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## Foreign Affairs Minister Baird Calls Commonwealth Members to Safeguard Basic Rights for All



Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird speaks to members of the Royal Commonwealth Society in London on January 23, 2012. Baird called on Commonwealth members to promote and protect the basic human rights of all people.

Baird said all countries have a duty to defend the vulnerable, to give voice to the voiceless, and to challenge aggressors. He went on to say governments “cannot be selective in which basic human rights we defend, nor can we be arbitrary in whose rights we protect.” [international.gc.ca]

## 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda

As the 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, Priyadarshi Dutta takes a look at “a forgotten aspect of his life: His 10-day visit to Sri Lanka in January 1897, soon after his successful journey to the West” – In one of India’s leading broadsheets, The Daily Pioneer:

### Vivekananda’s Lankan connection

By Priyadarshi Dutta

“This is the punya bhoomi, the land of karma. Today I stand here and say, with the conviction of truth, that it is so. If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed punya bhoomi, to be the land to which souls on this earth must come to account for karma, the land to which every soul that is wending its way towards God must come to attain its last home, the land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all, the land of introspection and spirituality — it is India.”

CONTD. on page 4

150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda held at Tambalakamam - Sarada Vidyalaya in Sri Lanka East on Jan 12, 2012.



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# Canada News

## Construction begins in the West Don Lands in time for the 2015 Pan/ Parapan American Games McGuinty Government Revitalizes Land and Creates 5,200 Jobs

Ontario is starting construction on a new waterfront community in the West Don Lands — in time for the Toronto 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games — creating 5,200 direct and indirect jobs.

The new community will become the temporary home to more than 10,000 athletes and officials participating in the 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games. Following the Games, the newly revitalized West Don Lands will benefit the community with new condominiums, affordable housing, a YMCA recreation centre and George Brown College's first-ever student residences.

The Games are moving ahead, on-time and on-budget. They will create more than 15,000 jobs and will be the single largest economic driver in the region in the next four years.

Investing in new sporting facilities, transit and communities is part of the McGuinty government's plan to create and protect jobs for Ontarians while strengthening local economies.

"The start of construction on the West Don Lands waterfront community is the first major step towards delivering the 2015 Games on-time and on-budget. The Athletes' Village will provide an exceptional experience for athletes and bring long-lasting economic and social benefits to the community."

— **Charles Sousa**, Minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan Am Games

"This project represents an important investment that will create jobs, provide economic opportunities and transform an unusable piece of land into a vibrant and environmentally-sustainable community."

— **Bob Chiarelli**, Minister of Infrastructure

"The Pan Am Games was the catalyst to kick-start this vital community project a



**Charles Sousa, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration**

**Minister Responsible for Pan/ Parapan American Games at Athletes Village Event** full five to ten years earlier. The Athletes' Village will be a state-of-the-art oasis for competitors where they can both rest and train to ensure top-notch performances during the Games."

— **Ian Troop**, CEO, TO2015  
 § 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games are the first international multi-sporting event held in Ontario in more than 80 years.

§ They are expected to draw more than 250,000 visitors to the Greater Golden Horseshoe region.

§ More than 1,150 Ontarians will have access to affordable rental housing and student residence accommodations following the conversion of the Athletes' Village.

§ The new YMCA recreation centre — a space for community activities — will help residents lead healthy active lives with access to a gym, a pool and a fitness and exercise area.

§ Ontario created more than 121,000 net new full-time jobs in 2011.



**Pan Am - group at 3D model : Michael Chan - Minister of Tourism, Culture and sport, Roger Garland - TO2015, Larry Tanenbaum - Dundee Kilmer, Dakota White - Athlete, Charles Sousa - Minister Responsible for Pan/ Parapan Games, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Mark Grimes - Toronto City Councillor, Ian Troop - TO2015, John Campbell, Waterfront Toronto**



**Dakota White - Athlete, Charles Sousa - Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Minister Responsible for Pan/ Parapan American Games, Anne Sado, George Brown College**

### THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING CANADIAN YOUTH PLAYING TEAM SPORTS

#### Minister Gosal Announcement on Prevention of Head Injuries among Children and Youth in Team Sports

Minister Gosal announced new support for young Canadians playing team sports. Brain injuries, including concussions, are an all too common occurrence in team sports. The impacts of a traumatic brain injury can have lifelong effects, such as permanently changing the way one talks, walks, learns and interacts

with others. That is why Minister Gosal announced that our Government is investing in a Canada-wide initiative that will help reduce the rate and severity of concussions and brain injuries and improve return-to-play decision-making for children and youth playing team sports.



**The Honourable Bal Gosal, Minister of State for Sport, speaks to students from John McCrae High School after announcing a project to prevent head injuries among children and youth in team sports**



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- Selfless work is love  
made visible"  
Swami Vivekananda**

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# from the publisher's desk

## Be Heart Happy this Valentine's Day

**By: Krishni Loganathan  
B.A. (Hons.)**

Valentine's Day expresses feelings of love and associates this with one of the most important organs in the body, the heart. Our heart is so vital to our existence, which is why February marks Healthy Heart Month, where Canadians are encouraged to begin to take a more pro-active approach to improving their health and reducing their chances of heart disease and stroke. More Canadians are encouraged to change their lives and start living a more healthy

and active lifestyle this month.

Heart Awareness continues to increase and Canadians are fortunate to have the resources at their fingertips. With social media as a tool, information travels instantaneously to each person, and search engines like Google bring up valuable resources to use. Statistics like 1 in 3 Canadians have suffered from heart disease and stroke are frightening numbers but very accurate statements that need to be known. Heart disease and stroke is the number 1 cause of death in women but many

women are still not aware of this.

Cardiologists encourage men and women to not only improve their eating habits but to also include physical activity in their lifestyle. A healthy diet alone will not decrease your chances of heart disease and stroke, but also incorporating some form of exercise can support this healthy lifestyle.

We all want to lead a healthy longer life so reducing your chances of heart disease would be the first step and can be done by following these guidelines;

· Be physically active.

· Be smoke-free  
· Know and control your blood pressure.

· Eat a healthy diet that is lower in fat, especially saturated and trans fat.

· Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

· Manage your diabetes.

· Limit alcohol use.

· Reduce stress.

· Visit your doctor regularly and follow your doctor's advice.

Monsoon Journal wishes everyone a Happy Valentine's Day and Heart Healthy Life all along.

## Vivekananda's Lankan connection

CONTD. from page 1

This is an extract from Swami Vivekananda's first public lecture in the East. Delivered soon after his return from the West (1893-1896), it was his first speech advocating India to recognise its spiritual mission. Such idolisation of India inspired the nationalist movement that broke out within a decade. Curiously, this speech was delivered neither on India's territory nor addressed to the Indians. It was delivered in the Floral Hall of Colombo, Sri Lanka, on January 16, 1897, where the Lankan Tamils comprised the audience.

Against popular misconceptions, Sri Lanka (unlike Burma) was never part of British India. The island had become a British Crown colony in 1802, with its separate legislative council, chief justice, military service, civil service and a governor who reported to the secretary for colonies rather than the secretary for India in London.

Vivekananda's exploits in Sri Lanka is a little known chapter. En route India, he plodded through the island for 10 days between January 15 and January 25, 1897. He came there on the invitation of Tamil Hindus who had keenly followed his great feat in the West. Tamils were in midst of a 'Hindu Renaissance' initiated by the Saivite reformer of Jaffna, Arumuga Navalar (1822-1879), and Vivekananda's visit gave it a big push in that direction.

The Swami reached Colombo on January 15. Thousands of Tamils came out to welcome him. In fact throughout his entire stay, a large number of Tamils from all walks of life accompanied him. He was respectfully called the 'Swamigal' by the welcoming devotees. Being immensely touched by this, Vivekananda said that this roar-

ing welcome was not in honour of a military general, a great politician or a millionaire but a monk attested to the spiritual bent of Hindu mind.

Vivekananda stayed in a bungalow in Barnes Street in the outskirts of Colombo. It was later renamed as Vivekananda Lodge. On January 16, he delivered his speech at Floral Hall. Its most striking part was that Vivekananda spoke with the confidence as if standing on the soil of India amidst Indians. He referred to India as punya bhoomi (sacred land) and made the audience feel as if they were living in this punya bhoomi. He betrayed no awareness of standing upon the soil of a Buddhist-majority country.

Vivekananda had to shelve his plan of sailing for Madras (Chennai) from Colombo as he was receiving numerous telegrams from various Tamil-inhabited towns of Sri Lanka to visit them. On January 19, he took the train to Kandy — the hill station inhabited by tea plantation workers from Tamil Nadu. He was welcomed at the Kandy railway station by a traditional band and temple insignia amid loud cheers.

After delivering a brief speech, Vivekananda set out for a long, arduous journey to Jaffna by a stagecoach as there were no railway line linking Kandy and Jaffna in those days. It was during this 200-mile journey that an outrageous incident happened. After nearly 50 miles, the coach broke down near Dambulla, known for its famous cave temple complex. This forced him to take a bullock-cart to reach Anuradhapuram, the ancient capital of Sri Lanka and the largest 'buried city' of the world.

Anuradhapuram hosts the Bo-tree, offshoot of the Bo-tree of



Both Gaya, under which Buddha had received enlightenment. On seeing Vivekananda, a huge crowd of Tamils and Sinhalese gathered, and he was compelled to deliver a lecture. He was speaking on the subject of bhakti, which was being translated into Tamil and Sinhalese.

Suddenly, a huge crowd of Buddhist bhikshus (monks) gathered around him and began beating drum and gongs in order to stop the lecture. The Swami had to stop his speech abruptly.

Then, after a journey of two nights, Vivekananda reached Vavuniya, in the northern part of Sri Lanka, another place of Tamil predominance. On January 24, 1897, the Swami crossed the Elephant Pass to step into Jaffna Peninsula. Jaffna, Tamil heartland, was the principal centre of Hinduism in Sri Lanka. He was received by a delegation of leading Hindus 12 miles outside the city, and brought in a triumphant procession.

But the real spectacle was in the evening. A torchlight procession, accompanied by Carnatic music and attended by an estimated 15,000 people, began. On the way, the Swami worshipped at Siva and Kathirasan temples. After the procession, his carriage reached the Jaffna Hindu College, where a huge crowd awaited him. Vivekananda deliv-

ered his keynote address on 'Vedantism'.

The theme was interesting, considering the fact that Jaffna has always been the centre of Saiva Siddhanta, which does not subscribe to the Vedantic model. After delivering an enlightened lecture, Vivekananda sailed from Jaffna by steamship by the midnight. After a journey of 50 miles on Palk Strait, he arrived at Pamban on January 26.

We remember how Indian Tamils were instrumental in Vivekananda's visit to the US to address the Parliament of Religion. But it is forgotten how the Lankan Tamils were the first to welcome him in the subcontinent. Vivekananda visited Sri Lanka briefly again in 1899, en route Europe.

The Tamils of that country never forgot him. The world's first — and still surviving — 'Vivekananda Society' was established in Colombo in 1902 within nine days of the Swami's death. The Jaffna Tamil immigrants to British Malaya (Malaysia) established a Vivekananda Ashram in Kuala Lumpur in 1904. Today, there is the Vivekananda College in Colombo and Orr's Hill Vivekananda College in Trincomalee.

Lankan Tamils still remember the Swami fondly, but do we?

[courtesy: Daily Pioneer]





# Canada News

## Read-out of Minister Fast's meeting with India's Minister of Commerce and Industry

Minister Fast and India's Minister of Commerce and Industry Anand Sharma met on the margins of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, recently.

Both ministers agreed to instruct their respective negotiators to redouble efforts on an ambitious schedule to complete negotiations on a Canada-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in 2013.

This commitment follows a productive third round of negotiations completed in December 2011.

Canada and India are pursuing a robust agreement, consistent with Canada's ambitious pro-trade plan.

A trade agreement with India will eliminate or reduce tariffs on goods, liberalize the trade in services and directly benefit Canadian businesses and workers in sectors ranging from primary agricultural, resource-related and chemical products to transport equipment,



machinery and equipment.

Canada will only sign an agreement that is in the best interests of Canadians.

Minister Fast also reiterated the importance of moving forward expeditiously with the establishment of the Canada-India Chief Executive Officer Forum, as requested by Prime Ministers Harper and Prime Minister Singh.

## GOVERNMENT CONCLUDES AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE WITH VANCOUVER SHIPYARDS CO. LTD. TO BUILD NON-COMBAT VESSELS



VANCOUVER — Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced recently that the Government of Canada and Vancouver Shipyards Co. Ltd. have successfully reached an agreement in principle that paves the way for the construction of Canada's non-combat fleet under the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy (NSPS).

"Our Government is committed to supporting the Canadian marine industry, to revitalize Canadian shipyards and to build ships for the Royal Canadian Navy and Canadian Coast Guard here in Canada," said Prime Minister Harper. "The agreement in principle reached with Vancouver Shipyards Co. Ltd. is a milestone of our Government's National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy – a strategy that will mean jobs and economic growth for the country and stability for the industry."

The National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy – the largest procurement sourcing arrangement in Canadian history – is expected to create thousands of high-value jobs across the country and will have significant economic benefits in shipbuilding and related industries across Canada.

The Strategy will deliver vital equipment to our men and women in uniform, giving them the tools they need to serve Canadians in Canada and abroad. It will involve skilled work in a variety of sectors, such as steel manufacturing, information technology, and defence systems development and integration. Small and medium-sized enterprises across the country will benefit through the construction of large and small vessels, as well as work related to repairing and refitting.

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## New physicians reflect Rouge Valley's commitment to access and service excellence

### Physicians join RVHS medical team

Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) is proud to welcome new doctors who specialize in surgical cancer care, obstetrics-gynecology, and hospital medicine.

"We are proud to be providing the highest level of care and bringing a range of specialties to our patients in our growing communities of west Durham and east Toronto. We welcome the latest physicians to our team at Rouge Valley," says Dr. Naresh Mohan, RVHS chief of staff.

### New RVC surgeon to focus on cancer care

For surgical oncologist Dr. Zaid Yasser, the opportunity to come to Rouge Valley is a chance to help create more awareness of cancer care.

"When I wanted to focus on a specific area of practice, I had a passion for oncology. The treatment of cancer is becoming more complex, which is why I decided to focus on this area. There's a lot to be done at a community-based hospital in this field," explains Dr. Yasser. "I'm looking forward to working with our medical team to help promote cancer care."

Dr. Yasser, earned a bachelor degree in medicine and surgery at Al-Mustansiriya University in Iraq, and completed the Ontario International Medical Graduate Program at Queen's University. He completed a fellowship in general surgery and a subspecialty fellowship in general surgical oncology at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Yasser, who will be primarily based at Rouge Valley Centenary (RVC), is fluent in English and Arabic.

### New Obstetrician-Gynecologist at RVAP

For obstetrician-gynecologist Dr. Placide Rubabaza, his work is an opportunity to help promote women's health, not only in Canada, but also in the developing world.

"Obstetrics and gynecology have come a long way. In third world countries, pregnancy is a huge morbidity risk. I hope to help contribute, both in this community and outside, in helping to continue to prevent difficulties in childbirth," he explains.

His interest in promoting women's health and education has also led to an interest in volunteer work in developing countries, including Burundi, where he is from. He has been involved with projects in Burundi and Benin, helping to promote maternal and child health.

Dr. Rubabaza earned his medical degree at the University of Ottawa Medical School, and completed his spe-

cialty training in obstetrics and gynecology at McMaster University. He also earned a bachelor of science degree in biochemistry at the University of Ottawa.

Dr. Rubabaza speaks French, English, Swahili, Kirundi, a language spoken in Burundi, and Kihyarwanda, which is spoken in Rwanda. He is based at the Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering (RVAP) hospital campus.

### New Hospitalist at RVAP

For hospitalist Dr. Camala Smith, the work of a hospitalist is a bit like detective work.

"This type of medicine interests me because it requires you to be a bit investigative. You also receive quick feedback

in terms of your diagnosis and you're able to see immediate results. I still enjoy working in community-based medicine, but I also enjoy the accessibility of resources offered by working within a hospital," Dr. Smith explains.

Dr. Smith, who began at Rouge Valley in September, is based at RVAP. She earned a bachelor of science degree from the University of Toronto, and completed her medical degree at McMaster University. She also went on to complete her residency in Family Medicine at McGill University.

Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) — The best at what we do.

RVHS is an excellent acute care community hospital with many programs, including 24/7/365 emergency, obstetrics,

paediatrics, cardiac care and mental health. 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, Ajax, Pickering and Whitby.



### Media Advisory/Photo Opportunities

## To Rouge with Love: heartfelt giving

Events to raise funds for echocardiograms for RVHS Cardiac Care program

**February 3, 2012** — This month will be a truly heartfelt celebration for many supporters of Rouge Valley's Cardiac Care Program, as generous hosts and their guests in the Durham/GTA region gather to celebrate Valentine's Day and Heart Month.

The annual event, affectionately known as "To Rouge with Love", is a series of cocktail parties and events intended to raise funds to help purchase essential cardiac equipment. For the second year, the event will support the Heart of it All campaign, to bring new echocardiogram machines to the Rouge Valley Health System hospitals. Held over the course of two weeks, at eight locations, each event will host a special guest from Rouge Valley Health System to explain why the equipment is so important and needed, as well as how it is used.

Last year "To Rouge with Love" raised more than \$20,000 for cardiac care at Rouge Valley and it is expected to be a success again this year. Guests attending the events make a donation upon arriving to their party, and have an opportunity to meet and interact with the cardiologists and leaders of the Rouge Valley Cardiac Care program.

Rouge Valley's Cardiac Program is doing incredible things. This group has embraced the concept of providing excellent cardiac care across both our Ajax and Pickering and Scarborough Centenary sites and as a regional centre of excellence provides outstanding care to patients from Lindsay to east Toronto.

The media is invited to attend these events for photo opportunities:

HOSTS	EVENT DETAILS
<b>Anne Raghurai</b>	When: Wednesday, February 8, 2012 7:00 to 9:00 PM Where: 3 Guildcrest Dr, Toronto Who: <b>Dr. Saleem Kassam</b> , RVHS Cardiologist; <b>Wendy Nagy</b> , RVHS Cardiac Program; <b>Ann and Gord Moore</b> , Foundation Board; <b>Katherine Craine</b> , RVHS Foundation; <b>Ros Sagar-Lal</b> , RVHS Foundation
<b>Gord and Ann Moore</b>	When: Tuesday, February 14, 2012 5:30 to 7:00 PM Where: 24 Annis Road, Scarborough (416) 264-9204 Who: <b>Dr. Paul Galiwango</b> , RVHS Cardiologist; <b>Bernard Johnson</b> , Director of Cardiac Care; <b>Katherine Craine</b> , RVHS Foundation; <b>Ros Sagar-Lal</b> , RVHS Foundation
<b>Patrons' Council</b>	When: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 4:00 to 5:30 PM Where: 580 Harwood Ave. S., Ajax 416-281-7400 Who: <b>Dr. Paul Galiwango</b> , RVHS Cardiologist; <b>Nancy Maxwell</b> , RVHS Foundation Board member; <b>Tracy Paterson</b> , RVHS Foundation; <b>Dave Stell</b> , RVHS Foundation; <b>Ros Sagar-Lal</b> , RVHS Foundation
<b>Chad and Susan Hanna</b>	When: Sunday, February 26, 2012

.. / 2



# Canada News

## HYUNDAI ELANTRA NAMED 2012 NORTH AMERICAN CAR OF THE YEAR

DETROIT, Michigan (January 9, 2012) – The 2012 Hyundai Elantra took top honors in the most exclusive automotive award in North America when it was named 2012 North American Car of the Year today.

A jury of 50 independent North American automotive journalists, including 5 Canadians, evaluated each of the new cars introduced last year and chose the 2012 Hyundai Elantra as the winner. The award was announced during a news conference at the 2012 North American International Auto Show in Detroit, marking Hyundai's second win. The Hyundai Genesis was named North American Car of the Year in 2009.

"This most prestigious of awards is a great illustration of why Elantra was one of the best-selling cars in Canada last year," noted Steve Kelleher, President and CEO of Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. "Given the fierce competition in the compact segment, especially here in Canada, we are honoured that the jury recognizes Elantra's far-reaching impact on the industry."

The jurors considered more than 50 new vehicles before selecting the top three cars and top three trucks. The Volkswagen Passat and Ford Focus were the other car finalists.

This is the 19th year of the awards, which were inspired by the prestigious European "Car of the Year." The jury is administered by an organizing committee and funded exclusively with dues paid by the jurors. Jurors judge the cars on a number of factors including innovation, impact on the industry, design, safety, handling, driver satisfaction, and value for the dollar.

Elantra exemplifies Hyundai's emotional "Fluidic Sculpture" design principles. "Fluidic Sculpture" considers the interplay of wind with rigid surfaces to create the illusion of constant motion. Elantra was designed at Hyundai's North American Design Center in Irvine, California and is built at Hyundai Motor Manufacturing in Montgomery, Alabama.

**CRITICAL ACCLAIM AND SALES SUCCESS IN 2011**



The Elantra's North American Car of the Year award follows a string of others, including being named Best New Small Car under \$21,000 by the Automobile Journalists Association of Canada (AJAC). With this category win, Elantra is also in contention to be named AJAC's 2012 Canadian Car of the Year when the award is announced in February at the Canadian International Auto Show.

The Elantra's critical acclaim was achieved in parallel with unprecedented sales success. With sales of 44,970 units, the Elantra nameplate played a key role in Hyundai's best-ever year in Canada.

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# Health & Fitness



## Low Back Pain Prevalence

**Dr. Amalraj Siva,**  
B.Sc (Hons), DC, CSCS, ART  
**Doctor of Chiropractic**  
**Certified Strength and**  
**Conditioning Specialist**  
**Active Release Provider**

How many times have you experienced low back pain? Does it feel better after treatment but always seems to come back? Have you ever wondered why on earth this low back pain is not going away for good?

### Did you know?

- Low back pain affects 80% of the population in one's lifetime.
- Low back pain is the second most common reason for medical consultation.
- The costs for low back pain is over \$25 billion dollars a year

Most patients with back pain usually recover within 2-4 weeks after the initial pain. This is in large part due to the natural restoration of the pain and injury by the body. You may think that your low back pain has been gone for good! BUT.....

The biggest problem with low back pain patients is the high rate of recurrence rates. Research shows that there is an overwhelming lifetime recurrence rate of up to 85%! Within 1 year after your first episode of low back pain there is a recurrence rate from 60% to 86%. Even though you may not be experiencing any low back pain at the moment, but in reality your low back is a ticking time bomb for the next pain episode.

### So what are some great ways to make sure you can reduce the chances of getting low back pain?

Avoid rounding your low back when performing tasks such as lifting to minimize the risk of low back injury.

Most low back injuries occur due to a cumulative sustained load (sitting all day long) or repetitive motion (bending). Research has shown that the mechanism for a disc herniation is repeated bending along with twisting of the back.

There is no evidence that rest and inactivity helps with low back pain. Exercise encourages patients to resume activity gradually.

This doesn't mean you should get out there and push your body to the limits. It's never a good idea to overdo it because you can end up doing more harm than good. There is good evidence to show that activity such as brisk walking can significantly reduce pain.

### Every low back pain is NOT due to a Herniated Disc or a Degenerative Disc disease.

There is a high false positive rate of using MRI's or X-ray's in patients for low back. Degenerative disc disease is a common finding after the age of 40 and its presence does not mean it is the source of your pain. Research showed that 85% of the population with no low back pain still had confirmed degenerative disc disease.



### Improve your Hip mobility!

The low back should be a stable joint and a lack of hip mobility causes the low back to overcompensate and become hypermobile. Learning how to properly use your hips can take away excessive stress of the muscles and ligaments of the low back.

### Stop doing sit-ups for developing your core.

Doing sit-ups puts a lot of strain on your low back due to repetitive bending of the spine. Better core exercises include planks and side bridges that are great to activate the core stabilizers and significantly reduce the strain on the lower spine.

### Muscles prone to weakness in most low back patients are the BUTT (Glutes) muscles.

Strong glutes help with pelvic stability reducing the amount of load going through your back. Having strong glutes helps you with proper lifting mechanics and is also important during sport specific movements like jumping, sprinting, and change of direction.

### Most chronic low back pain patients have what are called "muscle imbalances"

### due to bad posture.

If the agonist and antagonist muscles of the same joint are way out of balance it can increase the risk of injury. The core and glute muscles are prone to weakness and hip flexors and low back extensor muscles are prone to tightness. This imbalance tends to over stress the low back as well as the hip joints.

