to examine diversity needs
- Positive Youth Development and Training: recognized Kiana Bonnick, Nikita Chenier, Alana Coghlan, Daniella Drew, Kali Emberley, Jennifer Hayworth, Nicole Hayworth, Marissa Henderson, Marisa Jacobs, Kristina Knox, Nick Lagace, Jennifer Li, Keisha Maloney, Sharvil Medhekar, Emilie Menegotti, Alexandra Mireanu, Vinay Padalia, Liam Price, Jamie Quinn, Jayden Rae, Brett Santacona, Hayleah Sytnyk, Sarah Taylor, Jessica Wiersma and Anthony Young for their outstanding achievements at the Celebrating Youth Awards dinner
- Community Development: a youth partnership network has been developed to formally connect youth service providers to address gaps and efficiently utilize all resources to meet the recreation needs of youth in the community

The Town's Youth Section and Whitby Youth Council look forward to continuing to work on implementing the objectives of the Youth Strategy in 2014. To view the Youth Strategy, please visit www.whitby.ca/youth.

February Events

www.whitby.ca/calendar

Event Name	Location	Time
Operations Committee Meeting	Monday, February 3	7:00 p.m.
Newcomers Welcome Program for Seniors	Thursday, February 6	1:00–3:30 p.m.
Special Meeting of Council— Budget	Thursday, February 6	7:00 p.m.
Regular Meeting of Council	Monday, February 10	7:00 p.m.
Newcomers Welcome Program for Seniors	Thursday, February 13	1:00–3:30 p.m.
Youth Dance	Friday, February 14	7:00–10:00 p.m.
Family Day Fun	Monday, February 17	Throughout the day
Management Committee Meeting	Tuesday, February 18	2:00 p.m.
Planning and Development Committee Meeting	Tuesday, February 18	7:00 p.m.
Newcomers Welcome Program for Seniors	Thursday, February 20	1:00–3:30 p.m.
Special Meeting of Council— Budget	Thursday, February 20	7:00 p.m.
Newcomers Welcome Program for Seniors	Thursday, February 27	1:00–3:30 p.m.
Sports Facility Strategy Meeting	Thursday, February 27	7:00–9:00 p.m.
Youth Dance	Friday, February 28	7:00–10:00 p.m.

Sports Facility Strategy Meeting

The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the study and process and solicit views of residents and stakeholders. The Town of Whitby is developing a Sports Facility Strategy intended to provide guidance for the provision of indoor and outdoor sports facilities over the next 20 years. The strategy is intended to respond to population growth, trends in sports, changing demographics and community fiscal resources. You are invited to attend the first Public Information Centre regarding this subject.

Date: Thursday, February 27, 2014

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Council Chambers, Whitby Municipal Building 575 Rossland Road East, Whitby

WHITBY

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Family Day

February 17, 2014

The community is invited to spend some active, healthy and fun family time together with the Town of Whitby!

For a list of events, locations and times, please visit www.whitby.ca/events



THE VARLEY ART GALLERY OF MARKHAM ANNOUNCES FREE ADMISSION IN 2014



The Varley Art Gallery of Markham is pleased to announce free admission to its galleries thanks to the sponsorship of IBM from January 1st – December, 31st, 2014. Both the Varley and IBM share a commitment to providing access to artistic expression and meaningful learning opportunities to all members of the community. Our 2014 season features extraordinary historical

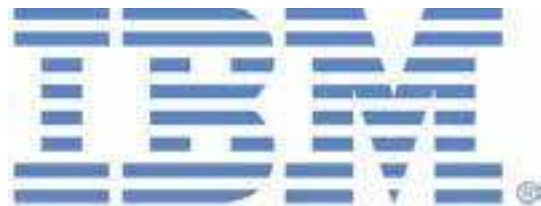
and contemporary Canadian art. It begins on January 25, 2014 with a year-long exhibition, The Varley Story & Colour, In Theory. This exhibition serves as a chronological survey of F.H. Varley's life and artistic practice featuring selections drawn from the Varley collection. Also on view are works on loan from major public institutions that explore Varley's use and understanding of colour.

A Story of Canadian Art: As told by the Hart House Collection (May 24, 2014 to September 1, 2014) will feature Canadian art from the historic collection of Hart House at the University of Toronto. Kim Adams: One for the road (September 13, 2014 – January 11, 2015), a contemporary exhibition surveying Adams' 30-year career as an inventor of strange new worlds.



Janet Read, Hem of the Sea

FREE ADMISSION. BEGINNING JANUARY 1ST - DECEMBER 31ST 2014 SPONSORED BY:



WINTERFEST 2014

Come and enjoy pony rides, snowshoeing, building snowmen, activities, crafts & great food!

Date: Monday, February 17, 2014
Time: 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Event Organizer: Markham Museum
Telephone: 905-294-4576
Email Contact: museuminfo@markham.ca
Location: 9350 Markham Road, Markham, ON, L3P 3J3
Cost: \$3 per person (Children under 2 are free)



Colour, In Theory



F.H. Varley, Early morning, Sphinx Mountain



Election Day is Monday, October 27, 2014



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Art Competition

Age Groups: 4 – 18 years old.

Awards will be handed out at the New Year Celebrations on April 19, 2014.

New Year Celebrations 2014 – Annual Cultural Celebration

Save the date: April 19, 2014
Venue: Don Bosco Collegiate
Time: 4 pm
Trainers: Tissa: 416-614-8225
Tickets: Rajkumar: 416-567-5104

Gymnasium Information

Play Volleyball and Badminton every Thursday night and stay fit.

Albert Campbell Collegiate from 7:30 – 9:30 pm

Membership Night 2014

Save the date: March 28, 2014

More information to follow.

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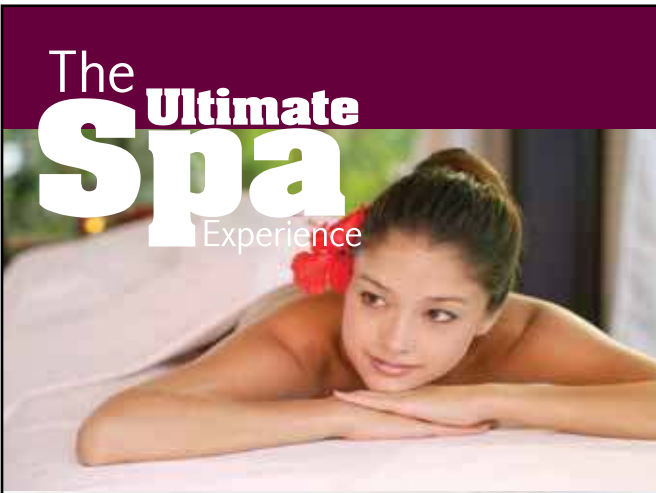


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