### Proper BREATHING mechanics.


Having the proper respiratory mechanic helps with spinal stabilization and posture. When breathing is compromised the spine is affected. This becomes more of an issue for athletes during aero-

bic activities because of poor coordination between the diaphragm and abdominals which lead to spinal instability.

### Working on sensorimotor and balance training.

Incorporating balance training through wobble boards and etc. help stimulate the proprioceptive system to help control the posture. When we have poor balance we often overuse our muscles in the lower back to maintain stability.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at [healthandsportsrehab@gmail.com](mailto:healthandsportsrehab@gmail.com).



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# Health & Fitness

## Matters of the Heart

Love is in the air! It's February- the month for love. A time to celebrate the special someone in your life, shower them with red roses, heart-shaped chocolates and expensive jewellery. It's also the month to love and be kind to your heart. The heart is one of the most important organs in our body, and serves the function of circulating blood, oxygen, nutrients, and various hormones throughout our body. According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, every 7 minutes in Canada, someone is the victim of heart disease and stroke. Heart disease and stroke are two of the three leading causes of death in Canada. Scary huh? The good news is that with small changes in your diet and lifestyle you can significantly reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke.

So, put your heart into it! Here are 5 steps to help you maintain a happy, healthy heart!

### Eat heart friendly foods

Love your heart by eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, Omega-3 fats and fiber. Foods such as salmon, avocados, dark green vegetables, nuts, seeds, apples, blueberries, and low fat dairy are loaded with nutrients and healthy fats that help maintain the normal function of your heart. Learn how to read food labels to help you make healthier food choices. Limit the amount of "bad fats" such as saturated and trans fat, sugar and salt and try to get enough of the "good fats" such as polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fats, protein, and fibre. Most importantly, take baby steps! Dietary changes can't be made overnight, it's a lifestyle change. Begin with making these simple swaps:

<b>Choose:</b>	<b>Toss:</b>
Fresh fruit	Canned fruit
Whole grain bread	White bread
Baked salmon	Battered fish
Milk in your coffee	Cream
Water	Diet soda
Oatmeal	Sugary cereals
Grilled chicken burgers	Hamburgers
Turkey bacon	Pork/beef bacon
Rice chips	Potato chips
Frozen yogurt	Ice cream

### Pump up the beat!

Stay indoors or take it outside, do it solo or call a friend, go for a walk or run a marathon! Get your heart racing and pumping! Physical activity is one of the cheapest, easiest and most effective ways to maintain a healthy heart. Regular physical activity can help reduce cholesterol levels, lower high blood pressure, prevent and control diabetes, and help you lose excess body weight.

Try to perform 30 minutes of moderate to intense physical activity within 60-

80% of your target heart rate five times a week to significantly lower your risk of heart disease.

### "Stay calm and carry on"

When life becomes too stressful, take a moment to close your eyes and take a deep breath. Stress can affect anyone at any age or stage in their life. Some common causes of stress may be financial; paying your bills, workplace-related, fighting for the promotion, or at home, caring and providing for your family. Many of us are often unaware of the detrimental effects prolonged or chronic stress has on our bodies, psychologically, mentally, emotionally and most importantly, physically. Studies show that stress increases the risk of heart disease by increasing blood pressure, cholesterol and elevating levels of the stress hormones adrenalin and cortisol. Being able to identify the stressors and cope with the tension are keys to managing stress.

Try these stress busting strategies to help you stay calm and carry on.

### Go for a walk.

Put on your walking shoes and head out for a brisk walk around the neighbourhood, or go for a leisurely stroll around the park. Get out, breathe fresh air and be one with nature!

### Spend some time with friends.

Make it a movie night or simply a gab session with your BFFs. Enjoy fun, laughter and social therapy!

### Meditate.

Find a quiet, comfortable room that is not too warm or cold, wear comfortable clothing, and most importantly leave that cell phone behind! Sit with your back tall and try to breathe from your belly, keeping your mind calm and relaxed.

### Be active!

Release your stress by; cleaning the house, gardening, swimming, ice skating at your local recreation centre, or taking a dance class!

### Listen to your favourite music.

Load up your iPod with your favourite tracks or pop a CD in to the player and enjoy the rhythm of the music.

### Write your thoughts in a journal.

Make your journal your best friend. Write about your thoughts, feelings, and people in your life, your stressful day, anything that helps you clear and relax your mind.

### Bake your favourite cake or dessert!

Did you know STRESSED spelled backwards is DESSERT? To avoid a total meltdown, grab your measuring cups and whisk and whip up a batch of cupcakes or a delicious apple pie! Get your hands dirty, be creative and enjoy a sweet treat.

By Aykta Grover  
 Founder, Aura Wellness  
 Certified Nutrition, Fitness, Pre and Post Natal Specialist



### Cook a gourmet meal.

Put on your apron, get out your pots and pans, start the oven and pull out your fancy food processor and become the master of your kitchen! Bake, grill, barbecue or roast your favourite steak or layer up your lasagne with your favourite veggies and sauce. Spend an evening to plan and prepare your favourite meal and share it with your family. What better way to release stress?

### Put out the bud

It's a known fact, smoking is bad for you. It will kill you. Most of us associate smoking with lung cancer or other serious respiratory diseases. Unfortunately, smoking also has harmful effects on our heart. The nicotine present in smoke increases the risk of heart disease by decreasing oxygen to the heart, increasing blood pressure, heart rate, and blood clotting and damaging cells lining the coronary arteries and other blood vessels. According to the Heart and Stroke foundation, smoking is responsible for 14.5% of all heart disease and stroke deaths amongst Canadians.

To keep this number from increasing, here are some ways to fight the habit:

### Use a nicotine patch or gum.

Avoid situations where you may be vulnerable to smoking.

Distract yourself with other activities.

**Exercise.** It will help you relax.

Drink plenty of fluids.

**Ask for help.** Join a support group and surround yourself with positive people.

Avoid buying or carrying cigarettes, lighters or matches.

Focus on the end result, a healthy, happy body!

### Share your heart

Be kind and perform an act of generosity; give up your seat on the subway to someone who needs it more than you, an elderly person or a pregnant woman. Donate blood at a local bank, you may save a life. Smile at a stranger, you may brighten their day. Compliment a friend or a member of the family, it will make them smile. Let someone steal your parking spot, they may need it more than you.

Simple changes can lead to great results. Love your heart by applying these tips and enjoying a healthy, happy lifestyle!

Aykta Grover  
 BSc, BAA, PTS and NWS

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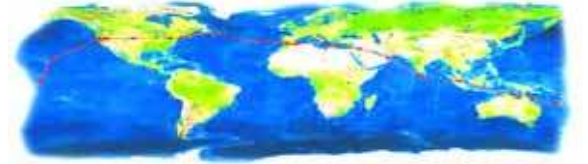
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1. Who owns the policy?	1. The bank owns the insurance policy.	1. Client owns their own Policy.
2. Who controls the policy?	2. The bank controls all the options.	2. Insured has control of all the options.
3. Can I guarantee I will always be covered?	3. Your policy will lapse if your mortgage goes into arrears.	3. Policy will not lapse if you miss a Mortgage payment.
4. Who is my beneficiary?	4. Your Beneficiary is the Bank.	4. You can name any Beneficiary you want.
5. What kind of coverage do I have?	5. Your coverage is decreasing term with level cost.	5. Level term coverage with fixed premiums.
6. Can I be covered if I change mortgage holders?	6. Moving the mortgage means reapplying for insurance.	6. Your covered regardless of which institution you choose.
7. How much insurance do I have?	7. Face amount of the policy cannot exceed the value of the outstanding mortgage.	7. Your coverage is determined by your needs and wants.
8. What options do I have if I or my spouse dies?	8. No option but to pay off the mortgage.	8. Survivor can invest the money and use returns to pay the mortgage and still keep the capital.
9. Can I convert my insurance to a permanent plan at any time?	9. Not extendible.	9. Your policy is renewable and convertible.
10. Am I penalized for casual deposits?	10. Penalizes casual deposits.	10. Rewards casual deposits.
11. Who guarantees that I am covered if I die?	11. Underwriting is done at time of death and research can date back to birth.	11. Underwriting is done at time of application and before a second premium is paid.
12. Who is more expensive?	12. Can be very expensive.	12. We are very competitive.



# Around the world



## Over 60 percent of households in the Northern Province are food insecure

by World Food Programme  
Sri Lanka - A Food Security Assessment Report:

This report presents the results of an in-depth study of food security in Sri Lanka, a country emerging from decades of violent conflict and still recovering from the worst flooding in recent history.

The assessment is the most wide-ranging study conducted by WFP in Sri Lanka and finds that a majority of the population in the Northern and Eastern parts of the island is food insecure, still re-building their lives and livelihoods which were severely impacted by conflict and compounding floods.

In response to a slow recover, a comprehensive and intensified food security strategy is required. Targeted food assistance, as an important component of an overall livelihood development plan, is found to be imperative, particularly for severely food insecure and vulnerable groups.

### Executive Summary

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute (HARTI) conducted a joint and comprehensive food security assessment in April 2011. The assessment covered the five recently conflict affected districts of northern Sri Lanka (Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mullaitivu, Mannar and Vavuniya) and five of the most flood affected districts in the Eastern and Northern Central Provinces of the country (Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa).

Primary data collection included household interviews for quantitative analysis and key informant interviews for qualitative analysis. The assessment covered 165 locations and 2,474 households, employing a stratified, two-stage random sampling approach. It is the largest survey ever conducted by WFP in Sri Lanka. Findings are statistically representative of the overall population of sampled districts.

Over 60 percent of households in the Northern Province are food insecure (46 percent moderately food insecure and 15 percent severely food insecure). This despite improvements among the returnee1 population in income and food security levels since October 2010. The trend and severity of food insecurity are



Meena and her siblings were orphaned during the last seige in Mullivaikkal, Sri Lanka North East at the tail end of the war. They are being taken care of by their grandmother's sister who also has a family of her own to feed

particularly worrisome in Killinochchi. Low income levels and high food prices have led to weak purchasing power of households in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

As a result, there are signs of asset depletion, high indebtedness and adaptation of relatively serious coping behaviors, especially in the Northern Province. In Vavuniya and Jaffna, the level of need in the not recently returned population – a population not typically the focus of assistance – is of similar severity as the recently returned population.

The most substantial food assistance reduction is expected in Mullaitivu where the situation requires close monitoring in the near future.

Dietary intake shows a clear deterioration from October 2010 to April 2011 among returnees in the Northern Province. A simultaneous and significant reduction of food assistance suggests that food assistance did play an important role in maintaining adequate food consumption for the recently returned population. As food assistance has been gradually scaled down, the dietary intake of households has shown significant deterioration, to levels below what is required.

Batticaloa is also a region of concern. The dramatic floods in January and February affected nearly the entire population and on many food security indicators the district now performs as poorly as the Northern Province.

The floods coincided with the major agricultural season and as a result vast areas of standing crops were washed away or submerged.

Although the effects were devastating, the flood impact on livelihoods is believed to be subsiding. However, in some areas (particularly those where yala is not cultivated) the situation may not be normalized until early 2012.

The total number of food insecure persons in the sampled area is 1.7 million, 78 percent of whom are in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

Out of the total population, 12 percent are severely food insecure, of which 82 percent are in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Food security interventions are needed to create capacity and productive assets among this very large food insecure population.



Conflict affected households in the Northern Province, especially in Killinochchi and Mullaitivu, and severely flood affected households, particularly in Batticaloa, require sustained and comprehensive action, both interventions to relieve hunger in the short term and medium-term interventions to strengthen livelihoods.

It is necessary to expand the coverage of the Samurthi safety net to food insecure areas of the Northern Province, especially Killinochchi, Mullaitivu and Mannar. Attention should be given to the review of land use policies to resolve the extensive reports of unavailability of land and to the scalingup of agricultural extension services for farming and livestock.

Given prevalent food insecurity, coupled with the deteriorating dietary intake, innovative food assistance – as part of an overall strategy to rebuild productive livelihoods – remains a natural modality of recovery and development assistance.

With the expected continuation of the reduction of food assistance to the Northern Province, it is likely that food security conditions will deteriorate in the coming months, particularly when the lean season approaches.

Therefore, food assistance should be extended to food insecure households until their livelihoods are re-established and systems for the monitoring of the food security situation should be introduced.

## Muslims in Sri Lanka concerned over expulsion of preachers

Sri Lanka has ordered 161 foreign missionaries to leave the country for propagating Islam, in violation of their tourist visas.

A Sri Lankan immigration official on Jan 23rd said the missionaries are members of Tabligh Jamat, a group founded in India to spread the teachings of Islam. He said the group included citizens of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, and some Arab countries.

Just over 7 percent of Sri Lanka's 21 million people are Muslims.

A Muslim source told the BBC that the movement sends groups of preachers

to places of worship, urging Muslims to devote more time to their faith and act more devoutly.

Any idea that they were militant was laughable, the source added.

Muslim members of Sri Lanka's government have expressed concern at the mass expulsion.

The news has also created consternation in the Muslim community in Sri Lanka, the third largest ethnic group in the country after Sinhalese and Tamils, the BBC's Charles Haviland in Colombo reports.

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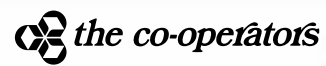
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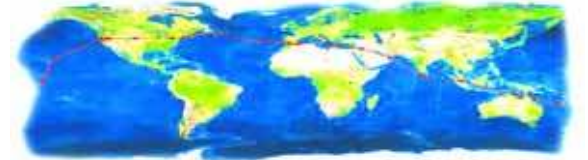
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# Around the world



## Tea estate worker families are Sri Lanka's poorest in earnings and nutrition

### IRIN news service

Tea in Sri Lanka is one of the country's biggest cash crops, but families working on tea estates are among the nation's poorest in terms of earnings as well as nutrition, say experts who back regional approaches to tackle nutrition disparity.

One in every five children younger than five is malnourished nationwide and one in six newborns has a low birth weight, one cause of infant deaths, according to a recent study from the Colombo-based Institute of Policy Studies (IPS).

But the situation is worse for children of tea estate workers, with one in three classified as underweight and 40 percent of babies born with too-low weight, IPS noted.

Ramasamy Ramakrishnan, 46, a tea estate worker and father of five, and his wife, who is also a tea harvester, earn US\$130 monthly to support a family of seven, including five school-aged children.

"It is difficult. We survive somehow. But I cannot find any other job," he told IRIN.

His family is among the one-and-a-half million people – or some 5 percent of Sri Lanka's 21 million population – who work in the tea sector, according to government estimates.

The most recent national poverty study conducted in 2009-2010 noted that 11.4 percent of these families lived below the national poverty line of 3,028 Sri Lankan rupees per month, or roughly \$27.

Household income plays a major role in determining nutrition levels of under-fives, with those among the country's poorest 20 percent three times more likely to be malnourished as those in the richest quintile, noted IPS.

In the government's most recent demographic and health survey (DHS) conducted in 2006-2007 some 17 percent of under-fives surveyed were stunted – a sign of chronic malnutrition and lack of nutrients.

Nuwera Eliya District – 150km south of the economic capital of Colombo – and the adjoining Badulla District, which both have large tea plantations, recorded the highest stunting rates nationwide that year, 44 and 33 percent respectively.

Angela de Silva, a lecturer at the University of Colombo's Faculty of Medicine and vice-president of the Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka said poverty and poor living conditions created an inter-generational cycle of malnutrition.

"The disadvantaged kid grows up to be a disadvantaged mother, often with

early marriage, teenage pregnancies or starting off pregnancy with both micro- and macro-nutrient malnutrition; in turn she has a low birth-weight baby and poor pregnancy outcomes."

Sri Lanka's government has programmes that promote exclusive breastfeeding in the baby's first six months – recommended by the World Health Organization to boost a child's lifelong nutrition – and provide nutrients and supplements to vulnerable populations, including pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and infants, in government clinics.

There are plans to "fine-tune" this breastfeeding promotion to target regions where malnutrition is high, said De Silva.

Education levels and mothers' knowledge about basic healthcare play a major part in determining their children's nutrition levels, said Kumari Navaratna, a senior health specialist at the World Bank's Colombo office.

"The primary caregiver for a child is the mother and evidence again and again is showing that if the mother is knowledgeable on appropriate feeding and caring practices, she is able to provide the best care to the child."

The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka and Ministry of Health have advised taking into account regional economic and nutrition disparities as well as varying knowledge levels when tackling malnutrition.

Since May 2011 the government's National Nutrition Council has established a multi-sectoral pilot project in areas with high malnutrition, including Nuwera Eliya District.

District health, agriculture and livestock departments are designing regional nutrition interventions, including growth monitoring programmes and child-friendly clinics.

Government welfare policies dating back to independence in 1948 have largely failed to achieve long-term nutrition improvements, said Muttukrishna Sarvananthan, head of the Point Pedro Institute of Development in Sri Lanka and research fellow at Monash University in Australia.

"Government welfare policies should focus on the quality of outputs rather than the quantity of inputs, which has been the case hitherto."

To tackle malnutrition, policies have focused on handouts, such as nutritional supplements, without considering vulnerable groups' needs separately, or policy efficacy, said Sarvananthan.

[IRIN, the humanitarian news and analysis service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs]



Children from the Tea estate sector, Sri Lanka – pic by: IRIN

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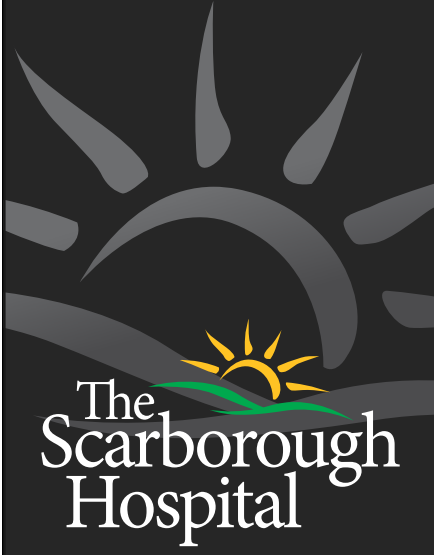
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# The Scarborough Hospital

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Annual Members of the Corporation are admitted by resolution of the Board and consist of individuals who meet the eligibility requirements contained in the bylaws and who pay an annual membership fee of \$20. Membership is for one year, and those individuals whose completed application is received before March 27, 2012 will be eligible to vote at the next Annual Meeting to be held on June 26, 2012, at 7 p.m. at The Scarborough Hospital, General campus, 3050 Lawrence Ave. E.

All Annual Members who wish to vote at the AGM on June 26 must apply before March 27.

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Telephone: (416) 495-2406 Fax: (416) 495-2598  
Email: [yragnitz@tsh.to](mailto:yragnitz@tsh.to)


*Please note that completed applications, with the registration fee, must be received by March 27, 2012. As a thank you for your support and participation, all Annual Members will receive two free parking passes and an invitation to a Members' Breakfast.*

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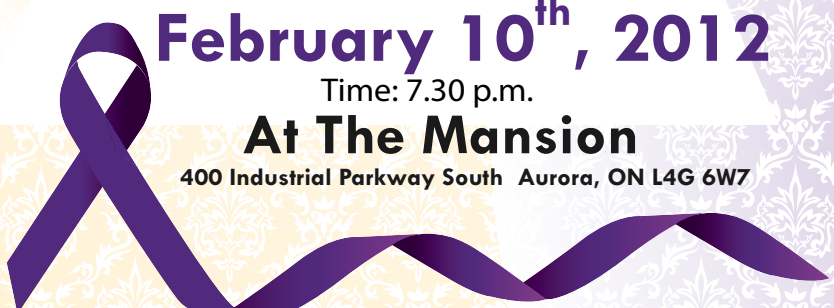
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**WHAT:** Join us for our annual convention, learn about our work, and engage in conversation with physicians and other development leaders from across the globe who are engaged in rebuilding the health, medical, and social service infrastructure in Sri Lanka and in communities in need worldwide.

**WHEN:** Friday, April 27th from 7:00-10:00pm & Saturday, April 28th, 2012 from 8:00am-11:00pm

**WHERE:** New Jaasmin Banquet Hall,  
90 Nolan Court, Markham, ON L3R 4L9, Canada

**RSVP:** [meera@imhocanada.org](mailto:meera@imhocanada.org)  
OR [coordinator@theimho.org](mailto:coordinator@theimho.org)



View our special event website at [www.IMHOAnnualConvention.org](http://www.IMHOAnnualConvention.org) where you can also register for the event & get tickets. Please mark your calendars now and plan on joining us in Toronto in April 2012!





# DAILY NEWS

2012



FAMILY SKI TRIP



SUMMER GETAWAY



SUNDAY DRIVE

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Parking, refreshments and a package of resource guides are included.

### **Food for Thought: You Are What You Eat**

#### **WHEN**

**March 1, 2012**

#### **WHERE**

The Scarborough Hospital  
General campus  
Auditorium  
3050 Lawrence Ave. E.

#### **HEALTH FAIR**

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

#### **FORUM AND Q&A**

7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

#### **PLEASE RSVP**

Krishni, 416.438.2911  
ext. 6661 or  
kloganathan@tsh.to

#### **TOPICS AND SPEAKERS**

- *Heart healthy lifestyle changes you can live with*  
– Dr. George Vertes, TSH Cardiologist
- *The dangers in your favourite comfort foods*  
– Margaret Devor and Wendy Levin, TSH Diabetes Educators
- *Breaking bad eating habits without breaking the bank*  
– Caryn Caryer and Shelley Linden, TSH Registered Dietitians
- *Getting comfortable in your own skin: body image and eating disorders*  
– Joanna Blanchard, TSH Mental Health Therapist and Stephanie Luke, TSH Child & Youth Worker
- *Town Hall Update*

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# The Scarborough Hospital

Food for Thought: You Are What You Eat

## FREE SPEAKERS' SERIES

The Scarborough Hospital is pleased to present the third It's Time to Talk Speakers' Series, "Food for Thought: You Are What You Eat".

Let The Scarborough Hospital's experts guide you on how to have conversations on topics like heart healthy lifestyle changes, eating well on a budget and body image and eating disorders.

You are invited to attend our FREE health fair and forum on Thursday, March 1, 2012. Parking, refreshments and a package of resource guides are included.

“IT'S TIME TO  
Talk”

**Space is limited, so please reserve your seat today.**

RSVP

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[kloganathan@tsh.to](mailto:kloganathan@tsh.to)

### TOPICS & SPEAKERS

Heart healthy lifestyle changes you can live with

with  
**Dr. George Vertes,**  
*SH Cardiologist*

- The dangers in your favourite comfort foods  
Margaret Devor and Wendy Levin, TSH Diabetes Educators
- Breaking bad eating habits without breaking the bank  
Caryn Caryer and Shelley Linden, TSH Registered Dietitians
- Getting comfortable in your own skin: Body image and eating disorders  
Joanna Blanchard, TSH Mental Health Therapist and Stephanie Luke, TSH Child & Youth Worker

### Town Hall Update

#### DATE

March 1, 2012

#### LOCATION

**The Scarborough Hospital, General campus, Auditorium, 3050 Lawrence Avenue East**

#### HEALTH FAIR

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

#### FORUM AND Q&A

7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

## 'Across the pond', the 'Scarborough Hospital' UK also transforms patient food

Although we're an ocean apart, our names and our projects are shockingly similar.

Last May, the 'Scarborough Hospital' in the United Kingdom took part in a programme called Operation Hospital Food, which set out to transform patient food and, in many ways, mirrors The Scarborough Hospital's ReFRESHing our Menu project.

Similar to ReFRESHing our Menu, the Scarborough Hospital UK wanted to demonstrate "how it is possible to produce healthy, appetising meals using fresh local ingredients whilst sticking to a tight budget and improving patient and staff satisfaction levels."

Another incredible similarity included bringing a well known chef on board to work with the Food Services staff in creating the new menu. Toronto-based Chef and local food activist Joshna Maharaj has been making this important contribution to the ReFRESHing our Menu project. For the Scarborough Hospital UK it has been celebrity chef James Martin.

"It's simply outstanding to know that, even a continent away, the importance of fresh, local healthy foods in hospitals is gaining such momentum," said Susan Bull, General campus Manager of Nutrition and Food Services at The Scarborough Hospital.

The Scarborough Hospital UK completed their patient food improvement project this past fall and the entire experience was broadcast as a week-long special series on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).



**Proud members of the Scarborough Hospital UK's 'Catering' team!**

"The last year has been a rollercoaster with highs and lows but overall we have really enjoyed the experience," said Pat Bell, Catering Manager at the Scarborough Hospital UK.

"Before this project, James (Martin) had never set foot in a hospital kitchen and I don't think that he knew what he was getting himself in for."

Pat points out that although they stood their ground on certain things "we were also open to change."

"Our staff worked tirelessly to introduce the new menu and we are really proud to offer our patients locally grown seasonal food that meets their nutritional needs as a hospital patient," adds Pat.

"What a coincidence that the Canadian Scarborough Hospital is taking part in a similar project. We wish you all the best and hope that it proves as successful as our project."

## Importance of Biomedical Engineering in patient care



**Abid Khan, Biomedical Engineering Technician (left), maintains life-saving and life-supporting hospital equipment such as ventilators used by Kingsley Kwok, Respiratory Therapist (right).**

Behind the scenes at The Scarborough Hospital is a small but remarkable group of individuals who maintain the life-saving and sustaining machines used every day by clinicians to care for our patients. One such individual is Abid Khan, whose voice shakes with pride as he describes the importance of Biomedical Engineering in patient care.

"We interpret clinical processes from a troubleshooting perspective to ensure all the machines are working safely and efficiently," says Abid, Biomedical Engineering Technician. "Any one of our patients could be someone I know and love, and I think about that every time I repair a machine."

The Biomedical Engineering team, contracted from ARAMARK Healthcare: Clinical Technology Services, oversees all medical equipment repairs, maintenance and service within the hospital. Their extensive knowledge combined with a true passion for their profession enables them to enhance patient care through their diligent support of care-related technology.

"All activity is based on the type of equipment with the highest priority given to equipment classified as 'mission critical and life support,' such as ventilators, anaesthesia delivery units and defibrillators," says Miguel Narvaez, Clinical Engineering Manager. "A technician is on-call 24/7, and if we receive a call from the OR or ICU we don't ask questions, we just go."

Sometimes repairing a machine can be as simple as replacing a broken clip or it can be more challenging, and the technicians must simulate clinical practices to determine the problem, ensure the repairs are precise, and that all parts of the machine work in conjunction with one another.

"Due to shift work at the hospital, there are times when we don't know exactly what the problem is," says Evgeny Belau, Biomedical Engineering Technician. "So we make sure we do full checks as a preventative measure. We have to take that initiative to avoid potential harm."

There are also a number of systems in place to ensure the department complies with policies, procedures and safety regulations, including several implemented by Miguel himself for additional safety.

"Safety is my first, middle and last name," he declares with a smile.

Miguel adds that in addition to the rounds made by his team, he also performs daily inspections as an extra safety precaution and an opportunity to develop relationships with hospital staff. Communication between technicians and clinicians is vital to ensure all machines are working properly, and that those malfunctioning are repaired and returned to the units as efficiently as possible.

"They are the backbone of the organization," says Kingsley Kwok, Respiratory Therapist. "If a machine isn't working properly patient admissions, surgeries and treatments can all be delayed."

**"We interpret clinical processes from a troubleshooting perspective to ensure all the machines are working safely and efficiently," says Abid, Biomedical Engineering Technician. "Any one of our patients could be someone I know and love, and I think about that every time I repair a machine."**





# The Scarborough Hospital

## New MRI at the Birchmount Campus



**Lead Technologist Ken Pui oversees the hectic schedule of the new MRI at the Birchmount campus.**

Ken Pui doesn't look like a traffic cop, but some days he feels like one.

As the lead technologist at the Magnetic Resonance Imaging department at The Scarborough Hospital's Birchmount campus, his daily goal is to not just ensure the machine is running and staffed, and patients are prepped and ready for their diagnostics, but to also help them set aside any fears, explain the routine and, perhaps most importantly, make sure everyone who needs a scan that day gets one – including emergency cases.

"Sometimes, it's a bit like being a traffic cop," laughs Ken, an easy going, gentle man with a soft voice who oversees the brand new Siemens Aera 1.5T MRI which came on line in October 2011 and was paid for through \$1.3 million in donations to The Scarborough Hospital Foundation.

"Other times, I feel like a chicken with no head running around!" jokes Ken, whose day begins around 7:30 a.m. as he checks to ensure everything is on track. The MRI department runs through to midnight weekdays and from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekends, though it will operate longer to clear backlogs when budgets allow.

"I want to make sure everything keeps moving, but also take the time to make sure the scan is right," said Ken as the first patient slides into the MRI's tunnel, designed to be much larger and therefore more comfortable than older machines. "I also like to talk to the patients, to tell them what's going on because some of them are a little afraid sometimes, and the machine can be noisy. It's better for them to be relaxed, and to know that it's painless and perfectly safe."

As he goes over the day's roster of scheduled scans, Ken mentally lists how much time each one will take and what special techniques might be required.

MRI diagnostics are an increasingly important tool for medical staff to zero in on what's causing patients' problems. He has one full-time staffer, eight part-timers who also rotate through the General campus where there are three other full-time and four part-time staffers working the upgraded GE 1.5 T MRI machine.

"Even though they've already been screened in the pre-admission process, you always ask them again what surgeries they've had, because in the case of brain surgery, there might be metal clips left inside and we can't do an MRI," said Ken as he chats with patients explaining in detailed but plain English just what they can expect.

At the Birchmount campus, the MRI department can process between 33 to 35 patients a day, though it varies by what part of the body is being scanned as some take longer than others.

"While we want to be efficient, we have to remember

we're working with human beings here and it's not an assembly line," he said as he looks over the list again and checks to ensure patients have arrived. "With some scans, people are right inside the machine and they get claustrophobic and they hit the panic button, and we have to stop and bring them out. We have to be patient, too."

While the majority of scans have been booked weeks in advance, there is the odd emergency, said Ken.

**As he goes over the day's roster of scheduled scans, Ken mentally lists how much time each one will take and what special techniques might be required.**

"We get patients sometimes with cancer and suddenly the tumour has shifted and put pressure on the spinal cord and they're paralyzed or lost bladder control and the surgeon wants to get an accurate look at where the problem," he said as the MRI spins up to speed in the next room making its distinctive sound.

It's all in a day's work for Ken, who came to Canada in 1990 from his native Hong Kong where he was an MRI technician at a private hospital. Upon arrival here, he spent the first couple of years delivering pizzas and waiting on tables before qualifying in Canada. After working in various clinics and hospitals, he joined The Scarborough Hospital in 1999, first in the X-ray department, then the MRI department.

"What's really satisfying to me is building a relationship with the patient, and actually listening to them as a friend," he said as he updates the evening crew at the end of the day, updating them on any changes. "I want them relaxed so we can get a good image for the radiologist to see and report back so they can get good treatment."

"I really believe it's our duty to help people. We are given the talent and we have to use our skills."

## IV Team at The Scarborough Hospital

Many people think IV (intravenous) insertion is a routine practice for any nurse. But to specialize in IV nursing you must be also be a teacher, advocate and confidante. And you must be able to empathize with your patients about one of the most feared procedures they will encounter during their stay.

At The Scarborough Hospital, we have a dedicated IV Team: one of just three such teams at GTA hospitals, and the only IV Team with a dedicated PICC (Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter) Team.

These nurses cover all areas of the hospital, working on their own. They can see anywhere from 25 to 30 patients on each shift, plus attend all codes and several stats.

"With each patient, we become a teacher," says Linda Azzopardi, an IV nurse for 40 years. "We help them understand what their IV is for, what the doctor is going to do and how they will know when they are getting better. But we're not just there to insert the IV and then leave. We listen, ensure the patient is satisfied, and sometimes we advocate on their behalf."

The pressure can be intense when a patient, either adult or neonate, is crashing, and they must start the IV quickly with less than suitable veins. They are expected to be successful every time, and 99 per cent of the time, they are successful on the first try. Despite the intensity, the reward comes from "the appreciation and gratitude expressed by the patients and families," says Hyacinth



**IV Nurse Louise Locker starts an IV line on patient, Russell Abric. The IV Team performs this procedure on up to 30 patients each day in addition to attending codes and stats.**

Lana, an IV Team Nurse for the past three years.

In fact, that's one reason why the nurses stay on the IV Team for so long; the gratitude they receive every day from patients and colleagues.

"We get thanked for the work we do every day," says Linda. "That's not common in nursing."

Dr. Peter Azzopardi, TSH's Chief of Paediatrics, says these nurses have a level of expertise mixed with a phenomenal sense of kindness and compassion. They perform their difficult tasks quickly, efficiently and with as little pain and discomfort as possible, qualities that are extremely important when caring for young, frightened patients.

"Many parents have commented to me over the years about the wonderful care the IV Team brings to their child's bedside," says Dr. Azzopardi. "It makes our hospital stand out as a place where bringing the right skills to the right patient is valued and put into action."

Job satisfaction, a challenging work environment and the opportunity to work in every area of the hospital have resulted in a team with an average age that's older than many other nursing specialties – seven of the 14 IV nurses are over age 60.

"This is not uncommon on IV Teams," says Sadie Fairhead, IV Team Manager. "I think it's because of the camaraderie, team spirit and job satisfaction. Our team is like a small family. We have incredible support and respect for each other. It's a great department!"





# The Scarborough Hospital

## Doctor's perspective shapes vision of TSH's future

They say hindsight is 20/20, but in Dr. Harold A. Stein's case, his foresight is just as crystal clear.

The world renowned ophthalmologist is a legend in his field and he has garnered honours and accolades from his peers, patients and community but he's never forgotten his career path started on a dirt road called Lawrence Avenue East.

For its part, The Scarborough Hospital has also never forgotten the contributions of Dr. Stein, both in care and financially in the form of a planned gift he is making in his estate plan to The Scarborough Hospital Foundation to ensure leading edge service to the community for generations to come.

To recognize his future legacy gift, TSH is naming the patient registration area in his honour.

"In the 1950s, Lawrence Avenue East was a dirt road and I used to drive Dr. Maxwell K. Bochner, my then fiancé's father, to meetings with the Sisters of Misericorde about buying the field at McCowan Road where the hospital was to be built," he said. "There was literally nothing out there in those days; it really was the boonies."

His mentor, also an ophthalmologist and later father-in-law, however, shared the vision of the Sisters who wanted to build a hospital to serve the rapidly growing suburb and in 1956, Scarborough General Hospital opened and a young Dr. Stein launched his first practice two years later, also working out of the new hospital. As an ophthalmologist with plastic surgery training, he quickly found his skills in high demand.

"There were all kinds of industrial accidents, car accidents, and lots of eye injuries from broken glass and metal," he said. "Safety wasn't as good in those early industrial days. We saw a lot of sports injuries and BB gun injuries, too."

His work soon caught the attention of the hospital's chief of staff and he found himself appointed Chief of Ophthalmology, a position he held for 35 years, proving himself unequalled in cataract surgery, corneal transplants, contact lenses and refractive surgery. Despite a crammed schedule, he also found time to be a professor in the University of Toronto's Faculty of Medicine and at the U of T Medical School, writing more than 37 books and hundreds of papers for medical journals. He also joined the Bochner Eye Institute, which his father-in-law founded in 1929 and where his own son, Raymond, also an ophthalmologist, is now Medical Director in addition to being Chief of Ophthalmology at TSH. Clearly, the Steins' connection to TSH is rooted in family.

Along the way, as you might expect, he's been honoured countless times both by his peers and the communities he has served with such dedication.

At 82, he's essentially retired today, enjoying life with his wife, Anne, "my best friend," who has been at his side for their journey together since those early days.

"I think the Department of Ophthalmology has saved tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of people's sight over the years, both here in Ontario and around the world," he says with justifiable pride.

While he is actively involved in local causes, he's also serious about his volunteer work going to Third World countries in "flying operating theatres" to donate his time, skill and money to treating people where disease, accident and pestilence allow blindness to run rampant.

"I've had a good career," he muses. "And I've always felt it important to give back."



From sanitizing wipes to seatbelts to life jackets, Canadians take numerous precautions to ensure we keep ourselves and each other healthy and safe. Yet, so many Canadians continue to smoke when research shows that smoking remains the number one cause of preventable death in Canada.

"Cigarettes are designed to directly affect the brain," says Dr. John Oyston, Anaesthesiologist at The Scarborough Hospital. "When the chemicals reach the brain, dopamine is released, which makes people feel happy and calm. Once you get used to that feeling, it's very hard to give up."

Dr. Oyston adds that cigarettes are more addictive than drugs such as cocaine and heroin, and the most effective way to avoid the addiction is to avoid smoking that first cigarette altogether.

As an anaesthesiologist, Dr. Oyston has a ringside seat to the harm smoking causes the body. After bearing witness to the damaging effects, he took action and launched the Quit Quarter Campaign, which encourages tobacco control and promotes smoking cessation by minting and distributing a coin stamped with a broken cigarette design.

For those who do smoke, but have decided to quit, Lori Irvine, Organization and Employee Development Coordinator at The Scarborough Hospital, provides some strategies to becoming smoke-free.

1. Keep your mouth busy – chew gum or snack on healthy foods such as grapes, plain popcorn, or pistachios nuts. This will keep both your hands and mouth busy for the duration of your craving, which will generally last about seven minutes.

2. Spend time in places where you can't smoke – the good news is that most places are

## STRATEGIES TO QUIT SMOKING

now smoke-free. Smokers generally have to go outdoors to smoke, so winter is a great time to try and quit because going outside is less tempting in cold winter weather.

3. Reward yourself – smoking is expensive. With the money you save from buying cigarettes, treat yourself to a small reward such as a new piece of clothing or save toward a larger reward such as a vacation.

4. Set a goal for your success – write down what you want to accomplish and share your goal with loved ones. Being accountable to yourself and others will help to sustain your success.

5. Follow up with your goal – Look back at the day or week and track when you were successful and when you smoked. Were there consistent times in your schedule when you smoked, such as during your break or after a meal? If the answer is yes, try to break those routines by replacing smoking with another activity like a short walk. Also being aware of your triggers can help you to overcome your craving.

6. Ask for support – ask a loved one or your family doctor for help, or call a smokers' helpline for advice and support. There are many resources available to help you butt-out for good.



**Quitting smoking is difficult, and often people try several times before they are successful.**

*"For some people it happens quickly and for others it can take some time," says Lori. "Everyone is unique, so develop a plan that works within your lifestyle. If you can't quit cold turkey then try cutting back at first. Don't set yourself up for failure, and remember to give yourself the opportunity to be human."*



# Sports



## The Score on Sports

By Tashvir Narine

December 25th 2011 may be remembered as the last Christmas to most individuals, but it also marked the beginning of the National Basketball Association (NBA) season. Usually starting closer to Hallowe'en, the season was delayed this year due to a lockout by the team owners, following a dispute regarding the players' bargaining agreement. The decision to play basketball this season only came on December 8th, and fans like myself were overjoyed to wake up on Christmas morning to be treated with marquee matchups around the league.

In Toronto that meant back to work for the Raptors, who play in perhaps the most multicultural city of all the NBA teams. No other fact shows this more than the face of the franchise, Italian centre Andrea Bargnani. As a result of the lockout however, this season was shortened and the Air Canada Centre (ACC) will host eight less home games in 2012. But even with this shortage, the Raptors' organization has still done an impressive job to incorporate different cultures in its programming to welcome all variety of its fans.

Providing ethnic-centered events is a common theme for many Toronto-based organizations, and South Asians are proving to be an emerging fan-base for sports and entertainment in Toronto and North America. Just last year, the International Indian Film Academy awards ceremony was held right in Toronto at the Roger's Centre. This phenomenon is also an impressive and warming tactic that many NBA teams have incorporated, playing host to many of the ethnic backgrounds of the team's region. For basketball and South Asians in Toronto, the connection is very evident as well. Almost everyone at a Raptor game knows to look for Sikh "SuperFan" Nav Bhatia, the successful Hyundai vendor from Mississauga who is usually seated behind the rim court side.

Last season, the Raptors celebrated both Diwali and Tamil Heritage nights, where cultural performances were enjoyed and tickets were on sale to members of South Asian communities. The tradition will continue in 2012, as the Raptors will celebrate Bollywood Night at the ACC, which will take place on March 2nd against the Memphis Grizzlies. Formerly located in Vancouver, the Grizzlies once shared the Canadian basketball spotlight, but with decreasing support the team was moved to Memphis, Tennessee.

Following Bollywood Night, the Raptors will also celebrate Tamil Heritage Day on March 23rd versus the New York Knicks. Last season's Tamil Heritage Night gave Toronto fans a spectacle when Blake Griffin and the Los Angeles Clippers came to town. This time, the scoring prowess of another All-Star Carmelo Anthony, should be just as entertaining.

Toronto is currently sitting at a record of seven wins and fourteen losses entering the Jan 31st match up with the Atlanta Hawks. This is certainly not the start that newly appointed Head Coach Dwayne Casey would have hoped for, however injuries have hurt the team with Andrea Bargnani being unavailable for some time thus far. The Raptors however, are only two and a half games back out of 8th place and with the quickened pace of the NBA season, the standings can reshuffle at any given time.

We can also mention that Toronto does have an additional home court advantage, being the strong multicultural background that exists in the city. This type of support puts the Raptors ahead of many other NBA organizations, regardless of wins and losses. If you were at the ACC last year on one of these nights, it is certainly evident from the roar of the crowd that Torontonians love to support their city and their team.

If you would like to be a part of the action this year and are interested in tickets or information for these events, please see below for details.

**2012 Bollywood Night with the Raptors  
March 2nd vs Memphis**

**Infinite Creations Entertainment  
Rajeev: 416-419-0939**

**Tamil Heritage Day with the Raptors  
March 23rd vs New York**

**T.T.B.A  
Shanker: 416-837-7454**



Nav Bhatia



Celebration at Air Canada Centre during Diwali



Superfan Nav Bhatia courtside with Canadian Rapper Drake



OTTAWA - Prime Minister Stephen Harper, his daughter Rachel and her friend take their seats for the NHL All-Star game. PMO Photo by Jason Ransom



# Recent Event



## ECHO Cardiograph System to Jaffna Teaching Hospital

### Funded by Canadian Medical and Dental Development Association (CMDDA)

On January 23rd, 2012, Jaffna Teaching Hospital management hosted an event for the handover of the this state of the art Echocardiograph System and Exercise ECG Treadmill system to improve Cardiac Care at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital.

The funds for the equipment was donated by CMDDA and was channeled to Rotary Club of Colombo South with the help of many others.

CMDDA is an organization of Tamil Canadian health care professionals and

supporters with a vision of providing humanitarian and medical aid, wherever it is required. CMDDA provides access to health care for all people expands across the globe and our commitment to raising the quality of life for people around the world is evident through their involvement in many health related projects in the past.

A message is here from the President and Project Coordinator and some of the photos taken at the event.



### Message from President and Project Coordinator



**Dr Rajes Logan**

On behalf of the Canadian Medical and Dental Development Association (CMDDA) we would like to extend our warm wishes for this inaugural event. CMDDA is an organization of Tamil Canadian health care professionals and supporters with a vision of providing humanitarian and medical aid, wherever it is required. Our advocacy of providing access to health care for all people expands across the globe and our commitment to raising the quality of life for people around the world is evident through our involvement in many health related projects in the past.

As one of our major international contributions, we are proud to be able to complete this state of the art Echocardiograph System and Exercise ECG Treadmill system to improve Cardiac Care at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital. We are proud to say that this is one of our major achievements in terms of the value of this donation.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the committed members of CMDDA, and the community supporters here in Canada- without whom none of this would have been possible. At this moment we would like to thank Cardiologist, Dr Lakshman and the Jaffna Hospital Development Association for their valuable time from this project request all the way to the completion of the project. We would also like to thank Drs Raviraj and Surenthirakumar for their commitment and support during this campaign. Special thanks to Dr Mubarak-Colombo South Rotary club and Ms. Mona ElSayed, from IDRF for facilitating the transfer of the funds and in assisting us with this matter.

Of course without the help of Hon. Bruce Levy-Consular General Canada, we would have not been able to connect with the Rotary International, which made this accomplishment possible.

Let us continue our goal in helping the helpless to improve their quality of life. We are certain that these equipment will be put to its' best use for the people in need and help to improve the health standard at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital

Although, we are unable to be there personally to make this donation and to mark this event, we would like to express our heartfelt wishes and thanks to you all

Best wishes,

**Dr. Rajes Logan**

President  
CMDDA

**Dr V. Santhakumar**

Project Coordinator  
Past President, CMDDA





# Recent Event

## GurMandir organized an enthralling evening to celebrate Republic Day

**Dr. Kanayalal Raina**

GurMandir celebrated Republic Day – 2012 by organizing an enthralling evening. The colourful Indian flags, decorations and posters adorned the hall. The young children who wore colorful fancy dresses performed exceptionally well. This was a fun-filled extravaganza, when the parents had a great time watching their children performing and singing Desh Bakhati songs. The young children who participated in this function included, Ekta Mandhan, Pronjal Mandhan, Vansh Kumar, Astha Subhash, Sneha Sunder, Kamiya Sunder, Vivak Turshani, Namrita Turshani, Bharat Tekwani, Hema Tekwani, Tanushree Chopra, Esha Gogna, Anushree Kumar, Hirva Patel and Gurdeep Gogna.

A short speech by the Krishan Vasdani welcomed the children and their parents and asked them for more participation in the right spirit in future national events as well. He hoped, our such activities will grow bigger and also would be able to spread authentic culture as much as possible, thus

enriching future generations of our children. He then introduced Aruna Kapadia the master of ceremony who as a matter of fact had spent two days to train the children to perform so exceptionally well.

On this 63rd Republic Day of India these young children very graciously went on stage and enthralled the audience with the inaugural song Jan-gan-man Indian National anthem, upholding the multi-cultural heritage. The organizers had put in a lot of effort to train the little ones and make every move perfect; this enabled their parents to feel proud.

The occasion was also graced by the presence of ‘Krishin Alimchandani & Mahesh Lahori along with their group (Sajni Vaswani, Manpreet Kaur, Piyush Waghvani and Manish Lahori) gave a beautiful presentation by singing a medley of ‘Desh Bhakti’ songs on Republic Day celebrations at the Gur Mandir.

Krishin Alimchandani is a music teacher and an incredible artist. He has been entertaining the Torontonians for more than 3 decades. Mahesh Lahori with his

melodious voice has been entertaining the disciples at Gurmandir and Sadhu Vaswani Mission. The two together kept the crowds entertained at the Gurmandir on Republic Day’ by singing these songs: Saare Jahaan se Acha Hindustan Humara, Jahan Daal daal par sone ki chidiya karti hai basera, woh bharat desh hai mera, . Aao Bacho tumhe dikhayen jhanki hindustan ki, . Hum Laayen hai toofan se kishti nikaal ke,. Ai mere pyaare watan, Merei Desh Ki Dharti, Eh Mere watan ke logon, zarra aankh mein bharlo paani, jo shaheed huve hain unki zarra yaad karo Qurbani

The onstage events were enthusiastically held and the songs ‘*Aye Mere Watan Ke Logo*’, is one of the greatest patriotic songs of India.

It was while listening to Lata Mangeshkar’s rendition of this song that the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, was moved to tears. Reportedly later he confessed to the singer: “Beti tune mujhe rula diya” (my daughter, you made me to weep).

There were at times nail-

biting, tough but interesting rounds of competition between our veterans Pandit Prakash Ji and Mahesh Lahori as they sung the songs in praise of Mother India, and as they took the audience past 62 years of India’s Republic. The whole place came alive with a medley of hand clapping, which was vibrant and colourful. This enchanted the crowd who had thronged in to witness the celebrations and frequently acknowledged the performances by a thunderous applause. This Republic day festival had something for everyone. There was humour for the young ones and thrill for the middle-aged and the elderly. Kavita Jagasia vice president and Usha Pradhan director of GurMandir were also present to cheer the young children on the Republic Day show.

Later while blessing the young children, Dr. Kanayalal Raina distributed certificates to all the children who participated in this event. This brought a touching end to the Republic Day festivity that celebrated talent. A sumptuous dinner was served to all who came to celebrate the Republic Day at GurMandir.



Attendees at Republic Day celebration



Music Performance



Section of attendees



# Recent Event



## President Mike Ahilan unveils Chamber's plan for 2012 at CTCC's First Quarterly Meeting



**MARKHAM-** The Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce hosted their First Quarterly Meeting on January 25th, 2012. There was a full attendance at Merlyn's

Taste of World who catered the meeting as members had a chance to network with each other, all representing the Tamil business community.

Town of Markham Councillor Logan Kanapathi was in attendance at the meeting who was also a former member of the CTCC.

Presentations were made by Graham from the Town of Markham on "Markham's Sustainability Plan" and Abdul Khalfan, Sales Manager; Kitchener Waterloo Region on "Point of Sale Systems for Businesses" from Debittech POS. Countless new members joined the CTCC and reaped the benefits of these valuable speakers and networking with successful members of the Tamil community.

The CTCC promotes entrepreneurship and encourages the young and old to join, develop and interact with the long-standing members. Media is a valuable tool in today's culture, and the importance and recognition of CTCC's partners were showcased by Navajeevan, CEO & Founder of Tamils' Business Connections. President Mike Ahilan addressed the members with enthusiasm as he stated the upcoming events including the Annual Awards Gala taking place on Saturday April 28th, 2012.

For more information please visit

[www.ctcc.ca](http://www.ctcc.ca).

Courtesy: [www.ninaivukal.com](http://www.ninaivukal.com)



President Mike Ahilan speaking as Chamber board members behind



Kannan from TamilOne



President Mike Ahilan



Vice President Jeyakumar Sinnadurai



Dr Lambotharan appealing to members to support IMHO



Presentation by Graham, Town of Markham



Board member Dilani Gunarajah and guest speaker Abdul Khalfan



Members at quarterly meeting



Presentation in progress



Section of attendees



# Cinema World



## MGR'S 95<sup>TH</sup> BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED



Fans pay floral tribute to the former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran on his 95th birth anniversary in Kancheepuram on Tuesday, Jan 17th. Photo: B. Jothi Ramalingam-The Hindu

AIADMK supremo J Jayalithaa led her partymen in celebrating the 95th birth anniversary of party founder and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M G Ramachandran even as she had asked party workers to take a vow to determine the future of Indian politics.

Jayalithaa, who rode to power on the massive anti-incumbency wave in the April 13 elections last year, had on the eve of her mentor's birthday exhorted her partymen to gear up to take the victory "beyond the borders of Tamil Nadu and reach the top spot in Indian politics," and determine its future.

She garlanded the statue of MGR, as Ramachandran is fondly addressed, at the party headquarters and released a special souvenir on the occasion on Jan 17th, 2012.

While unveiling the statues of Dravidian veteran C N Annadurai and MGR, installed at Kallakurichi through video conferencing, she also disbursed educational assistance of Rs 45.57 lakh to 115 students.

Making perfect use of his charismatic on-screen presence, MGR later on went to take the political stage by storm when he founded the AIADMK in 1972 upon expulsion from DMK following differences with its chief M Karunanidhi. Known for his swashbuckling roles in many a Tamil film, Ramachandran managed to endear him as a darling of masses, in the process carving a niche space for himself in Tamil Nadu politics.

A two-time Chief Minister who remained in office till his death in 1987, MGR is also a recipient of India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, and was instrumental in launching Jayalithaa into active politics.

### Dhanush signs first Bollywood film

Tamil superstar Dhanush earned a massive following in Bollywood with the success of 'Kolaveri Di' and now the actor has signed his first Hindi film. The 28-year-old will be seen in director 'Tanu Weds Manu' fame Aanand L Rai's upcoming film 'Raanjhnaa'.

"It's a big deal to get a launch like this at the beginning of my career here. Aanand's script is different from regular cinema; it's one of those 'made to make a difference' kind of films," Dhanush said in a statement. The actor, who has won the National Film Award for his role in 'Aadukalam', became a household name thanks to 'Kolaveri Di' from his Tamil film '3', which went viral online.

"For the past six months, I've been looking for a simple boy to play the lead in Raanjhnaa. My requirement was a man who

could look vulnerable on screen. When I saw Dhanush in the Tamil film 'Aadukalam' (for which he won the National award), I liked him immediately.

He looks very ordinary and honest, and that was the demand of the character," Rai said.

Talking about the film's storyline, the director said, "The film is an intense love story. Just like my film Tanu Weds Manu, the film and its characters will take you to Delhi, Punjab, Chennai." Dhanush, who is not fluent in Hindi, is reportedly planning to learn the language.



Dhanush

## BOLLYWOOD IN FULL ATTENDANCE ON OPRAH'S INDIA VISIT

Bollywood A-listers queued up to meet American television mogul and talk-show queen Oprah Winfrey at a private party hosted in her honour on her maiden India visit recently.

Dressed in an orange color sari, Oprah, who visited India for 'Next Chapter' a new series of her famous talk show, attended the star-studded party organised by socialite Parmeshwar Godrej.

Earlier, she met the Bachchans at their residence in suburban Mumbai.

"The gracious Oprah Winfrey visits our home, to meet us and bless the baby... Warm hearted, endearing... Drive her to the party in her honour. And Oprah in sari.. Looking lovely!!," Bachchan had tweeted.

The Bachchan-Oprah connection goes back to 2005, when Aishwarya made her first appearance on the 'The Oprah Winfrey Show'. Again in 2009, she was invited with her hubby Abhishek to the show.

The Oprah party saw several biggies including Amitabh Bachchan, son Abhishek, daughter-in-law Aishwarya, Shahrukh Khan, Priyanka Chopra, Priety Zinta, Lara Dutta, Shilpa Shetty, Anil Kapoor, Imran Khan, Neha Dhupia, Sameera Reddy, Dino Morea, novelist Shobha De, and jewelry designer Farah Khan Ali among others, who went gaga over her and were all click-happy.

"@Oprah and @iamsrk, two people I absolutely adore! Thankyou for making my day! Now can go into labour happily!," an ecstatic Lara Dutta, wrote on twitter. She even posted a picture of her with Oprah and Shahrukh.

Posting a picture with Oprah, actress Neha Dhupia, says, "With @Oprah .... She is oh so charming."

"Tonight was dinner at the Godrej House with Oprah Winfrey . Nice to see her wear a beautiful Sari. Also nice to see Ash out after so long!," actress Priety Zinta said.

"My God! Oprah Winfrey is the warmest most down to earth person I have ever met! What a personality! I'm thrilled!," actress Sameera Reddy tweeted.

"Oprah conquers Mumbai! SRK tells her she is the biggest star in India. Country's A-list queues up for pics with sari-clad celeb.O is WOW!," Shobha De said.



"Butterflies in my stomach as I get ready to meet my inspiration @Oprah. Did not feel this way even when I met my first boyfriend haha," jewelry designer Farah Khan Ali tweeted.

She posted a picture a picture with Oprah, Hrthik, Sussane, and her family members. "Family photo with my parents, @Oprah, Parmesh and @sussannekroshan and @iHrithik," Farah said.

Even Oprah enjoyed the party and the warm welcome from all. Replying to a tweet, to jewelry designer Farah Khan Ali, Oprah says, "FarahKhanAli was so great meeting you and all the beautiful Bollywooders. Directors, poets, screenwriters, what a nite! @ FarahKhanAli, just opened your gift..WOW! What a fun nite."

Oprah is in India for her new show, for which she would travel around the world, interviewing celebrities, newsmakers and others. She was in India during through mid January and said to have filmed a portion of her show at the Taj Mahal and Agra Fort.

On a visit to Jaipur's literary festival, Oprah Winfrey called the country "the greatest show on Earth" in an interview with CNN sister network CNN-IBN.

"What I've learned is, you can't see India in a week," Winfrey told the network in an interview airing Sunday. "You can't see India in two weeks ... India is so complex, I would have to say it's the greatest show on Earth. I've never seen anything like it. India, I'll be back again and again."

- PTI/CNN

## Popular singer Usha Uthup wins Entertainer of the year' award

Popular singer Usha Uthup was made the Big Woman Entertainer of the year in recognition of her Special Contribution to Bengali music at a ceremony, the first such award instituted for women achievers in different creative fields including show business.

Actor Rituparna Sengupta was adjudged the Entertainer of the year for essaying critically acclaimed as well as popularly accepted roles across different genres in the Bengali film industry for years in the ceremony.

Upcoming singing star Anewsha Dutta Gupta, the discovery of a talent search contest on a channel, was made the BIG Women Entertainer for music (young).

Veteran theatre personality Usha Ganguly, whose group Rangakormee stage Hindi and Bengali plays, was named the entertainer of the year for theatre while cricketer Jhulan Goswami was picked up for distinction in the Big achiever category in the field of sports.

In a special category, five other women including Shamlu Dudeja, Alokanda Roy and Geeta

Vendakrishnan were chosen for their role as social activists and working among the underprivileged.

During the programme held on Jan 29th evening. Rabe T. Iyer, Business Head BIG Live said, "This is the first time that an entire show has been designed to honour women entertainers across so many categories."

Usha Uthup, the popular Indian pop, jazz and playback singer was born November 8, 1947. She is well known for popular hits in the late 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

She started her Bollywood playback career, when she sang an English verse in hit song, "Dum maro dum" in Hare Rama Hare Krishna, and went on work with music directors like R.D. Burman and Bappi Lahiri, through the 1970s and 80s, singing hits like "Ek do cha cha cha" (Shalimar), "Koi yahan aha nache nache" (Disco Dancer), "Ramba ho" (Armaan), "Hari Om Hari" (Pyaara Dushman) and "Doston se pyar kiya" (Shaan) and more recently "Darrling" in 7 Khoon Maaf. She has sung in 16 Indian languages including Bengali, Hindi,



Usha Uthup

Punjabi, Assamese, Oriya, Gujarati, Marathi, Konkani, Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil, Tulu and Telugu. She can also sing in several foreign languages including English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Sinhalese, Swahili, Russian, Nepalese, Arabic, Creole, Zulu, and Spanish.

She was honoured with Padma Shri, fourth highest civilian award presented by Government of India last year.



# Special Feature



## Straight from the Heart!



By Firdaus Ali

*Dil-e- Naadan Tujhe Hua Kya Hai...Aakhir Is Dard Ki Dawaa Kya Hai – Mirza Ghalib, 17TH century*

While the heart continues to be an inspiring muse for poets and philosophers, today, heart-talk has taken on a new meaning.

In Canada, every seven minutes someone dies from heart disease or stroke. They represent two of the three leading causes of death. And unfortunately, the prevalence of risk factors in the South Asian community is alarming.

Research has shown that people of South Asian descent are more likely to have high blood pressure and diabetes, putting us at a greater risk of heart disease and stroke compared to the general population.

We are also three times more likely to cope with or die from coronary heart disease. We also have the highest death rates from ischemic heart disease compared to other ethnic groups. Needless to say, we need to discuss the issue of heart health openly and honestly.

Though these facts are daunting, what is encouraging is that the majority of these diseases and conditions can be prevented.

However, despite the dangers, many South Asians choose not to take heart-health risk factors seriously. Some feel such risk factors don't apply to them. Others shrug their shoulders, thinking death is inevitable, so why change the way they eat or their level of activity?

And the barriers aren't simply mental in nature.

"Sometimes, a lack of culturally appropriate resources and services act as barriers to South Asians navigating the healthcare system," says AKM Alamgir, a Heart and Stroke Foundation volunteer with an academic and clinical research background in hypertension, childhood obesity and stroke. "Inadequate health literacy and prejudice about health issues also stop them from accessing adequate and timely care," he adds.

Determined to break these barriers, the Heart and Stroke Foundation has emerged as a leader in championing diversity and inclusion in heart health. The Foundation is committed to reducing the impact of heart disease and stroke by spreading life-saving knowledge across diverse communities through its educational campaigns and resources.

Recognizing the urgency to engage South Asian communities, the Foundation stepped up its diversity program, modifying its educational resources to make them culturally and linguistically appropriate for South Asian audiences.

Currently, Foundation heart health information materials are available in Urdu, Punjabi, Tamil and Hindi. These tailored resources outline risk factors and warning signs for heart disease and stroke and provide healthier lifestyle options. The Foundation has also created healthy eating guides and recipes from North Indian, South Indian, Bengali and Punjabi cuisines.

Shishir Lakhani feels these materials should be required reading for all South Asian families. No stranger to the higher risks faced by this community, he is actively engaged with the Heart and Stroke Foundation as the President of the York South Chapter.

Though he lost his father to heart disease, "The biggest tragedy is the fact that up to 80% of heart disease and stroke is preventable, and simple lifestyle changes can reduce one's risk," he says.

In addition to South Asians having higher rates for diabetes and high blood pressure, unhealthy eating habits and lack of physical activity, are also cutting lives needlessly short.

According to Dr. Milan Gupta, a Foundation researcher, exercise is a wonderful way to boost heart health, but it's a tough sell for South Asian communities in Ontario.

Dr. Gupta led a study focusing on South Asians' attitudes towards exercise and how to counter the

premature onset of coronary heart disease. His study found that South Asians recovering from coronary heart disease have less access to opportunities for physical activity than Caucasians. They also develop coronary heart disease much earlier in life – in some cases in their 30s or 40s.

But even after risk factors are identified, many South Asians fail to make the necessary lifestyle changes to ward off disease.

"Many South Asians continue to lead unhealthy lifestyles and follow detrimental eating habits, even after being diagnosed with high blood pressure or cholesterol, assuming medications alone hold the answer to all health problems," notes Jagjeet Singh, a Heart and Stroke Foundation volunteer.

Leading by example, Jagjeet recently walked from Thunder Bay to Brampton, spreading the Foundation's message around heart health to the South Asian community.

Most South Asians rely on high-fat dairy products like butter, ghee, paneer, even deep-fried puris and oily parathas, for their nutrition content and these often then become regular meals, he continues.

Socio-cultural beliefs, such as marital status, also hinder South Asians from staying healthy. "Many South Asians believe a physically active lifestyle is for single individuals only," says Jagjeet. "Once you're married, you don't need to exercise or stay fit. This cultural myth is one of the main increased risks of heart disease and stroke among South Asian women."

Aliya Ariz, a Community Mission Assistant with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, also cites socio-cultural barriers, but she points out that lack of culturally appropriate programs and services inhibit South Asian women from being more active.

"South Asian women live by certain cultural norms and a lack of safe spaces make it nearly impossible for them to stay healthy. Women may consider it inappropriate to exercise when men are around and will choose not to mingle with men in swimming pools or in sports lessons," she says.

Assimilation is another factor for increased heart health risk, she believes. Health is often forgotten when immigrant families are under the stress of finding jobs and surviving in a new environment filled with overwhelming social changes.

That consuming social change can also be negative in nature.

"A sedentary lifestyle, westernizing of diet with fast food consumption combined with the fat-rich ethnic foods and genetic predisposition all compound the issue. It is not that we don't know what is healthy and what is not, but it's difficult to break old habits and organize time to adopt positive and healthy changes in lifestyle," adds Aliya, a medical doctor from Pakistan.

Losing her mom to heart disease, she is determined to educate the community about heart health risks. She also urges health promotion leaders to be role models. "Until you practice what you preach, it's not effectively communicated and doesn't motivate people," she says.

Though South Asians are becoming more aware of heart health through traditional and online media, and through health promotion programs by organizations like the Heart and Stroke Foundation, there still remains a huge gap in transforming knowledge into action.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation will continue to educate communities about risk factors and warning signs of heart disease and stroke, and give communities the knowledge and the tools they need to make smart decisions for their heart health.

Building on the Foundation's support, the South Asian community needs to come together to support healthy communities and recognize that focusing on health is a critical social investment that requires not only talk, but changes in our thinking and behaviour.

The reward for making such changes is longer, fuller lives for our families and our communities for generations.

## Support the Gala to raise funds for South Asian Autism Awareness Centre



By: Kingston Yogendran

Dreams are fragile things: they can either remain locked away inside the comfort of our thoughts; or dreams can be realized only to reveal that their interaction with reality doesn't necessarily yield the same kind of beauty and hope as it did in our minds. It's a rarity to dream, to realize that dream, and for that dream to exceed the threshold of our imaginations. In 2008, Geetha Moorthy, along with a handful of passionately committed individuals, dared to make a dream a reality: they wanted to create a centre that not only raised awareness of Autism in the larger South Asian community, but to offer therapies and social programs that would help children realize their true potential.

The South Asian Autism Awareness Centre (SAAAC) began its operations in dining rooms and neighborhood parks, with only a handful of volunteers. Now, composed of a multi-disciplinary team including physicians, behavioural therapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, dance/music therapists, & social workers, SAAAC has become an increasingly integral institution in the South Asian community. The centre has become an important resource for 50 families. In addition, it has also become a space where nearly 60 volunteers meet, support, and create innovative means to help children and families impacted by Autism.

As the organization approaches the close of their third year of operation, it looks back to the accomplishments of the past and the lofty goals of the future. One of the most celebrated aspects of the past year at SAAAC was the implementation of the SMARTS program. SAAAC has always looked to innovative means in engaging both children and the SMARTS was a creative path in incorporating children into a variety of arts programs ranging from music to dance to visual arts. Within the South Asian culture, the arts are often seen as a secondary priority, an after-thought in the social, academic and emotional development of a child/youth. SAAAC, has made priority to incorporate the arts into their programs. There is a strong belief that the arts needed to be fostered alongside other priorities for children/youth impacted by Autism. SMARTS, derived from the idea of "smart arts"—learning through different art forms, is a result of this belief.

The poet W.H. Auden once said to "learn from your dreams what you lack". For many years there lacked in the South Asian community an open and understanding space for families impacted by Autism. Through the dreams of a committed few there is now an institution that attempts to eliminate the isolation and alienation many families feel when dealing with disability in the South Asian community. Yet, SAAAC continues to be an ongoing dream – but with committed individuals and a supportive community dreams will continue to become reality.



# Town of MARKHAM

## Business Mission to India and Dubai Strengthens Economic and Cultural Relations

People and businesses from all over the world choose Markham as their home, making us one of the most diverse and vibrant municipalities in Canada. A significant benefit of this diversity is the breadth of business knowledge and cultural awareness it brings to our community.

In 2010, we laid out our economic vision, "Markham 2020, a 10-Year Economic Strategy," and developed programs to expand our international relationships, with particular emphasis on China, India and the U.S. Increasing our global competitiveness helps pave the way for local businesses wishing to expend internationally and for foreign owned and multi-national businesses to locate here.

This year, to advance our economic strategy, Markham partnered with the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC) to lead a business mission to India and Dubai this January. Over 50 GTA-based business leaders joined me and ICCC President Satish Thakkar, along with Councillor and Economic Development Committee Chair Carolina Moretti, and Indian-born Regional Councillor Joe Li, on the 12-day mission to New Delhi, Jaipur, Mumbai, Pune and Dubai (UAE).

The delegation benefitted from a series of meetings and networking sessions. Highlights of our activities included a meeting with approximately 100 local business people at the World Trade Centre Mumbai; signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mahratta Chamber of Industry and Commerce to facilitate trade and investment between Markham and Pune; and meetings with the diplomatic corps at the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi and the Canadian Consulate in Mumbai.

Although the delegation is back home now, our work continues. This spring I will host the Confederation of Indian Industry's first Canadian meeting of the Canada-India Committee. The National Association of Software Services Companies (NASSCOM) will hold its inaugural meeting of the Canada-India Technology Roundtable in Markham this year and NASSCOM's President, Mr. Som Mittal, has been invited by Mr. Thakkar to be the keynote speaker at the ICCC's annual general meeting in June.

To return from this mission with a sense of accomplishment and having been so well received by our Indian hosts is a very satisfying way to start a new year. I'm more confident than ever that Markham is one of the best places to live in Canada and that it has what it takes to achieve its economic vision – at home and internationally.



**Frank Scarpitti**  
Mayor

### UPCOMING EVENTS

VIP/Press Conference India Mission at Markham Convergence Centre		Black History Month Celebrations at Council Chamber and Great Hall	
Mayor's Chinese New Year Dinner at Council Chambers	Diamond Jubilee Celebration at Great Hall – Markham Civic Centre	Budget Press Conference at Canada Room – Markham Civic Centre	15th Anniversary Salute to the Flag at Council Chamber – Markham Civic Centre
FEB 5 2:00 PM	FEB 6 2:00 PM	FEB 8 10 AM – 12 PM	FEB 14 11:30 – 1:00 PM
	FEB 6 5 – 7:30		FEB 15 2:00 PM
			FEB 20 10 AM – 4 PM
			Markham Museum Winterfest (Family Day) at Markham Museum

## Markham Tamil Heritage Celebration

Markham celebrated Tamil Heritage Days at the Civic Centre on Saturday, January 14. Throughout the day, over 400 Tamil residents joined the celebration, which marked the Tamil New Year and Thai Pongal (the annual harvest festival), enjoying dance and musical performances, speeches, and a traditional Tamil lunch.

Markham was the first municipality in Canada to proclaim Tamil Heritage Days. Markham Council has recognized January 13, 14 and 15 as Tamil Heritage Days/Thai Pongal/Tamil New Year.



Local Bharata Natyam dancers perform during the welcoming ceremony



Councillor Logan Kanapathi (left), children and members of the community watch as YRDSB Trustee Juanita Nathan adds rice to pot. A highlight of Thai Pongal occurs when a pot of sweet rice boils over, signifying a bountiful harvest.

## Town of Markham Trade Mission in India

Mayor Frank Scarpitti and Satish Thakkar, President of the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce, met with Mumbai Mayor Shraddha Jadhav during their business mission to India in January.

India Mission 2012 is part of Markham's overall economic strategy to develop stronger business relationships with India and Dubai. The mission took delegates from Markham, including over 60 business leaders, to New Delhi, Mumai, Pune, Jaipur, and Dubai, for meetings with Indian policy-makers, representatives of the Government of India and state governments. The delegation also met the diplomatic corps at the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi, the Canadian Consulate in Mumbai, and Ontario Marketing representatives based in Delhi and Mumbai.





# JOHN BODDY HOMES PRESENTS 'EAGLE GLEN'

John Boddy Homes has been voted 'Best Builder' in Ajax/Pickering for the fifteenth year in a row for this year's Readers' Choice Awards and has released its next phase at their 'Eagle Glen' community in Ajax. Located just minutes east of Toronto 'Eagle Glen' combines the closeness and convenience of city living with a suburban feel, and its prime location makes it a great place to call home. Classic two-storey homes are available, as well as side and back splits. Homes start at 2,553 square feet and range up to a spacious 3,534 square feet. John Boddy Homes offers traditional size lots with a minimum of 105 feet in depth and a great selection of extra deep lots, pie shaped lots and walk out basements. With such a broad range of house sizes and styles 'Eagle Glen' has the ideal home to suit every preference. From the unique exteriors and charming streetscapes to the elegant interiors, various John Boddy Homes include such impressive standard features 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 with 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 entertaining friends. In addition, some models include such impressive extras 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 John Boddy Homes include main or second floor laundry rooms, laundry chutes, kitchen breakfast bars, private water closets, interior garage access, high efficiency furnaces and basement rough-ins for future bathrooms. Also, windows are vinyl clad wood which allows for interior custom colours with a maintenance free exterior. Other features include arched entryways, custom millwork, 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 Glen' 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 and 'Eagle Glen'. 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 Glen' Sales Office features a Décor Centre that contains a wide range of upgrade items to select from in order to customize your home. Their high-tech electrical and décor consultants allow homebuyers to make upgrade selections on site, enabling them to conveniently personalize their home.

When you purchase a new home in 'Eagle Glen'



The Stonegate



Eagle Glen - Model to View



The Parklane - Model to View

there are no hidden closing costs. John Boddy Homes pays for education levies, development charges, water and hydro meter hookup fees, boulevard tree planting, landscape package and a paved driveway.

Currently John Boddy Homes is offering an incentive package of \$3,000 in free upgrades or 5 appliances to all new home purchasers. Also included is one year of Rogers' services for free! Included in this package are home phone with 150 long distance minutes and 2 calling features, personal TV with free rental of a standard definition box, a HD digital box, VIP package, free on demand programming, Canadian timeshifting channels as well as Rogers Hi-Speed internet service and all are installed for free.

The 'Eagle Glen' community offers many important neighbourhood amenities such as a brand new on-site public elementary school, places of worship, fully equipped parks and easy access to both Ajax and Go-Transit Services. Toronto is easily accessible from nearby Highways 401 and 407. Located just north of a host of shopping and recreation centres, 'Eagle Glen' allows residents all the amenities of the urban lifestyle while providing the beauty and tranquility of the neighbouring countryside.

Since 1955, John Boddy has been involved in the construction of thousands of new homes throughout Ontario, and has earned a reputation as an accom-

plished 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 'Eagle Ridge on the Green' in Ajax developed in the 1990's and early 2000's.

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

With three fully furnished model homes a visit to 'Eagle Glen' is a must. Drop by the Sales Presentation Centre located on Stevensgate Drive, north of Rossland Road West, one half kilometre west of Westney Road three kilometres north of Hwy. 401. Sales office hours are Monday through Thursday 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday and Holidays 11:00 a.m. to 6:00p.m; closed Friday. Let their friendly knowledgeable staff help you determine which of the many home styles available is perfect for you and your family and get set to join the ever-growing 'Eagle Glen' family community.

For more information, please call (905) 619-1777 or visit their website at [www.johnboddy-homes.com](http://www.johnboddy-homes.com).



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# Sritharan Thurairajah

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# Recent Event

## Sritharan Thurairajah is Top Gun 2011 - 4 years in a row for LiLand

LiLand Insurance celebrated the success of 2011 with a grand gala on Jan 14th at Spirale Banquet Hall. The awards gala was attended by Senior staff from Industrial Alliance & Assumption Life, LiLand Agents and their loved ones. The theme for the gala was western. There was lots of fun and many of them were dressed in western style and wore hats and sheriff badges. There was a mechanically operated bull and many tried to ride the bull and it was hilarious as many could not even sit on the bull for few seconds.

President Roland Chan once again came with an emotional and touching speech on how he climbed the ladder to success and the secret stories behind it.

Junior Roland Chan, Marketing Director, the architect now driving the team gave a very detailed speech.

Part of the script from his Awards Gala speech is given below.

### Vision, Innovation and Luck

By: Roland J. Chan

I'm very honored to be standing up here today amongst my colleagues, business partners, peers and their loved ones again. As 2011 drew to a close, I began reflecting on what was a momentous year for our company. We have a lot of positive aspects to look back on again because 2011 was another excellent campaign. However, as I said last year - LiLand is a different kind of company. We don't just sit back and count the numbers...because that's what the competition does. At LiLand, we focus on the numbers THAT COUNT. One thing that amazes in this job through the people I meet in our industry, and

I'm sure Rob, Shelden, and Paul can attest to this, is how different and special an organization we are. I'm equally surprised to hear all the opinions from outsiders on what's made LiLand so success-

<p><b>Details of the Award Winners for 2011:</b></p> <p><b>2011 Top Gun</b> Sritharan Thurairajah</p> <p><b>2011 Top Gun Runner-Up</b> Nannette Britanico</p> <p><b>2011 Investment Top Gun</b> Andre Dellino</p> <p><b>2011 Investment Top Gun Runner-Up</b> Nannette Britanico</p> <p><b>2011 Co-Rookie of the Year</b> Emmanuel Marianesan</p> <p><b>2011 Co-Rookie of the Year</b> Liwayway Bernardino</p>
--

ful. So as I paused over the holidays, I began questioning some of this mythology on what makes LiLand different?

So successful. And I wanted to address 3 of those myths with you.

- Myth #1 - LiLand is Visionary.**
- Myth #2 - LiLand is more Innovative.**

### Myth #3 - LiLand Lucky.

Of all the luck we've received, the luck of having the right agents, the right managers and administrators, friends, teammates, colleagues has been the most important of all.

So in conclusion, what is it that makes LiLand so different? I can tell you this:

Our success is primarily not a matter of circumstance. We are not any more visionary, any more innovative or any more lucky than the competition.

Our success is first and foremost a matter of conscious choice and discipline.

The factors that determine LiLand's success lie largely in the hands of the people sitting in this room. That's what sets us apart.

Congratulations to all our award winners tonight and all our agents are their spouses/guests.

Thank you and have a great evening.



Rolan Chan, President-LiLand Insurance



Paul R. Grimes Senior Vice president, Industrial Alliance



Shelden Smollan - Regional Sales Manager, Assumption Life



Roland J Chan - Director of operations & Genevieve Tanchoco - Director of Administration of Liland receives Award from Assumption Life



Sritharan Thurairajah - 2011 Top Gun with Paul R. Grimes Senior Vice president, Industrial Alliance



Nannette Britanico - 2011 Top Gun Runner-Up & 2011 Investment Top Gun Runner-Up with Roland Chan



Andre Dellino - 2011 Investment Top Gun with Roland Chan



Emmanuel Marianesan - 2011 Co-Rookie of the Year with Robert E. Carter - Vice president of Sales, Industrial Alliance & Paul R. Grimes Senior Vice president, Industrial Alliance



Winning Group



Roland Chan, President of LiLand with VIP guests



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# Special Feature



## Acclaimed artist collaborates with the Royal Mint

### CONTEMPORARY ARTIST, GARY TAXALI COLLABORATES WITH THE ROYAL MINT FOR A SERIES OF SIX 2012 CELEBRATORY COINS

TORONTO - Internationally celebrated contemporary visual artist and award-winning illustrator, Gary Taxali, recently appointed to the Stamp Advisory Committee for Canada Post, has collaborated with the Royal Canadian Mint to create a series of six celebratory coins to feature in their 2012 gift sets, covering the themes of Birthday, Wedding, Tooth Fairy, New Baby, O Canada, and Holiday (which will be released later this year).

Taxali is known for his reinvention of pop art and iconography reminiscent of the 1930s with comparisons to pop culture masters like Keith Haring and Andy Warhol. Fine art, pop culture and 1930s style iconography and graphics are intertwined in the unique retro style of the coins.

font called "Chumply", the first time the Mint has allowed an artist to change the typography on coins.

"The Mint is pleased to work with Gary Taxali on this year's gift sets," says Patrick Hadsipantelis, Vice President of Marketing and Communications at the Royal Canadian Mint. "His renowned artistry brings a new and unique twist to these special keepsakes which celebrate some of life's great moments".

The 2012 Royal Canadian Mint Gift Sets and Tooth Fairy Gift Card will be available for order from [www.mint.ca](http://www.mint.ca) on Tuesday, January 17, 2012 and shipping will begin in February 2012, at which time these products will also be available in the Mint's boutiques (in Ottawa, Winnipeg and Vancouver), as well as

go to [www.garytaxali.com](http://www.garytaxali.com) [www.taxali.com](http://www.taxali.com) and [www.taxalionline.com](http://www.taxalionline.com). For interviews and review copies, please contact Vandana Taxali at [vandanat@rogers.com](mailto:vandanat@rogers.com) or 416.865.0800?

#### About Gary Taxali:

Gary Taxali is an award-winning illustrator and fine artist. Taxali is known for taking his unique characters, graphics, symbols and icons and intertwining them to produce works of fine art. His signature pop culture works are infused with 1930s-style packaging, posters, typography and advertising with original and sophisticated characters and graphics onto distressed surfaces.

In addition to working for many clients in the advertising, design and editorial worlds, he devotes a portion of his time teaching and lecturing at various organizations and schools, including Danmarks Designskole (Copenhagen), Instituto Europeo Di Design (Rome) and OCAD University, where he is a faculty member.

He has won over 500 awards including a Gold Medal from The Society of

Illustrators, and a National Gold Addy. He was shortlisted for a Cannes Lion and in 2009, he received a Grammy nomination for Best Package for Aimee Mann's album "Aimee Mann's Smilers".

His unique retro style has appeared on the covers of Newsweek, and he has clients as diverse as Rolling Stone, GQ, Esquire, Warner Brothers, Sony, and The New York Times. He lives and works in Toronto, Canada. Gary just released two books on his art entitled, "I Love You, OK?" published by teNeues and "Mono Taxali" published by 27\_9.

#### About the Royal Canadian Mint:

The Royal Canadian Mint is the Crown Corporation responsible for the minting and distribution of Canada's circulation coins. An ISO 9001-2008 certified company, the Mint is recognized as one of the largest and most versatile mints in the world, offering a wide range of specialized, high quality coinage products and related services on an international scale. For more information on the Mint, its products and services, visit [www.mint.ca](http://www.mint.ca).



The Taxali designed coins are a unique and marked departure from the Mint's usual coin designs with a more edgy, vintage yet contemporary style. Each coin is like a miniature collectible piece of Taxali art with the artist's initials engraved on the coin that will excite Taxali fans worldwide.

The coins feature Taxali's recognizable pop culture imagery infused with his retro graphic vintage style. The words "25 Cents", "2012" and "Canada" are depicted on the coins in Gary's famous

through dealers and distributors including participating Canada Post outlets.

There will be a special press launch event showcasing the Taxali coins being hosted by the artist and Young and Rubicam at The Spoke Club on January 25, 2012 from 6 to 8 pm in Toronto, Ontario.

Special thanks to Remix, Maelle Designs, Young and Rubicam and We Bake In Heels for the The Spoke Club press launch event.

For more information on Gary Taxali,

## Deepak Chopra to receive "CIF Chanchlani Global Indian Award"



TORONTO, CANADA - Canada India Foundation ("CIF") is pleased to announce that the recipient of the CIF Chanchlani Global Indian Award will be Deepak Chopra. He is one of the world's leading thinkers on human empowerment and has been heralded as one of the Top 100 Heroes & Icons of the Century by Time Magazine. "The award will be presented to Mr. Chopra at the Annual Award Gala, in Toronto, on April 21, 2012" said Barj Dhahan, Chair of CIF.

CIF created the CIF Chanchlani Global Indian Award to recognize an individual who demonstrates global leadership, vision and professional excellence, which has made people of Indian origin around the globe proud of their heritage. In addition to a specially commissioned trophy, the Award includes a sum of \$50,000 which is given to a charity of the recipient's choice. As the fourth recipient of the Award, Deepak Chopra joins a select company of previous winners: Sam Pitroda ~ pioneer of India's telecom revolution, Tulsi Tanti ~ trailblazer in the deployment of wind power & Ratan Tata ~ India's most respected

industrialist and philanthropist. "By his words & deeds Mr. Chopra exemplifies those qualities of the Global Indian Award recipient", said Rahul Shastri, National Convenor of CIF.

"The Award will be presented at one of the most anticipated events of the year, the CIF Annual Gala. The annual gala has been graced in previous years by prominent leaders including The Right Honourable Prime Minister Stephen Harper, India's former President Dr. Abdul Kalam, Federal Ministers Jim Flaherty and Jason Kenney, the official Leader of the Opposition Michael Ignatieff and well-known author Shashi Tharoor", said Ajit Someshwar, Chair of this year's Gala.

CIF is a national, non-profit, non-partisan organization established in 2007 to foster support for stronger bi-lateral relations between Canada and India; to educate Canadians on the changing face of India and to increase the participation of Indo-Canadians in the public policy process in Canada. CIF's founding members include entrepreneurs, senior Canadian business executives and top tier professionals.

#### Contact: Kalyan Sundaram

[info@canadaindia.org](mailto:info@canadaindia.org)  
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# Spirituality



## Saint Paul- 'harbinger of world evangelism'

BY J.J. Atputharajah

### A. Significance of Paul's Contribution to Evangelism

Saint Paul can be described as the Billy Graham of the 1st Century. St. Paul's methods are followed by virtually all the evangelists who followed him over the centuries. His letters gave the guidelines for all those who wanted to take the 'good tidings of great joy' to the uttermost parts of the world. When Paul wrote he had the power of Jesus work for him. His letters he believed could transform individuals and communities in the initial areas of evangelism he started with in the Asia Minor and Europe. They still can. He was an apostle who communicated and shared the good news of God's actions in Jesus in the wider Gentiles' world. He was the one who popularized the universal gospel and served as the model for evangelism for umpteen numbers of his followers throughout the centuries.

Paul's letters were meant to confront his audience with the presence and power of Jesus, even as the letters were heard or read. He confronts readers here and now and invites them into a life-long process of transformation. His name still conjures up a conversion that changed his own and every Christian life forever. It is his thoughts that have shaped the western civilization as we see it today. Paul preached to both the Jews and the gentiles. He was a visionary formulated in the ways of Jewish seers. He had the immense capacities to understand the mysteries of God and proclaim the gospel to the nooks and corners of the world. He was a seer with an unsurpassing brilliant intellect. Paul's letters produced a community of small assemblies scattered across the Eastern Mediterranean founded and nurtured by him. Most of his letters sustained the faith, love and hope of all the assemblies he served. For example his letters to the Romans is the greatest manifestation of his powerful writings. In them we see the re-presentation of Jesus, the life of heaven and the transformation of the covert within the course of the letter itself.

### B. Paul's Damascus Experience:

In his letters Paul gave a glimpse of heaven. He encouraged his converts to believe in themselves what he believed of himself. His Damascus experience was the very portrait of Christian conversion. He always strived to make the same conversion practicable in the lives of all those who came into contact with him in his three missionary journeys. Paul is the very symbol of evangelism for all times. His ways and methods of evangelism are good for all times and situations.

### C. His Methods of Evangelism:

Paul had both power and weakness and weaknesses seem to have caused problems for him. He considered sexual desire as the root of all wrong-doing. That is why he initially took practical methods to safe-guard the purity of thought word and deed. Christianity is heavily influenced by Paul himself. Everything in every part of Paul's life is dedicated to and is part of his mission. He is forever intense, driven and serious. He writes his letters to heal, support and re-in force communities he was in charge of. He lists the different roles given by God to different people: emissaries, prophets, teachers; to have miraculous powers, the gift of healing or skill in support and administration; to have the gift of speaking in tongue or improving them (Corinthians). Paul himself is an emissary: he spoke as a prophet, he teaches. He followed the example of Jesus who saw visions and revealed all the heavenly secrets that were made known to him. (EX... The Transfiguration). Paul himself spoke of his visions and unveilings.

Antioch was the first city in which the followers of Christ were called Christians. It was one of the greatest cities of Roman East in those times. Paul and Barnabas made a good team as evangelists. Barnabas was the delegate from the Jerusalem assembly. Paul and his team traveled around the Roman colonies preaching the word of God. Paul, Barnabas, Silas and Timothy evangelized the whole of Asia Minor and extended their areas of work to Greece, Corinth and eventually to Rome. Paul spoke at prayer houses, in shops, in the streets and in houses. He was skilled in rhetoric's. He was famously courageous. He was bold to face principalities and powers and even jail life did not deter him from fulfilling his mission.

### D. Paul's Assemblies:

Paul is the focal point, the creative and sustaining centre of their lives. They were a community set apart, united and holy. Their conversion has marked them out from their neighbors and extended families. His communities are behaving graciously toward those outside. Whenever they felt unsettled, it was Paul who put them in the correct track and mood. Paul dealt with their faith, love and hope when they needed his help. They looked up to him for assurance and approval. The children of the light have to stay awake for the day of the Lord. Paul wanted his communities to put off the old humanity and put on the new. The good news opened the way to share on earth the worship of heaven and to hear the mysteries of heaven. Paul had the gift of prophecy, healing and tongues. The members of his assemblies gradually



got them too. He had the inner capacity to understand and appease the cultural differences of the communities at Corinth and Thessalonica. He had his problems but he overcame them by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Paul alludes the power of God in the following line: 'You have been washed, You have been made holy, You have been found just, In the name of the Lord Jesus Anointed, And the Breath of our God'. (1 Corinthians:6:11). The baptism actually guaranteed them new and heavenly life. Paul skillfully solved the divisions among the Christian communities. He was able to demolish their pride and rebuild the communities when it became necessary..

He undermined the pride of the Corinthians and extolled the role of love in their lives. He helped them to reach maturity in their religious convictions and the life of faith. He draws his strength from God's faithfulness to set things right. Once their problems were solved the Corinthians played in a great symphony of generosity and commitment. Paul was not ashamed of the 'good news' he proclaimed. Paul was the forerunner of all the evangelists who followed him over the two millenniums including Martin Luther, John Wesley, Stanley Jones, Billy Graham, Benny Hynn, Saadu Sundar Singh, D.G.Thinakaran and several others. Of

course they all followed his methods and ways.

### E. His Presentation of Jesus:

Paul was indeed a true evangelist. He was to make Jesus known to his listeners and readers. When Paul wrote and spoke, Jesus was at work. His letters could transform individuals and communities. They still can. Paul was a creative genius who did everything in his power to disclose to others the truth that had dazzled him. His purpose was to transform his readers and his communities. He was sure that he embodied the person and message of Jesus for those who had never known him. When Paul was not present in person his letters did his work then and now. His letters were meant to comfort his audience with the presence and power of Jesus, even as his letters were read and heard. He had the immense capacity to doctor to human minds; his wonderful choice of words prove to be a life-giving balm to all those who listened to him. He confronts his readers here and now with the person of Jesus and involves them into a life-long process of transformation. Saint Paul is indeed the model chosen by Jesus to ignite the message he initiated to uttermost parts of the world. Hence his outstanding role as the evangelist of all times.





# Spirituality

## WORDS OF PEACE

# A Very Special Subject

"The subject I talk about," says Maharaji, "is very special. It's so simple that the most complicated minds cannot fathom or understand it. It is so inexpensive that it is given freely, yet it is not accepted. It is received, but not accepted. It is so precious that all the wealth in the world cannot buy it. It is given in such abundance, and yet it is extremely limited."

"So what am I talking about? What is there in this world that would fit this description? There's only one thing. It is this breath."

This is a subject, Maharaji says, that other people don't talk about much. It seems too obvious.

"There have been many philosophers," he says. "Many people sit down in cafés and talk. If you want to talk about politics, there's no problem. If you want to talk about the weather, no problem. A traffic jam—no problem. Pollution, wars, poverty—no problem."



"Yet when it comes to talking about this breath, there's a big problem. What's the problem? Nobody knows what to say. What can you say about a breath?"

That's because there's so little appreciation of how important each breath really is, Maharaji says. "Without it, there would be no wars—not for you. Without it, there would be no traffic jams, no pollution, no anything—not even nothing—for you. Everything is because it comes. Everything is because it's there. When it is not, there's nothing."

"Now, I do talk about breath, and I can talk about it for hours. I can talk about it day after day. In fact, I have been talking about it since I was very, very young, because it is the source of me, and in it is serenity. Within me lies tranquility. Within me dances life."



It's the simple, profound fact of existence that makes everything that happens in a life possible, Maharaji says. Because we are alive, we can feel, we can experience, we can understand.

"This is what makes possible the relationships we have with a father, a mother, an aunt, an uncle, a brother or a neighbor. This is what lets us know; this is what lets us understand, what lets us experience."

Experience, he says, is fundamental. Without it, there is only theory. Without experience to ground us, we can get lost very easily.

"As an example," Maharaji says, "look at something as simple as drinking a glass of water when you are thirsty. Would you like a lecture, or would you like a glass of water? If you are just a little bit thirsty, you might actually entertain the possibility of going and listening to a lecture on thirst, on water. As the thirst becomes more real, as the thirst becomes more obvious, you will no longer consider a lecture. You want water."

Why is it, Maharaji asks, that when it comes to thirst, theory is not good enough, yet when it comes to breath, when it comes to understanding what life is all about, theory will suffice?

"To know now, to understand now, to experience now the beauty of each moment—this is what I'm talking about," he says. "To be in touch with the rhythm of your life. Every day, to feel this breath, this moment, this opportunity to be alive."

"You are the center of your universe, and in that center, there is magnificence. In that center is joy. In that center is beauty. In that center is love. In that center is everything."

Maharaji says he can show a person how to tap into that center.

"We go back to where I started from—this breath. Here it comes. Here it goes—to come back again. I have the know-how to help you to connect within to that simplicity. That's what I do. Do you want to be in touch with that simplicity in your life? It's up to you."

To learn more about Maharaji,  
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# Spirituality



## Oneness Movement in Canada

May Sri Amma Baghvan shower their grace to you and to your family

**Question:**

People have been seeking enlightenment over several life times. How is it possible?

**Answer:**

When I look at a person, I don't see him as a first-timer. I only see millions of years behind him. I believe that all of humanity has finished all the work they need to do. I think everybody has been well prepared through so many lives. And therefore now is the time to get it. All the hard work has been done. I believe everybody has done the hard work, and now the fruit is there to be had.

**Question:**

Bhagavan, when you say people will become enlightened spontaneously, what will this look like in practical terms?

**Answer:**

In practical terms the world will look very different. We will not be able to talk about me being an Indian or you being an American or somebody else being an African. We cannot talk in terms of races and nationalities, or I can't say I'm a Hindu, I'm a Christian, and I'm a Muslim. So all these things that divide man will just disappear. Not that man will do these things will just drop off.

There will be no need for these things.

We will become just human beings. No kind of division will exist. We will all become one family. It's not a concept, this just happens. This is when we will truly become humans. But as long as we are going to define ourselves in terms of nationalities, religions, cultures, race, we will still continue to be tribal and very primitive. We are truly becoming human now. It will definitely happen.

**Question:**

There are many people who are consciously destroying the earth for their own self-centred pursuits. What about these people?

**Answer:**

All this will dramatically change. Man will soon realise that the earth is a living organism, he depends on it like his Mother, so no one will even think of harming the earth. This won't take some kind of education; it will be a natural happening. This is what will happen. So we are going to see a very different earth, a very different world. I am not speculating. I am just speaking very directly from the visions thousands of people have had in the last decade from various continents.

**Question:**



Many scientists are predicting global warming, possible ice age or a major environmental catastrophe. You on the other hand are so sure of planetary enlightenment!

**Answer:**

The predictions are quite true, but what they are not aware of is that, as we have seen in our visions, a great transformation is sweeping across the planet, which will in turn prevent these things

from happening. Already we are seeing signs of people becoming enlightened, and how it affects the environment. We are able to see this on a very small scale. And from that we are able to predict that on a global scale this transformation is going to occur. This is what is going to save the earth. If that does not happen, then what the scientists are predicting could very well come true.

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# Spirituality

## Why Are You Missing?

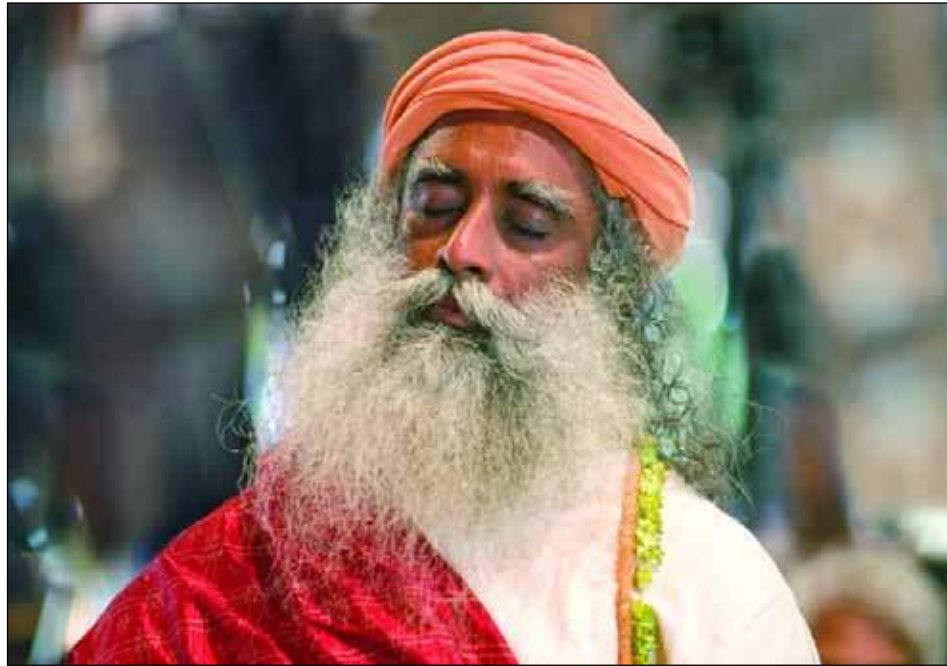
God is not somewhere, he is here and now. It is you who is not.

If you fix the goal of your life, you will not miss anything. There are tendencies within everybody. The past karmas have influences over you, they push you this way and that way. All your passions, all your desires, you cannot fight with them. Don't ever try to fight with your passions and desires. Fighting with them is like fighting the demon, Mahishasura. If one drop of his blood falls, a thousand Mahishasuras will rise up. Your desires and passions are just like that. If you try and fight with them, if you chop them, they will spill blood, and with every drop, a hundred or a thousand will come up. There is no point fighting them. Just educate your passions, educate your desires to flow in the right direction, that is all.

Desire the highest in life. All your passions, direct them to the highest. Even if you get angry, direct it only toward the highest. Even with your passion, that is the way to do it. Right now, every bit of energy that you have, you expend it by making it into desire, passion, fear, anger, and many other things. Maybe these emotions are not in your hands for now, but channeling them in one direction is in your hands. Maybe when you are angry you cannot be loving, you cannot suddenly turn your anger into love, but the anger itself can be directed. Anger is tremendous energy, isn't it? Direct it in the right way, that is all. Every ounce of energy that you have, every passion, emotion, thought, if focused in one direction, the results can be very, very quick. Things will happen. Once you know there is something higher and you want to be there, there should be no other question about it.

Now, for you, again and again, this spirituality, this enlightenment, this God-realization looks so far away. It appears to be close this moment, the next moment it appears to be light years away, so certain complacency will come. They have always told you: "A bird in hand is worth two in the bush." What is there now is better than something somewhere else. What you need to understand is, it is not somewhere else, it is all here and now. Only because you are not, it looks like that for you. God is not somewhere, he is here and now. It is you who is not. That is the only problem. It is not difficult, but definitely it's not easy. It is extremely simple. Moving from here, from wherever you are right now, to the infinite is very simple, because it is right here. Do know, "simple" need not necessarily be easy. It is just subtle and delicate. Unless you put your whole life energy into it, it will not open up.

With halfhearted appeals, God never comes. With halfhearted appeals, realization never happens. It has to be every-



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](http://www.ishafoundation.org)

Toronto local contact 1-866-424-ISHA (4742) or email [Toronto@ishafoundation.org](mailto:Toronto@ishafoundation.org)

thing; only then it can happen in one moment. It need not take twelve years. Probably a fool takes twelve years to become intense enough; that is different. If you make yourself intense enough, it is just one moment. After that, life is just blessed. You simply live on, whichever way you want, whatever way you choose. But without creating that one moment, going on doing all kinds of nonsense, what is the use?

### Rushing Past The Past

If every moment, one is like a snake leaving the skin behind, only then there is growth.

Right now, whatever you call as "yourself" is simply a certain formation of the mind you have collected. It is a certain type of information in your mind. When you say, "I'm a good person", "I'm a bad person", "I am haughty", "I am meek" or whatever you may say, all those things are simply certain formations of the mind, or in other words, it is just past accumulation. You simply live through your past. If the past is taken away, most people are just lost. Everything depends on the past. It is the previous moment which rules everything. This moment is not important. As long as the personality is important, it simply means the previous moment is important. This present moment is not important, because the personality belongs to the past.

In this moment you really have no personality, do understand this. The personality that you carry is a dead thing. When you're carrying a dead body over your shoulders, you can't walk very far. With a dead body, which way can you head? Only to the burial ground, isn't it? If you carry a dead body for too long, you will have to bear with terrible smells. Your personality, the stronger it is, the more odoriferous it is. You can go far in life only when you can leave your past.

This is like a snake shedding its skin. Do you know how a snake sheds its skin? One moment it is a part of its body, the next moment it sheds its skin and just goes on without turning back. If every moment, one is like a snake leaving the skin behind, only then there is growth.

Only a person who does not carry the previous moment to this moment, only that person is free from everything, and that quality will be felt everywhere. Within a few moments of meeting you, people will trust you to the extent that they would not even trust their parents, or husbands, or wives, simply because you don't carry the burden of the past with you. If you carry the past with you, then you will also smell like anybody else. The whole world stinks with personalities.

Everybody has his own strong smell or personality. These are the various stench in the world, and they keep clashing all the time. When one does not carry this odor, one can cross over this existence. One not only passes through this world effortlessly, one will pass through the very process of life and death effortlessly. This person crosses the ocean of samsara 1 without any effort. What looks like a great effort for somebody else will be happening for this person without any effort. Everything just simply happens.

There may have been some moments in your life when you felt true compassion towards something or somebody. In those moments, all your personality, who you are, what you are, everything would have melted. Nothing would have been there. You are simply there in that moment.

1 samsara: world; the cycle of birth, death and rebirth

Sadhguru J. Vasudev is a contemporary mystic rooted as strongly in worldly

and pragmatic matters as he is in inner experience and wisdom. Named one of India's 50 most influential people, he has addressed prominent global forums on issues as diverse as socio-economic development, leadership and spirituality. He has served as delegate to the United Nations Millennium Peace Summit and the World Peace Congress and has been a special invitee to the World Economic Forum (2006-2009), the Australian Leadership Retreat (2006) and TED (2009).

His interviews are featured in The New York Times, BBC, Bloomberg, CNN and CNBC. He is the author of several books, the subject of four books and co-author of the Amazon Bestseller "Midnights with the Mystic". His public talks frequently draw crowds of over 300,000 people.

Founded by Sadhguru, Isha Foundation is a non-religious, non-profit organization with over 200 centers worldwide and over one million volunteers. Isha Foundation offers Inner Engineering Online – a practical approach for inner transformation in a fast paced world. The course designed by Sadhguru presents simple, yet powerful tools for an individual to experience life on a deeper level with more awareness, energy, and productivity. This program is an ideal opportunity for those with time and travel constraints to experience the same profound effects of the traditional Inner Engineering program, which has impacted millions of people over the past 25 years. To learn more, view the free Introductory Talk, or to register visit [www.InnerEngineering.com/toronto](http://www.InnerEngineering.com/toronto)

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Saturday, May 5th

8.30 AM - 7.00 PM

(Wholesome Vegetarian lunch provided)

Sunday, May 6th

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# News from Waterloo



## Cow claims starring role in Tamil culture

Roseville, Cambridge: She's a strong black beauty with a big day on her horizon. Her name is Blacky and she weighs half a tonne – give or take a kilo or two.

Most of the time she's just one of the 500 cows being milked on a century old farm on the eastern edge of Roseville in the Waterloo region. But this weekend Blacky will be the centre of attention.

About 60 people are expected to gather around her Saturday afternoon as the Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region holds a special thanksgiving ceremony at Meadow Lee Farms in Roseville.

The ritual commemorates a three day festival, called Thai Pongal, which starts on Sunday, January 15. The annual celebration takes place after the harvest in Srilanka and South India, the traditional homeland of Tamil people.

Community members thank the sun for making plants grow and thank cattle for producing milk and help till the soil. Farmers, too, are thanked by people who live in the city, said Dharini Sivakumar, the Secretary of the association. "We don't produce food, but we thank the farmer for giving us food."

Thai pongal is considered as festival

celebrated by all Tamils irrespective of their faith.

On Saturday, Jan 14th, Indra Logendran, the President of the association will cloak Blacky with an ornate blanket and hang colourful garland of flowers around her neck. Traditionally, celebrants cover the cow-of-distinction's horns with metal caps. However, this time, she will be painted in Orange by Rajivi Nadarajah.

The Tamil language school children will be on hand to witness the ceremony along with their teacher Mrs. Kunamalar. "This is the only way our children, who are born in Canada, could witness the actual ceremony. I will thank the Tamil cultural association be part of the community and to preserve our culture."

Blacky is an old pro, according to farmer Paul Perrin. For him, the event is an exercise in a community coming together. For the Tamil community of Waterloo region – Brantford and Guelph, the ceremony is a way of passing their tradition and culture to their children.

Please visit [www.tamilculturewaterloo.org](http://www.tamilculturewaterloo.org) for event photographs.



Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region representatives attended the annual open house event of Hon. Elizabeth Witmer, MPP kitchener - Waterloo.



(L-R) S. Sivakumar, Nagul Sundaram, Logan Nadarajah, Elizabeth Witmer, Indra Logendran, Dharini Sivakumar.





# Op-Ed

By Alaka M. Basu

I am writing this on the road from Colombo to Kandy. And again (I have been doing this repeatedly for the last four days) I thank the gods for having allowed this break from the bitter cold of Delhi into such a lush paradise of warmth and water and throat-searing food.

But it is also a bit disorienting to be in this country. It feels like home country (the landscape is especially so reminiscent of Kerala) and yet there is something that is distinctly different. One does not get this kind of disorientation in a patently different land — Japan or Sweden for example; there everything is new and different and so one is clearly an outsider. And within India, even in places far away from one's "usual place of residence" (as the census calls it), there

this particular case.

Luckily, the more academic current definition of culture is all about it being dynamic and changeable and negotiable, so maybe reflecting on the positive culture of Sri Lanka will help us to change and negotiate our own negative one as well.

So how are Sri Lankans different from us? I know of course all the text book stuff that was rammed down our throats in classes on development in college — the remarkable literacy rates (virtually universal), the excellent health (infant mortality, maternal mortality and life expectancy levels that rival Western Europe's), the fantastic public services for health and education that persist in the face of a neo-liberal economy.

I also know that this country has seen

what age category I should slot myself in. Instead, there is a miraculous one inch of free space that surrounds me from top to bottom and back to front right in the middle of these superficially shoving crowds. I cannot stop rubbing my eyes in amazement at this.

My second reason for feeling out of place is that public spaces are unreasonably clean. Neither in Colombo nor on the road to Kandy did I see the mounds of filth-encrusted plastic bags and other forms of smelly or environment-contaminating waste that even the most expensive parts of our own cities and towns revel in. Nor were public buildings and roadsides ungrudging receptacles for fiery red spit. Sri Lankans may not eat paan, but they do use plastic bags alas,

me in return. This absence of broken-hearted (and frequently broken-limbed) poverty was so in your face that I forgave myself for wondering which planet I was on.

The explanation probably lies in the equally implausible absence of evidence of roaring wealth of the kind that hurts one's eyes and ears in the shopping malls of Delhi and Mumbai and Calcutta (my anthropological expedition to the mall in Colombo — Majestic City — that the local people proudly urged me to visit was such a damp squib after Ambience Mall in Delhi and South City in Calcutta) as well as in the fancy car dealerships in Kolhapur and Coimbatore. In other words, in spite of having a per capita income close to twice ours, if crazy consumerism is a bit reined in in Sri Lanka, there must be greater income equality than we have here and that might explain the relative absence of stark poverty.

PS: When I started writing this piece, I meant to include a fourth Sri Lankan virtue — the absence of petty cheating. But this had to be dropped after our experience at the Elephant Orphanage in Pinnawala.

As we neared the bathing baby elephants in this spot of popular tourist attraction, a scrupulously innocent looking man in a lungi persuaded us to give him Rs 100 for a bag of bananas to feed the elephants. Excited about this feeding adventure we rushed to the water only to be stopped by a guard who pointed us to a sign saying that feeding the animals was prohibited and that we had to leave the bananas on the ground. Needless to say, given our Indian expectations, when we turned around within seconds before admiring the elephants, there was no sign of the fruit seller or the guard. Or the packet of bananas.

(The author is professor, Department of Development Sociology, Cornell University, NY, USA. Professor Alaka Basu, was in Sri Lanka on a holiday recently and this article appears here courtesy of The Telegraph published in Kolkata (Calcutta), where it first appeared.)

## Island Mystique: Three startling differences Between India and Sri Lanka

are reminders of the larger country one claims citizenship of — Hindi film music wafting out of narrow lanes, life-sized posters of un-photogenic politicians wishing someone or being wished by someone or the other "haardik kamnayein" for a birthday or festival, familiar brand names of soaps and spices in roadside grocery stores.

This is what I think at first is the cause of the feeling of disorientation in Colombo. Until I notice that I recognize the Hindi film melodies of the Sinhala songs playing on taxi radios and notice that Sri Lankan politicians are as un-photogenic and as poster-hungry as ours, and discover that the Tata and Airtel and Reliance (as well as Ariel and Colgate and Lux) brands are as visibly ubiquitous as in India.

So what is it that makes me feel out of place? The drive to Kandy is long and my moving pen gradually reaches a conclusion. There is something culturally amiss here. I am not seeing some important things that I expect to see when the people around look so much like me that they even come and ask me for road directions.

Culture is a big word, I know, and it implies things that are long-standing and stable and difficult to change. If I believed this lay definition of culture I would be very depressed indeed, because what is missing in Sri Lankan culture should be missing from India too, and the thought of culture being an immutable thing should make one hopelessly sad in

more than two decades of brutal violence, which seems to have finally ended or at least paused (thanks to a period of even more brutal violence, some say). But these are not things that one notes visually and anecdotally enough to account for one's feeling of disorientation.

Then what are these more obviously visible unique features of life in Sri Lanka? I think that three startling differences make up the root cause of my disorientation. Maybe they are related, but maybe they are not — they are quite distinct and don't automatically accompany economic growth (they certainly have not accompanied our own long period of 8-9 per cent gross domestic product growth); that is why I call them cultural rather than socio-economic.

First of all (and dearest to my own heart) is the ease and joy with which women traverse public spaces. In the densest crowds, such as in the packed public buses we ride in Colombo and (as I am still to discover) in the heaving masses paying their new year's respects in the Tooth temple in Kandy, if this had been India (and especially if this had been Delhi), there would have been few women daring enough to actually be present as well as to smile pleasantly at strangers — even male strangers, as my husband happily discovers.

Instead they would be fearful of being groped and mauled if young (or even middle-aged) and pushed roughly aside if old and weak. But I am not 'eve-teased' and nor do I break any bones; so I wonder



Professor Alaka Basu

and they must be having household garbage too; where they dispose of these things remains a mystery to me.

The third striking absence was of the kind of degrading poverty one sees in such abundance in any place in India. I don't think their poor and homeless get hidden from view as ours reportedly were in Delhi during the Commonwealth Games and, yet, even the one apparent beggar I saw on the street, and tried to give some change to, turned out to have a sheaf of lottery tickets she pressed upon

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# Durham Tamil Association



Tamil Organizations in Durham have been working together, celebrate Pongal and have obtained proclamations from City of Pickering and Town of Ajax recognizing the 14th of January and month of January as Tamil Heritage Day and Tamil Heritage Month in Ajax & Pickering.

In recognition of the Tamil Heritage month and the City of Pickering's proclamation, Durham Tamil Association hosted "Pongalo Pongal" Tamil Thanks Giving festival on the 15th of January at Ontario Power Generation Information Centre. Celebrating Tamil Heritage Month DTA had exhibits proudly depicting Tamil culture at the Pickering Rec Centre on Valley Farm Rd all month

Deputy Mayor of Pickering, Renrick Ashby, Councilor, Town of Ajax, Bruce Townley Inspector & Executive Officer to the Chief for Durham Regional Police Services, Raveena Rajasingham President Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham joined by TCASD Executive, Keith Falconer, President East Shore Community Association-Pickering, Kurtis McAleer, Chair of Durham Youth Council, Shashi Bhatia, Chair Indo Canada Association. Don Terry Director Ontario Power Generation, Roland Rutland Director Bahai Community, Juanita Nathan Markham School Board Trustee, Pon Balarajan TGTE all participated in the event. Traditional food, pongal sweets etc



## Jan 14th – Proclaimed by Town of Ajax as Tamil Heritage Day

with the support of the City of Pickering. Celebrating the Town of Ajax proclamation, Tamil Cultural Academic Society of Durham celebrated Pongal on Saturday Jan 14th at the Ajax Community Centre. Celebrating THM Kolam and coloring contests were held and TCASD has Tamil culture displays in the Town of Ajax. Both DTA & TCASD attended, supported and promoted the THM events together to all Tamils in Durham.

On January 15th Durham Tamil Associations Thai Pongal event was well attended with O' Canada sung in Tamil. Several cultural programs classical music and instruments by DTA kids and youth - including a dance depicting Pongal, a classical dance by TCASD youth. Colorful displays of Tamil Culture with Pongal and Kolam demonstrations were well organized by our volunteers : Several dignitaries attended and brought greetings including Chris Alexander MP joined by his wife Hedvig and daughters Selma and Elisabeth, Joe Dickson MPP, for Ajax, Pickering, Tracy MacCharles MPP Pickering-Scarborough East, Dave Ryan, Mayor of Pickering joined by his wife Anne, Doug Dickerson

was served at the celebration. The kids' performances (dance, music) etc was done to the highest standard showing what the Pongal celebration is all about. It's important for our young generation of Tamils to educate and experience our culture and values from our ancestry.

We are very fortunate that we live in a country Canada that supports and allow practicing our culture and values. Our gratitude towards our community leaders who always attend and show their support. Durham Tamil Association along with other Tamil organizations is doing a tremendous work for the growth of our community and embracing all cultures while proudly promoting the Tamil culture. On January 25th City of Pickering launched an online cultural directory. [www.cityofpickering.com](http://www.cityofpickering.com) and click on cultural directory. The launch event featured DTA President Josh Suresh's speech in which he thanked the City of Pickering for the proclamation and embracing Tamil Culture in Pickering. Event included a classical dance by DTA youth.



**CHRIS ALEXANDER**  
Member of Parliament for Ajax - Pickering

Dear Friends,

This message is to congratulate all of you on the occasion of the auspicious festival of Thai Pongal, which is celebrated worldwide by Tamils, including the large and growing Tamil Canadian community.

As you all know, Thai Pongal is a harvest festival – one in which thanks are offered for what has been reaped and for the life-giving sun.

It is a time of gratitude for the abundant blessings bestowed on us by God, and of hope for the New Year as witnessed by the recent winter solstice.

At Pongal we leave behind what is past and open ourselves to the new.

For all of us, Thai Pongal this year is a special occasion as we rededicate ourselves to the cause and principles of peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka, where conflict and the legacy of conflict have continued for far too long.

Pongal is a time of generosity and sharing, when the goodwill that reflects humanity at its best enlivens us as individuals, our families and communities.

On behalf of the government of Canada and my family, I wish to extend warm personal greetings to all of you who are celebrating Thai Pongal – and to wish you and your families peace and prosperity for 2012.

Yours very truly,

Chris Alexander  
Ajax-Pickering -MP

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[www.chrisalexander.ca](http://www.chrisalexander.ca)

### Upcoming events:

**Pickering Heritage Day** -Pickering Town Center February 25th from 11 AM Jo in us and all Tamil organizations, and Tamil Schools in Durham in proudly exhibiting & performing Tamil culture.

**DTA Basket Ball** night February 26th at East Shore Community Center Pickering  
**DTA trips** to Pickering Museum Village

**DTA Enjoy Winter Snow day** Festivities Feb 20th (weather permitting)

Our Sincere thanks to everyone's continued support.

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# 27 Appointees Named To Ontario's Highest Honour



Hon. David C. Onley



David Crombie



John Tory



Suzanne Pinel



Rahul Singh



Dr. Anna Banerji

Three-time Toronto Mayor, David Crombie, former Ontario opposition leader John Tory, popular bilingual children's educator Suzanne "Marie-Soleil" Pinel, founder of GlobalMedic Rahul Singh and a specialist in tropical and infectious diseases Dr. Anna Banerji were among 27 Ontarians being appointed to The Order of Ontario.

**David Crombie** of Toronto, a three-term mayor of Toronto whose socially-responsible urban policies replanned the downtown and preserved important historical neighbourhoods. He continues as Founding Chair of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust and Chair of the Toronto Lands Corporation.

**John Tory** of Toronto, a lawyer, business leader, community activist, broadcaster and former MPP and Leader of the Official Opposition. He is a consummate champion for the Greater Toronto Region as a founding member and chair of CivicAction and chairs and volunteers on countless fundraising campaigns.

**Suzanne Pinel** of Ottawa, a French-language educator and television personality recognized by generations of

Ontario children as "Marie-Soleil". Ms. Pinel's national show produced 145 bilingual programs over the course of a decade.

**Rahul Singh** of Etobicoke, founder of GlobalMedic which today has over 500 volunteers who have led more than 60 missions in over 30 countries. His work earned him recognition on Time Magazine's list of the world's 100 most influential people in 2010.

**Dr. Anna Banerji** of Toronto, a specialist in tropical and infectious diseases and world-renowned expert in the field of respiratory diseases in Inuit children. She helped create the Immigrant Health and Infectious Disease Clinic and the Canadian Refugee Health Conference

The appointees were chosen for their contributions to the arts, law, science, medicine, history, politics, philanthropy and the environment.

The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, congratulated the appointees at a ceremony on Thursday, January 26 at Queen's Park.

"The Order of Ontario is the highest provincial honour bestowed on an individual. With it, we recognize the greatest

minds, forward-thinkers, humanitarians, activists and pioneers in our province. These people change lives here and the

world over."

**The Honourable David C. Onley**  
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

## Sri Lanka President Rajapaksa must Address Specifics of a Political Settlement – The Hindu

Full Text of Editorial published in "The Hindu" of January 20th 2012 - the first issue of India's respected newspaper under its new Editor Siddharth Varadarajan, under the heading "Way Forward in Sri Lanka":

President Mahinda Rajapaksa's reiteration — in his recent meeting with External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna — of his commitment to the "13th Amendment plus" approach to solving the nation's Tamil question is to be welcomed, although it is only from Mr. Krishna that we know about this in the present instance.

Of course, the President has articulated this commitment several times before, including in an interview to The Hindu in 2009. But what proponents of an early political settlement, including India, are concerned about is that more than two years after the LTTE's defeat by the Sri Lankan military, the country has made little progress in that direction.

In the post-war period, as Mr. Rajapaksa moved to consolidate his political gains and the government made progress on rehabilitation, it was expected that he would also swiftly seek political closure to the decades-long ethnic issue. Indeed, the government has given several indications of its seriousness about a political settlement.

It initiated talks with the Tamil National Alliance, the political representatives of the Tamil minority. It also set up a parliamentary select committee to discuss a political solution. The relaxation of the Emergency in 2011 was also an encouraging sign.

The government sought to address international concerns about civilian casualties and human rights violations in the last phase of the war in 2009 by appointing the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission, which has identified some areas for further action by the government. And yet, there has



been little by way of concrete movement forward on the Tamil question.

Given President Rajapaksa's apparent conviction that the 13th Amendment

**Siddharth Varadarajan**

should form the basis for a political settlement, it is time for him to move towards the specifics. Thus far, there has been articulation only about those subjects the government is unwilling to devolve, that is, police powers and land administration.

The "plus" appears to be a reference to an upper house — a Senate — representing all the provinces. The Parliamentary Select Committee, which the government hopes to make the mechanism for drafting a political package, should not go the way of previous committees which did not lead to any substantive outcomes, but rather became a forum for sections opposed to a settlement.

As the main representatives of the Tamils, the TNA should not shy away — or be discouraged by extremist elements in the community — from playing a constructive role in this process. Aside from allaying Tamil apprehensions about the heavy military presence in Jaffna and the rest of the region, the government must plan to hold early provincial elections in the North.



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# Holy Land Tour



S. Raymond Rajabalan

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CONTINUED FROM DEC 2011 & JAN 2012

### Where exactly is Holy land?

The Holy land referred to as Kingdom of Israel in Judaism is located at the extreme end of the Mediterranean. The term “Holy Land” is also used by Muslims and Christians to refer to the whole area in between the Jordan River and Mediterranean Sea. It is bounded on the north by Lebanon, on the East by Syria and Jordan on the south by Sinai desert.

### Our Tour to the Holy Land

This article attempts to provide detailed information about the significance of the various places the author and his wife recently visited the Holy Land.

### Bethlehem

Bethlehem is a Palestinian city in West Bank. It lies about 10 km south of Jerusalem

### Church of Nativity

The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem is one of the oldest continuously operating churches in the world. The structure is built over the cave that tradition marks as the birthplace of Jesus of Nazareth, and thus it is considered sacred by Christians. The site is also revered by followers of Islam.



Church of Nativity

### View of The Church of the Nativity from Manger Square.

The first basilica on this site was begun by Saint Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine I. Under the supervision of Bishop Makarios of Jerusalem, the construction started in 327 and was completed in 333. That structure was burnt down in the Samaritan Revolt of 529.

The current basilica was rebuilt in its present form in 565 by the Emperor Justinian I. When the Persians under Chosroes II invaded in 614, they unexpectedly did not destroy the structure. According to legend, their commander Shahrbaraz was moved by the depiction inside the church of the Three Magi wearing Persian clothing, and commanded that the building be spared. The Crusaders made further repairs and additions to the building during the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem with permission and



help given by the Byzantine Emperor, and the first King of Jerusalem was crowned in the church.

The church is administered jointly by Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Armenian Apostolic authorities. All three traditions maintain monastic communities on the site.

The structure is actually a combination of two churches, with a crypt beneath—the Grotto of the Nativity—where Jesus was born:

The main Basilica of the Nativity

is maintained by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. It is designed like a typical Roman basilica, with five aisles



Interior of the Basilica of Nativity

(formed by Corinthian columns) and an apse in the eastern end, where the sanctuary is.

Numerous Chapels are found in the compound 1, including the Chapel of



The Altar of the Nativity, beneath which is the star marking the spot where tradition says the Virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus.

### The Altar of the Nativity

The Grotto of the Nativity, an underground cave located beneath the basilica, enshrines the site where Jesus is said to have been born. The exact spot is marked beneath an altar by a 14-pointed Silver Star set into the marble floor and surrounded by silver lamps. This altar is denominationally neutral, although it features primarily Armenian Apostolic influences. Another altar in the Grotto, which is maintained by the Roman Catholics, marks the site where traditionally Mary laid the newborn Baby in the manger.

### 14 Pointed Silver Star



Saint Joseph, commemorating the angel's appearance to Joseph, commanding him to flee to Egypt (Matthew 2:13); the Chapel of the Innocents, commemorating the children killed by Herod (Matthew 2:16-18); and the Chapel of Saint Jerome, where traditionally he is believed to have translated the Bible from Greek and Hebrew into Latin .

### Church of St.Catharine of Alexandria, Bethlehem

The adjoining Church of St. Catherine, the Roman Catholic Church, was built in a more modern Gothic revival style, and has since been further modernized according to the liturgical trends which followed Vatican II.

### Manger Square



Manger Square, a large paved courtyard in front of the Church, is the site where crowds gather on Christmas Eve to sing Christmas carols in anticipation of the midnight services.

### Beit Sahour (House of Shepherd) - Bethlehem

Approximately 2 km to the east of Bethlehem lies the village of Beit Sahour, where one of the most sacred places to Christians; the Shepherds' Field. This has been identified as the scene where the Angel of the Lord visited the shepherds and informed them of Jesus' birth ; “And there were in the same country shepherds abiding



# Holy Land Tour

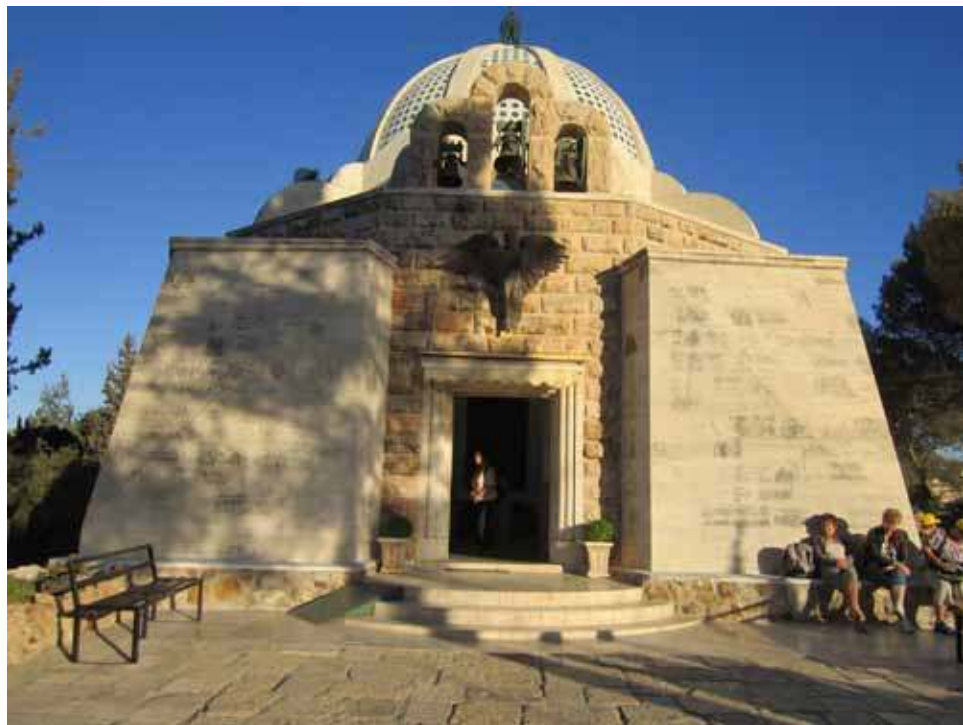


Facade of St. Catherine's Church, with statues of St. Jerome and the Virgin Mary

**St. Jerome (c. 347 – 30 September 420) was a Roman Christian priest, confessor, theologian and historian, and who became a Doctor of the Church. He is best known for his translation of the Bible into Latin (the Vulgate), and his list of writings is extensive**

in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And the Angel said to them, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luke 2:8-10).

Wall, is located in the Old Quarter of East Jerusalem in Israel. It is 57 meters tall, or 187 feet, built of thick, corroded limestone, and is close to 500 meters in length, though most of it is engulfed in other structures.



Shepherd's Field Roman Catholic Church

### Wailing Wall

The Wailing Wall is located in the Old City of Jerusalem at the foot of the western side of the Temple Mount. The Wailing



The wall is believed by devout Jews to be the Western Wall of the Second Temple

### Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount



Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount

The most famous Islamic site in Jerusalem is the Dome of the Rock. An impressive and beautiful edifice, the Dome of the Rock can be seen from all over Jerusalem. It is the crowning glory of the Temple Mount. The Dome of the Rock is not a mosque, but a Muslim shrine built over a sacred stone. This stone is believed to be the place from which the Prophet Muhammad ascended into heaven during his Night Journey to heaven.

The sacred rock over which the Dome of the Rock is built was considered holy before the arrival of Islam. Jews believe the rock to be the very place where Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac. In addition, the Dome of the Rock (or the adjacent Dome of the Chain) is believed by many to stand directly over the site of the Holy of Holies of both Solomon's Temple and Herod's Temple.

At dawn, when the light of the sun first strikes the dome and the drum catches the rays, then this edifice is a marvelous sight to behold.

The Arabic inscriptions around the octagonal part of the Dome of the Rock are verses from the Qur'an.

The sacred rock that is the central focus of the shrine is a large, ancient rock that may have once stood in the center of Solomon's Temple. For Jews, it is the rock on which Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac. For Muslims, it is the rock from which Muhammad's winged horse leapt into the sky, accompanied by the Archangel Gabriel, on the "Night Journey" into heaven (Qur'an 17).

### AL AQSA Mosque

Al-Aqsa Mosque ("the Farthest Mosque") is the third holiest site in Sunni Islam and is located in the Old City of Jerusalem. The



AL AQSA Mosque

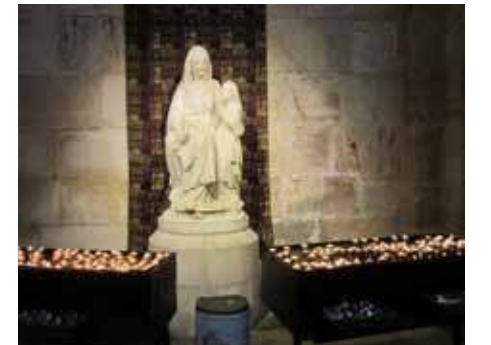
site on which the silver domed mosque sits, along with the Dome of the Rock, is the Temple Mount, the holiest site in Judaism, the place where the Holy Temple is generally accepted to have stood.

### Saint Anne's church- Jerusalem

The Church of St. Anne is a beautiful 12th-century Crusader church, erected over the traditional site of the birthplace

of Anne (Hannah), the mother of Mary. It is an excellent example of Romanesque architecture. St. Anne's Church was built between 1131 and 1138 to replace a previous Byzantine church.

The church is renowned for its remarkable acoustics and reverberating echoes. The voices of even a small choral group can



Saint Anne's church

sound like a large congregation in a vast cathedral.

The church is right next to the Bethesda Pool, believed to be the site where Jesus healed a paralytic (John 5:1-15).

### Pool of Bethesda - Jerusalem



This is the site of the miraculous healing of a paralyzed man by Jesus, as recounted solely in the gospel of John, and also the site of the birth of Mary's mother, "Anne". Here we saw the ruins of a Roman temple to the god of medicine and remains of a Byzantine church built over the temple.

*The writer who has extensively contributed a number of articles to Monsoon Journal feels that his recent travel to Israel on a Holy Pilgrimage was a great experience of a life time.*

*Monsoon Journal is pleased to publish a series of articles describing the various places visited by the writer – Managing Editor*

*To be continued.....*



# Recent Event



## Heart Health Month Special

# An exclusive interview with Dr. Skattebol, an international expert in Omega-3

This time of year, many Canadians are trying their best to maintain New Year's resolutions that revolve around health and wellness goals. One topic that may not be top-of-mind is the importance of maintaining a healthy heart.

Cardiovascular disease describes a number of conditions associated with injury to or illness of the heart and blood vessels throughout the body and within the brain. A small portion of heart ailments may be caused by genetics or a pre-existing health condition. But read the list of risk factors associated with heart disease - inactivity, obesity, high blood pressure, smoking, high cholesterol and diabetes - and you quickly understand that this condition is largely preventable.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada recognizes that individual and social risk factors affect the life-long heart health of Canadians. Research has shown that people of South Asian descent are more likely to have high blood pressure and diabetes and are at greater risk of heart disease and stroke than the general population. However, Omega-3's, can help prevent clotting of blood, reducing the risk of stroke and also helps lower triglycerides, a type of blood fat linked to heart disease.

Dr. Atle Skattebøl (MD, Ph.D), an international expert in Omega-3's who was in Toronto at the end of January gave an exclusive interview to Monsoon Journal. He studied in the United States at The State University of New York at Buffalo. He has got many years of experience in clinical research and management experience in the pharmaceutical



Dr. Atle Skattebol

industry.

Dr. Atle Skattebøl, Chief Medical Office for EPAX, Oslo, Norway, one of the world's leading producers of concentrated Omega-3 products today, and it sells them in bulk to capsule manufacturers and marketing companies worldwide. The company's focus for a number of years has been to develop and produce high-quality Omega-3 products, and consumer safety has been its overriding goal. This effort has earned EPAX international recognition of its products, which are considered the purest on the market. EPAX primarily uses raw fish oil produced in Peru. This is because these raw fish oils hold the highest quality, both in terms of purity and Omega-3 content.

Dr. Skattebøl highlighted the importance of Omega-3's for heart health. He went onto mention what to look for when choosing the product, especially the contents of EPA & DHA.

Dr Atle said that a city like Toronto with so many different ethnic communi-



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ties, many having moved from their country of origin to a new place that affects their life style and diet. He recommends eating of fish 2 to 3 times a week for heart health and that's not possible at times. Effective heart health depends on smart lifestyle choices to prevent disease, and the latest research shows that prevention starts with a daily supplement of Omega-3 essential fatty acids from fish oil.

Omega-3 essential fatty acids lower triglycerides, heart rate and blood pressure. This essential nutrient also improves heart function and efficiency. Fish oil supports the health of blood vessels and reduces blood viscosity, thereby

lowering the risk of platelets clotting and sticking to artery walls. As an added bonus, Omega-3 oils decrease inflammation (associated with arthritis and eczema) and improve the texture of your skin and appearance of your complexion.

When it comes to Omega-3 and your heart health, Jamieson has you covered. No one would deny the importance of protecting human health and well-being. Since opening its doors in 1922, Jamieson Laboratories has been dedicated to developing the finest and most innovative products to advance the health and vitality of all Canadians. Jamieson Omega-3 products can be seen here.





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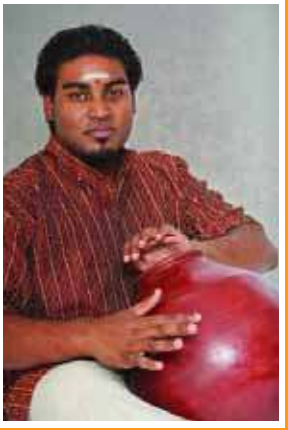


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# Short Story

By: C. Kamalaharan

Maniam was restless as the car sped through the busy narrow streets, towards his native village. The anxiety to meet his next of kin, other relatives and friends kept on mounting as the car took him towards its destination. Notwithstanding the fatigue of his long, continuous journey, he went on reliving in his village, he had been part of it, several decades ago.

Maniam, as many of his peers, was a victim of circumstances, being forced to settle in Canada, in spite of his unwillingness. His repeated pleas to leave him behind, were turned down and was unfairly uprooted and settled in Canada,

in the fertile red soil, how soothing was it to sleep, after a heavy days work, on the wooden bed in the open, being soothed by the gentle breeze, how sweet was the taste of the freshly tapped nourishing toddy, served in palmyrah leaf containers.

With these burning desires in him, his requests to send him to his country were crushed instantly; "why do you want to go there, we are providing everything here, the govt. is providing free medical benefits, dole money and many others, what more do you want! Do you want to meet a tragic end there! remain here and for goodness sake don't bother me hereafter." Not able to confront his

son's consent he embarked on the journey to his native village.

As the car came to a halt at his brother's gate the children ran out shouting, "Periappah has come." Overwhelmed by their spontaneous greetings, Maniam hugged and kissed each one of the them. He couldn't believe his eyes for, they had all grown up. In the midst of this emotional reunion, Maniam asked for his brother, Ratnam. "Where is thamby?" "Here he is Periappah" the youngest in the family replied, pointing at his father who stood behind him; a frail figure with sunken eyes and head completely bald. "What happened to you thamby, you have gone down so badly?" "Not only me, most people here have been severely affected by the prolonged war situation, which had torn apart the social fabric of society. You too would be in my shape had you remained here". This shook

was conspicuous of its absence, instead a scene of utter isolation prevailed.

Saddened at what he saw, Maniam in a pensive mood, walked up to the row of shops, at the junction where people congregate to share local news, buy vegetables and provisions and to listen to the blaring film music from the tea kiosks. Maniam couldn't recognize anyone, all seemed to be strangers to him. Just then he saw a lean figure, trudging his way towards him, with the help of a walking stick. Maniam was able to recognize at once, his one time companion. Delighted to see him, Maniam warmly embraced and greeted him, "Chelliah Annai, how are you?" "Oh! Maniam, happy to see you after so many years, you have bloated" .Maniam continued, "how are you Annai?" "What to say, haven't you heard about our plight. We are displaced people due to our houses being in close proximity to the security camps. Our abandoned houses are exposed to miscreants who have a field day; wrenching off doors and windows, removing tiles, chopping down timber and do whatever their hands could lay on. It will cost an exorbitant sum to repair and renovate the houses and so for the time being we are managing in makeshift homes, hoping for some relief."

"Where is Kathir?" inquired Maniam." "He never comes out, lies at home convalescing after treatment for a severe wound, inflicted by a stray shrapnel, poor chap is experiencing severe pain." "Then, where is Somu?" "He too never comes out, after a severe attack of dengue fever." "How about his daughter? Is she married?" "No, not yet, finding suitable boys is a real problem here, most boys have left and the few remaining are whisked away, once they are in the matrimonial market. So how are you Maniam?" "I'm fine." "You are fortunate Maniam to be settled abroad, enjoying a trouble free and peaceful life." "What peaceful life! We lead a sedentary life, particularly during winter, full of snow and during summer too we elderly folks are housebound doing 'day care work', when our children go for work. Looking after grand kids is not an easy job, they are very mischievous doing all sort of pranks, no rest even after lunch and so we have to be vigilant right throughout." "That is not at all a problem, after all you are leading a tension free and peaceful life, unlike here, not knowing how things would be the next moment", said Ratnam.

Cutting short the conversation Maniam bid him goodbye and proceeded towards the temple. On arrival there, he washed his feet, from the tap installed outside the temple and entered the temple, to find everyone there strangers, even the priest was a new face. After circumambulating the inner courtyard, praying the various deities enshrined, he applied a stretch of 'viputhi' on his forehead and left the temple. On his way back home he was extremely happy to

Contd. on page 53

## THE DILEMMA



by his son.

Though settled in Canada his thoughts were always centered around the life in his native village, which he preferred to the monotonous and housebound life in Canada. He longed to be back to the simple, carefree and unbounded life in his native village.

Whenever he was in a relaxed mood, he would lie on bed and relish recollecting nostalgic memories of the happy days, he had spent in his ancestral home. How pleasant was it to rove about the picturesque setting of the farmland in the evenings, when men, women and children engage in farming, how entertaining was it to watch children at play and other activities taking place in the playground, what delicious dishes were served from fresh vegetables, harvested

son further, Maniam withdrew into his room, laid himself on bed and grieved over the predicament he was in.

Earlier, prior to retirement, Maniam was held in high esteem at home, in office and in society. His children listened to whatever he said in good faith, never did they disobey him. He was the 'commander in chief' at home'. And lo! after retirement he lost his grip and became a subdued person, similar to an officer stripped of his authority.

It was at this juncture that the news of a Godsend directive reached Maniam. According to it all farmlands hitherto held in the high security zone would be released to the owners and the owners were requested to present themselves personally and reclaim their lands. Maniam's joy was boundless. With his

Maniam for awhile. "Where is your wife thamby?" "There she is coming", replied Ratnam. Maniam's heart sank at the sight of her; a lean body wrapped in a soiled nightie and walking hunched.

After settling down, Maniam distributed the gifts he brought for each one of them and after dinner both the brothers had a long chat in the open and retired to bed late in the night.

The following morning Maniam bubbling with enthusiasm ventured out on a stroll around the village. Contrary to his expectations wilderness had spread all over; thicket of bushes, weeds, grass and trees were seen overgrown. In the midst, abandoned dilapidated buildings, severely battered by shelling and bombing, were seen partly hidden by the dense foliage. Once a scenic and tranquil place



# Short Story



Ramanitharan Sathasivam was sent to one of the factories of Global group of companies, as a temporary helper for a week. He was attracted by the lean tall woman on Monday the first day at work. It is a furniture assembly factory, where she works as an operator of a drilling machine. He was an assistant to an operator, who was busy cutting planks according to measurements on another machine behind her. Up till noon she was one among the about fifteen women working there.

The ease and skill at lifting the planks and drilling holes on it, alone on that machine, showed her years of service, at that work. After two pm he was shocked by the scene he saw there. There was a six foot cupboard with electrical instruments and keys by the side of a pil-

He was reminded of her on the next day after work, when he was at home. On that day he inquired about her from one of his co-workers. He told him "She is from Azerbaijan and is working for nearly ten years like me and she never talks to anyone in a happy mood and her name is Iyun. It is natural for anyone to get attracted by her but her fierce look will drive you away. So better control your desire." The very name Iyun sank into his heart and was making him happy. He imagined that her slender body was swaying in the air like a climber, looking for support from something or someone.

On the third day she was looking at him with that same empty look four or

eyes, smile free face, stressful white slender body, stealthily.

On the fourth day night, her body which was giving happiness to him on looks, was in his hands. Her skin's warmth was giving him immense joy and at that time too, he was staring at her face. Her entire body was the embodiment of her face to him. He stared at her eyes as though to fathom the depth of her grief. In her deep blue eyes he saw glittering stars, felt crazy and embraced her tightly. She slid from his embrace slowly and disappeared. He was lying on the bed awake with her memories for a long time.

He got up in the morning with the feeling of a warning, that it is impossible to get

describe a person, who attracted you and made you to be mad about you, when you were immune to such feelings? Is she a ghost or a damsel or super damsel? He was unable to find an answer. He had no time to think about it anymore, since it was time to get out for work. He walked in the ankle deep snow, which fell last night, to the bus stop. That was a Friday. He will be finishing work at 3 pm and that is the last day for him at that place. That will be his last chance to see her. Since he has to report for work at his usual place on Monday.

The snow which comes down in flakes gets hardened as days pass by and becomes slippery. But on that day it was crumbling under the shoes of Ramani. He was walking firmly and majestically. A red car passed by him and Iyun bent her head down and looked at him.

ORIGINAL IN TAMIL by **Thevakanthan** (Canada)  
ENGLISH VERSION BY **Thuraiyuraan**

# Damsel in Distress

lar in the factory. She was trying to move that by her palms alone. He was wondering how a slim woman is trying to move, when even six or seven strong men can't move it. While he was looking at her, she turned towards him and their eyes met. When he saw her with a piece of cloth around her head, he thought she must be wearing it to safeguard her hair from dust. But on looking her face to face, made him to think her as a muslim woman. Even jewish women have head gears like that but she looked like a muslim woman to him. From her look he saw traces of grief and even her cheeks, chin and her forehead bore streaks of sadness. Since he has to finish work before 4.30, he was forced to stop looking at her and focused on his work. But later realised that she was trying to ease her back pain by stretching at that cupboard.

While returning home by bus he was feeling a sense of grief engulfing him. He never had any sad incidents in his life. Why this sudden feeling of sadness in him instead of his usual happy mood? he was trying to seek an answer to this. Even though she turned away her head from his look immediately, her look must have planted this sadness in him, he thought. He had heard that looks transfer messages but never heard that they convey feelings too. On that day he realized that they convey feelings too. When he reached home his mother and eldest sister were immersed in the feelings of sadness and happiness by seeing the serial on the TV, he was reminded of the tall, thin woman's unexplained sadness exuding from her blue eyes and it's emptiness.



Maryana Arshanovna, right, is welcomed on December 1, 2011 as a new citizen of Turkmenistan with a bouquet as she proudly holds her newly received passport. Many stateless in Turkmenistan are in that country after the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991. They originated from places like Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan – Pic by : UNHCR- B. Baloch

five times and he had seen her doing this for no reason. He was shocked to see her trick of knowing his feelings for her, by drilling his mind. He tried to turn away from her and kept his head down, but she continued to stare at him. She may be more than his age. She is from a different cultural background and even then her thoughts of finding him as a male lover swallowed him repeatedly. Even though he was afraid to face her staring, he was enjoying the beauty of her grief stricken

her and got ready to go to work. Mother who came with a cup of tea said "I think you did not sleep well last night. Don't know which ghost got hold of you?" and left the room. "Mother is good at using words with double meanings. She must have understood something. May be I must have muttered something in my sleep."

He knew that ghosts and demons are attractive and torture you. Hence they will be beautiful and enticing. How to

That day it looked Iyun was in deep thinking. The planks kept in front of her were big. She stared at them for some time and approached the Supervisor and talked to him. She may have asked for an assistant. Unexpectedly the Supervisor asked him to help her.

His work was to assist in keeping the planks on the machine and once the holes are drilled to transfer them to the table on the side, fitted with wheels. Everyone was busy at work and the work was pro-



# Short Story



gressing with speed. There was joy on the face of every one, for not only the work will be over by 3 pm, but also the ensuing two days are holidays.

You sacrifice yourself for work for five days and have two days for you. At one O clock the work stopped. Everyone was busy cleaning the machines and sweeping the place, to make it ready for Monday's work. Everyone was ready to leave by 2.50 and the bell rang at 2.55 and people lined up to record their time on the machine. But Ramani was not expected to do that. He went to the office, told them and left the factory.

While he was leaving Iyun came behind and whispered "come to Coffee Time, I will be waiting for you" and left to the car park. He was little afraid that she is going to ask about his staring at her. But summed up his courage and went there. When he went in Iyun was not there. He went to a table in the corner and sat. Sometime later she appeared from nowhere and sat in front of him.

"Shall we have Coffee" he asked her.

"Later" she said and remained silent for sometime. She looked like arranging her thoughts in order, before talking. "I saw you looking at me since you came. While working with me you were looking at me. While I was bending down too you were looking. Were you looking at my breast through my blouse?" she asked. He was shocked and looked up. She was smiling. He thought she may have told that for fun. This gave him some courage to talk.

"No. Not at all. I am not that type of person" he said.

"So what did you see"

"I was looking at your face"

"What is there to look in my face? Am I beautiful?"

He thought, she had decided to speak openly or she may be of that nature. Hence he also thought of speaking openly..

"Yes. You are beautiful. But there are girls more beautiful than you there" he said.

"True. But what is that you saw in my face? Tell me"

"How can I tell that. There was a kind of, kind of unhappiness."

"What!"

It was a surprise and not a question. He decided to speak to her about it. He did not want to miss this opportunity to tell her about his feelings.

"There is a shadow of grief in your face which is hindering your beauty, Iyun. Specifically your whitish blue eyes are full of that. It is spreading the grief to all the objects it sees. Yes, you are beautiful. But without it you will be more beautiful or gorgeous. You must have been cheated by your lover or married and divorced. That does not matter. But that grief hindering your beauty, is a

challenge to a male. I felt that your beauty is letting out that challenge. It was urging me even in my dream, to relieve you of that sorrow and make you smile."

"So you decided to chase it away?"

"Yes"

"You are mad" she said and started laughing gently. After keeping silent for a few minutes she got up and asked "I want to buy coffee, what about you?". He also got up and went with her. Both returned with coffee and started tasting it.

Iyun said, "I have never spoken to anyone about me. I did not want to. They will not understand me if I tell my story. I felt like speaking to you since you have come from a country where there is bloodshed and the minorities are being massacred. That is why I asked you to meet me."

Not much crowd at Coffee Time. Most of them who came there picked up their coffee and left.

"Azerbaijan is full of misery. There is more or less the same situation like your people are facing in your country. But the dimensions are different there."

He knew a little about Azerbaijan. It is in the west coast of Caspian sea and south of Caucasian mountain range. It was the first country to declare independence when the Soviet Republic

broke. But even after that it never had a peaceful status. Because of internal religious feuds there are lots of humanitarian tragedies happened in the past and happening at present. When she came out to tell me about her tragic events and of her country, I am speaking of her beauty and love. He felt ashamed of himself.

"It is said that one's life starts with crying being the first activity. The surroundings must change this situation. It is the virtue of a country to set up a suitable atmosphere for such a change. My country never stopped my crying till I was ten years of age."

He has seen her seriously reading. Now he was able to see the seriousness in her talking too.

"During the civil war when I was ten years, my father and mother were shot dead right in front of me. That event stopped my crying. After that I had deep mental wounds from atrocities and violent events in my life. This should not happen to anyone. At last, I had the opportunity to seek political asylum in this country with my uncles family."

"Yes. I have escaped from death. But I have left my life there in my land. It is true that up to now I have never undergone any misery or violence. But the memories of my land and my kith and

kin is still lingering in my mind. I am eating, drinking and sleeping. But these alone are not life. Under these circumstances can I be happy and smiling. Tell me Satha."

Ramanitharan Sathasivam was frozen. He felt a kind of, not love but an extra ordinary liking towards her at that time. She was an embodiment of a patriot with serious conviction. Living in your own land was her conviction.

"Satha, do you know the meaning of my name in my language. Sun with moonlight. My sky is devoid of moonlight but only the Sun remains. When I am in deep embers, how do you expect cool moonlight from me."

After speaking for a while they got up and started walking. He accompanied her to her car. While he was walking towards the bus stop Iyun said "bye bye" from her red car.

Beauties with tragic episodes are moving around to find justice. He was able to hear the wailings of souls in his far away land. He was able to see in his mind the horrible acts of killings of that place., Ramani was feeling a darkness slowly falling on his forehead, on the cheeks and on the chin. He felt his whole facial nerves responsible for smiling, getting gradually numb.

## THE DILEMMA

### Contd. from Page 51

see people moving about with 'viputhi' on their forehead, a tradition that has been passed down since ages in Saivite homes.

The following morning he went for a stroll to the vegetable market where fresh vegetables grown in the locality are brought for sale. The high pitched voice of the auctioneers surrounded by those bidding was still in practice. While moving about he was shocked to note the exorbitant prices of vegetables, which were purchased by many, in grams and not in kilos. How could a family with a meager income survive, he thought within himself.

The next day in order to browse the local dailies, he walked towards the reading room. To his utter dismay, Maniam saw only the dilapidated building, partly covered by plants and creepers. Disheartened at the sight, he walked up to the playground which was during his time, a place for recreation, entertainment and social gathering. Here too he saw the abandoned playground full of grass and bushes. Only the volleyball court's damaged posts and the football goal posts remained as monuments. Maniam thought of having a field day in his ancestral village, when he left Canada, in an upbeat mood. On his arrival only he found the futility of

his dream. The entire scenario had changed. As days passed his body too became physically weak, owing to exposure to the sweltering heat, mosquito bites, and infectious diseases. He felt the pangs of isolation here too.

Meanwhile his brother, Ratnam realizing Maniam's deteriorating health condition, felt that it was due to the change in the environment which is not conducive for him and advised him, "Annai, we are very much concerned about your health and we feel that it is good for you to get back to your son, who will provide the utmost care, mainly during your twilight years." Maniam couldn't stomach what his brother said. For him, life here as well as in Canada is the same, not at all happy and conducive. He was in a dilemma, whether to be here or to be in Canada.

A few days back when Maniam was having a nap after lunch, the brakes of a motorbike arriving at top speed screeched as it stopped at their gate. Just then two youths hurried inside the compound and inquired, "where is Maniam?" "He has gone out to a distant place," replied Ratnam. "When will he come?" "Not sure, may be tonight or tomorrow." "O.K we will come later," saying so they took off in their bike. Ratnam felt something fishy going around, may be they have come to extort money, or for abduction. Acting swiftly

he hurried into the room, put up Maniam and in a hurried state of anxiety said, "Annai get ready, no time to waste, danger seems to knock at our door, you have to leave immediately", saying so he informed his son to call a car immediately.

In a frantic dash, Maniam got ready, packed his bags, bid a tearful farewell to all and accompanied by his brother got into the car, that was ready for them. Without the knowledge of even the neighbourhood, the car sped towards town, to catch the Colombo bound bus.

Hardly had the car gone a few miles they confronted a big crowd at a corner. The driver slowed down the car and grounded to a halt. The presence of police officers caused panic for Maniam and his brother. Not knowing what to do they remained quite. Ratnam peered out and caught sight of the two motorcyclists standing handcuffed. He softly told his brother, "Anna, these are the guys who came in search of you." On inquiry from a passerby it was revealed that they were the culprits who obtained money by extortion at several places and have been absconding arrest. A few minutes later the absconders were taken and the road was cleared for traffic. Maniam once again was in a dilemma whether to return or proceed. He with much hesitation asked, "Thamby must I go." "Of course, you must go, your health is more important for us. Go and return with a sound health." The car took off with Maniam in a downbeat mood and still in a dilemma.



# Short Story



The absence of tolling early morning bell gave an eerie feeling to the surroundings of the Nallur Temple; the roads were deserted but for the stray dogs and the cattle that occupied the middle of the road. The inside of the Temple was the diametric opposite of the outside: the din by the multitude, scavenging and scraping every last bit to eek out an existence in that curfew enforced environment, was deafening. The staccato gunshots could be heard in the distance interspersed by loud booming sounds of bomb

When that long-awaited lull dawned, they had to scurry like the rats suddenly exposed to the light, abandoning every asset they owned due to lack of buyers, but their heirloom gold sewn around the hems of their clothing, and leave the peninsula stealthily through untrodden paths, avoiding the army and the rebels alike. Arriving in Colombo in one piece without being molested by any one of many warring parties was an achievement in itself, but the journey didn't end there. The last lap loomed in front when the agent produced two forged American

The whole ordeal could have been easily averted with the single stroke of a pen, had their son resorted to legal migration, but it never occurred to him or his wife. The parents wanted to let bygones be bygones, because it could have been worse. The drive through the tundra from Buffalo to Toronto was an experience bordered on surrealism. They had a glimpse of it while in the church in Buffalo, but they were not prepared for miles and miles of desolate frozen land on the way to their promised land. Their son Suren had made a few trips to

and Sares. They lived with Sares's extended family when they came first to Toronto and later moved to a two bed room house when both Suren and Sares landed jobs in Royal Bank of Canada, as mortgage expert and a teller respectively. They both found the new life unpalatable: Suren for that matter had enjoyed a pampered life in Colombo; being married to a woman from a rich family came with its perks: a dowry house in Wellawatte, travels in chauffeur driven vehicles, and servants for every beck and call. Sares on the other hand was an uncrowned queen in her household. But their assets on fire sale and the subsequent conversion couldn't reinstate the same lifestyle in Toronto. It was a rude awakening as to how a seemingly large fortune could evaporate in no time during currency exchange; his generous dowry, once an object of envy in Colombo, could only cover the down payment for a starter

By: **SIVAGAMI**

# THE PROMISED LAND

house.

Sares always exuded an air of superiority, that alienated her from her community from the outset; her claim that she wasn't comfortable in Tamil, despite having studied in Tamil medium all her life, created confusion if not animosity. She would have moved up north away from the Tamil community, if not for her family who couldn't understand why their daughter would move away from them and commute to work when she could live a few minutes away from her job. Suren always went along with her whims, doing everything expected of him to differentiate them from the rest. They avoided Tamil cultural functions, spoke English at home, claiming anything but English would create confusion in the mind of their young son and Sares frequently uttered the cliché "when in Rome, be like a Roman"; but if you happen to throw a stone in the air anywhere in Scarborough the chances are that in 99% of the time it would fall on an immigrant whose mother tongue would be anything but English. The remaining 1% couldn't understand their heavily accented English (Tamlish); so they had forged a niche that wouldn't fit in to any. To complicate matters, they had embraced Christianity to impress, God only knew who, and that kept her family in perpetual bewilderment.

The snow had whitewashed everything around them; the unforgiving cold air slapped hard when they got down from the car with their luggages: the four pieces of the last remaining life savings. It was like a magic moment: all their weariness melted away like the snow during springtime when they saw the curious innocent face of their grandson. He was standing in front of his pregnant mother and tilted his head up from time to time to get cues from the mother as to how he should react to the strangers.

"Say hi to your Grandpa and Grandma, David"

"Hi, Grandpa and Grandma, welcome



Sri Lankan refugees, belonging to the first group of returnees arrived by sea from India under UNHCR's voluntary repatriation program travel in a bus to Congregation point upon arriving in Colombo harbor. The first group of 37 refugees (15 families) arrived by commercial ferry in the Port of Colombo on Oct 12, 2011 after an overnight voyage from Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu, southern India. Pic: UNHCR/ Amarasinghe/ October 2011

explosions and shelling. Sivam and his wife Rani were confident that the occupants of the Temple enjoyed a special privilege because of the Temple itself, because they believed the government forces wouldn't drop the bombs anywhere close to the Temple; but they couldn't say the same for the people hiding in their bunkers. People vocalized their thoughts, and the common yearning was when there would be a lull so that they could get out of Jaffna.

passports in exchange for their life-long savings in the bank. The rigorous preparations took place next: the memorizing of new names and an introduction of a young man who would accompany them as their son up to Buffalo until the real son took over. And eventually a short stay in "Red Carpet Inn" and a long stay in a church in Buffalo New York yielded an entry as refugees in to Toronto and that finally ended the saga that had started in Jaffna, Srilanka.

Buffalo, but he had always come alone, hence they were anxious to see their grandson, whom they were going to meet for the first time, and the daughter-in-law who was pregnant.

Suren was their only child, who was an accountant married to Sares in Colombo during the 1983 ethnic strife. Sares came from a well-to-do family in Colombo and after the pogrom her whole family managed to migrate to Toronto and they in turn sponsored both Suren



# Short Story



to our blessed home" Sunday school training shone through at five.

"What is he telling" the Grandparents asked coyly their son in Tamil.

"He is happy to see you both" the son paraphrased.

"He doesn't speak Tamil?"

"We are careful, not to confuse him"

"We are going to be here, he will pick up in no time"

"We don't know,--- we think it's not a good idea,--- we'll talk about it later"

The two months stay in Buffalo had heightened the cravings for Jaffna food, and to their surprise the table had everything they could think of: string hoppers, puttu, sothi, potato curry, sambol and vegetable curries. Sivam paid tribute vociferously to Nallur Murugan for enabling their safe reunion before taking part in that sumptuous vegetarian repast. He mumbled praise with the full mouth to Sares on her cooking skills, and in that attempt he almost choked. Rani chided him and quickly offered a glass of water. While he was clearing the throat, Sares corrected his misconception by educating them on the two wage earners in most of the households, necessitating buying food from outside. Sivam turned and looked at Rani, and that said much about what needed to be done to rectify that situation.

After briefing on the bare essentials such as toilet use, hot water use, stove and microwave; the couple instructed the elders not to bother cooking and took their son with them to the daycare center on their way to the bank. The snowfall the night before had left a pileup halfway on each window with the fog covering the rest, making everything hazy. Except for the drone of the heaters with intermittent gurgling, and the same from the refrigerator, the winter's peaceful quietude was palpable for the newcomers. The draught coming in through the old windows made them shudder; and instinctively they sought more layers. They tiptoed in socks, preparing to explore the nook and corner of their first abode outside of Jaffna. The first thing stood out in the living room was a picture of Jesus Christ; they looked at each other in full amazement; the furniture was all shiny and glassy and the cold linoleum floor kept them dancing around in the kitchen. The dirty dishes in the sink had drawn Rani unconsciously to the task. Stung by the icy cold water, she made a muffled outcry and remembered the need to mix hot water. Sivam slammed the refrigerator door quicker than he opened; the terrible thought that his loved ones would be enjoying anything other than what they were served the night before crossed his mind; but he decided not to explore further, fearing the worst. They consoled each other that they were not hungry because they had eaten too much for dinner. They felt bad that they didn't bring any toys from Jaffna for the grandson; but the thought that she was going to pass on the gold jewelry that she had inherited from her grandparents to her

grandchildren made Rani happy. They finally untangled the gold jewelry from the hems and placed them in the drawer and displayed the picture of Nallur Murugan on the dressing table.

The wearied wage earners showed up with their son around five o' clock with food from "Martin Bakery": the name was familiar for any Jaffna man, famous for fish bun and beef curry and that made Sivam wince reflexively. Noticing his father's reaction, Suren was quick to announce that he didn't fail to take his parents needs in to consideration. It was strange seeing his family enjoying beef and goat curry, but Sivam kept his silence without knowing that it was the

Christian people help each other; I have to give credit for them"

"With our long, old names we can't progress in this part of the world"

"Correct, correct; times are changing; we also have to go with the flow" they couldn't enjoy their vegetarian food that they had nothing but all praises the day before. After the uneasy dinner, Sivam took the family to the room to show the jewelry that they had brought. Sarah was quick to point out that it was out of fashion but all agreed on the monetary value; Steve agreed to take for safekeeping; and decided to keep it in their bank.

Back in their room Steve and Sarah breathed a sigh of relief; they were happy

long deliberation that they would learn to cook what ever necessary for the grandson but they didn't know how to break the language barrier; but they decided to plead the case with their daughter-in-law. Something strange must have happened that day; before even they raised the question, Sarah announced in the dinner table that she was going to try leaving David with them and that made the table suddenly so lively.

Steve and Sarah promised to call every hour when they left for work to check on David. David was very quiet the whole morning, playing with his toy cars; the grandparents microwaved his food as



Peace Bridge sign in Buffalo, NY. The bridge connects Buffalo, NY, to Fort Erie, ON, Canada. - pic by: Lindsey Ungar

beginning of the slew of surprises yet to unfold. Halfway into the dinner the phone rang and Sares picked up.

"Steve, it's for you" Sares yelled.

"Who is it?" Suren squirmed before he answered the phone.

Suren came back and sat at the table and there was a total silence for a while. He cleared his throat to signal that he was going to say something important.

"Appa, I've been planning to tell you something very important, just before David was born we came in contact with a conservative movement and from their teachings we decided that it's best for our son's future that we embraced Christianity; so in that process we have changed our names: I took Steve instead of Sivagurunathan and Sares is Sarah now; I hope this won't upset you"

"Why should it upset us; if it's good for our grandson, then we are all for it" Sivam tried hard to sound convincing.

"The church helped to get Sarah the job as a teller in the bank; otherwise it's impossible"

"Good, good; even in Jaffna the

that the parents took the news in stride.

"Did you notice the Murugan picture in the room" Sarah complained to Steve.

"Sarah, please don't start; I can't ask them to change their ways after all these years"

"We changed, didn't we?; you will never know, unless you ask"

"Oh', please, don't even go there; they are old fashion"

"I've nothing against them, but it's bad for the house; it's idol worship, akin to Satan worship; think about it"

"Sarah, stop it, I'm not going to discuss this any further; that's it"

In the morning, when they came down, ready to leave with their son, the grandparents couldn't help asking why they should take their son to a daycare center when they were home. Sarah told them that it would be difficult for David because of the language barrier and food preferences. She couldn't avoid noticing unhappiness not only on the faces of the grandparents, but on her son's as well. Left to themselves in the house, the grandparents came to a decision after a

instructed and kept it on the table with juice and he ate quietly. Then he slowly crept next to them and started in English and when they answered in Tamil he replied to their questions in English and soon they were having a decent conversation. He even used a few Tamil words that he admitted he had picked up at the daycare center.

It was an uneventful day for everybody; the young parents watched their son having a limited, nonetheless a decent conversation with his grandparents at the dinner table; the grandparents on the other hand were comfortable passing beef curry to their grandson. Steve thought it was the propitious time to broach the subject of moving in to a three bedroom house. He told them that they were working with a real-estate agent, but the mortgage was the issue and they were trying to work around it. He also said that he was planning to convert the basement in to an apartment so the parents could become his tenants; but the parents didn't understand all the nitty-gritty.



# Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham



## Thai Pongal



TCASD presenting symbol of Tamil Culture to Town of Ajax Mayor Steve Parish

The Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham (TCASD) is committed to keep the cultural and Academic values by motivating children and youth to participate in various cultural and academic events. The Tamils in Durham region were fortunate to celebrate the Tamil Heritage Vizha of "Thai Pongal" with families, friends from other cultures, political leaders who supported in achieving the proclamation of the Tamil Heritage month, Tamil organizations and various community groups. January 14th was an unforgettable day in our children's life. We are very proud and thankful to Town of Ajax for the declaration of our Heritage month of Thai and also City of Pickering. Celebrating cultural events like Thai Pongal keeps our growing community happy and peace.

The Pongal event was celebrated in Ajax community centre with over 200 people. The hall was decorated with the traditional lamps, ("kurthu oli") coconut leaves, beautiful Kolam, clay pots on the table as centre piece. The Pongal pani was set up in a special place facing the Sun God. TCASD's talented children brought the sun into the room by their talented art work. Fibulas backdrop decorated with thoranum and flowers brought every one's memory to home. Our guests and children had the opportunity pour the freshly harvested rice, in significance of Prosperity, Peace and Happiness.

What was missing is the real fire place but the Pongal was prepared and shared with all the gusts along with delicious home made food prepared by TCASD members. The Town of Ajax Mayor presented the Tamil Heritage month proclamation to TCASD. The youths and children kept our audience entertained with traditional Pongal songs, dances and creative crafts and meaning full speeches from seniors. More over it was a great family event uniting our community.

In celebrating Tamil Heritage month TCASD presented town of Ajax with decorated pongal pot and wooden spoon to display at town of Ajax. Similarly TCASD also presented city of Pickering with decorated pongal pot and wooden

spoon as a token of appreciation and symbol of Tamil Culture. In addition TCASD presented new Tamil books to Oshawa, Ajax and Pickering library.

TCASD has participated in many interesting community events for the last four years and proved that it made significance changes in many young men and women lives. Commitment of TCASD Children, Youth and seniors and their interest in building a better community among the Canadians is the most priority for its Members. Always, willing to support and participate in diverse cultural events makes TCASD to stand out tall as an organization in Durham region. Four Tamil women from TCASD were recognized by MP Hon. Chris Alexander for their volunteerism, dedication and for their leadership to TCASD and to the community.

The saying "Thai Pirandhal Vazhi Pirakkum" meaning "the commencement of Thai paves the way for new opportunities" is often quoted regarding the Pongal festival. During the month of "Thai" everyone is looking forward to the new beginning "Pongal Day" thanking the Sun God for the good harvest and consecrate the first grain to him on this Thai Pongal day. This is our Tamil cultural values that we practice from years and years on this special auspicious day.

Year 2012 major cultural event for TCASD was celebrations of Pongal Day with the recognition/proclaim from the Town of Ajax for the Tamil heritage month on 14th of Jan 2012. It was a very successful event with many guests from the federal level, MP Chris Alexander, provincial, MPP Joe Dickson and municipal level Mayor of Ajax and councillors, Mayor of City of Pickering and councillors and many community partners attended the celebration.

Indeed, Thai Pongal is a festival of freedom; peace, unity, compassion, love and peace are the central theme of Thai Pongal. We appreciate and thank all the participants, guests and members for their continuous support to our organization. Our sincere thanks to TVI, CMR, Monsoon Journal and Uthayan News paper for the coverage and support.

Vazlga Thamill! Vazlga Vaiyagam!



Tracy MacCharles, MPP for Pickering-Scarborough East and some of the youth



TCASD presenting symbol of Tamil Culture to City of Pickering Mayor Dave Ryan



Youth girls performing

## Celebration of Tamil Heritage Month in Durham Region

- 1) Thai Pongal Display at the Mcleans Community Centre in Ajax through out month of January
- 2) Thai Pongal Celebration - Jan 14th
- 3) Jan 19th - Kolum teaching at J. Clark Richardson Collegiate through Community Council of Durham
- 4) Jan 28th---Contests on Tamil Heritage
  - 1) Coloring contests
  - 2) Tamil word and pongal items matching contests
  - 3) Essay on Thai Pongal or Tamil Heritage
  - 4) Kolum contests for adults





# Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham

## Thai Pongal Display

Thai Pongal Display at Mcleans Community Centre in Ajax by our youth Sigogini Sivarajah.

It was important for the Tamil to teach and share our rich culture and Town of Ajax gave us the platform to do that. In celebration of Tamil Heritage Month, our youth, Sigogini Sivarajah exhibited a display at the Mcleans Community Centre in Ajax.



## 2nd Annual TCASD News Letter "TCASD TIMES"

Every year few youth work hard to put together the TCASD news letter. This year Tanesha Thirukumar and Lavanya Pathmanathan worked tirelessly to bring to light of all the TCASD events that were conducted in year 2012. The very first copy was given to Councillor Peter Rodrigues. Visit [www.tamilcommunitydurham.com](http://www.tamilcommunitydurham.com) to view TCASD Times.



## The June Callwood Harmony Scholarship

The June Callwood Harmony Scholarship is a prestigious award that only 10 students across Canada receive. The Harmony Movement receives many exemplary applications from across Canada and the competition is intense. At the end, they judge their applications based on five criteria: courage, creativity, commitment, consistency, and community.

Sigogini Sivarajah, 18, is one of the ten 2011 June Callwood Harmony Award recipients. She is a first year student attending the University of Ottawa and is enrolled in the Honours Health Sciences program with an ambition to enter the field of medicine. Sigogini started volunteering in grade five and hasn't stopped giving back to her community ever since.

Throughout her high school career, she was always a role model and a defined leader. An active student in school, a leader in the community, a team player at the workplace, and a loving family member is a brief definition of Sigogini Sivarajah.

She is a member and a dedicated youth with Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham (TCASD), where she helped educate her community about diversity and represented it herself through various performances and discussions at several events. TCASD goals are to help work with youth like Sigogini to find opportunities and to become into good leaders in the community. She also

had volunteered her time with many organizations including the Bahai community of Durham. She was employed with the Durham Regional Police Service in the summer of 2009 and had the opportunity to be trained and certified in diversity and also participated in the Harmony Workshop.

Through several activities like these, Sigogini shaped her perspective on diversity and reached into the community to educate and promote diversity further on. She had completed over 2000 hours of community service.

Her high interest, active work and positive outlook on diversity led her to receive this honourable award. On November 1st, Sigogini Sivarajah had received her award at the Arcadian Court and out of the ten students selected across Canada; she was the outstanding one that had been selected as the valedictorian. She was given the opportunity to present a speech on behalf of all the award recipients.

This should be an example for all other youth and for them to engage themselves in the community. Their hard work is never gone unnoticed. Engaging themselves in the community will only open doors for them and will give them an abundance of opportunities and the best way to know that is to learn through experience. Everyone youth has the capacity to achieve this so lets get involved!

Congratulations Sigogini!



L-R, Roland, Mr. Philip, Sigogini, Councillor Ashby, Raveena and Shajahi



Sigogini with Ajax Councillor Ashby



# Business



## Managing Your Money

# RRSP facts – basics you need to know to save

David Joseph, M.A. (Economics)

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.

Young people who are starting a career and working toward major financial goals such as paying off student debt or buying a home often put contributing to an RRSP on the backburner in the hope that they'll be able to catch up later. The truth is a small amount invested earlier in your life has a greater financial impact than more money invested later on.

It may be to your benefit to move money you currently have in savings accounts or other investments into your RRSP sooner, rather 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, without generating immediate taxable income. It's important to remember that interest earned on savings accounts and both realized and unrealized capital gains on non-registered investments will be taxed prior to when they are moved into your RRSP. In many cases, borrowing to take full advantage of RRSP contribution room makes sense. Maximizing your RRSP contribution now offers immediate tax savings this year and tax-deferred potential growth for many years to come. Using this strategy can make it beneficial to borrow for a short period to maximize your plan.

Here are some basic facts that will help you get the most into and out of your RRSP.

- **Be deadline driven** This year, the contribution deadline for RRSPs is February 29, 2012 – don't miss it!

- **Be a maximizer** Always make your



maximum contribution each year – you'll get the most in immediate tax savings and in long-term growth. How much you can personally contribute can be found on your most recent notice of assessment from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Each year, the Canada Revenue Agency identifies your unused contribution room for the upcoming tax year on your Notice of Assessment. If however, you are unable to locate your

Notice of Assessment, a quick call to the Canada Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-8281 or a visit to [www.cra.gc.ca](http://www.cra.gc.ca) can provide the information you need.

- **Play catch up** Fill up unused contribution room fast. You can do that in a single year or over a number of years until you reach age 71 – but quicker is better.

- **Match savings to income** As you make more money, make larger contributions to your RRSP and you'll have more income in retirement.

- **Consider borrowing to save** An RRSP loan can be a good thing to maximize this year's contribution or catch up on past contributions – but only if you

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can get one at a low interest rate and pay it back as quickly as possible. Even better: use your RRSP tax savings to help pay off the loan.

- **Choose a beneficiary** Designate a beneficiary for your RRSP (in Québec, this must be done through a will). Generally, RRSP assets do not form part of your estate and do not attract probate fees. If your beneficiary is your spouse/partner or a disabled child/grandchild, your RRSP can be transferred tax-deferred to your beneficiary's registered plan.

Contributing to your RRSP is an important way to save for retirement – but it's just one part of a solid retirement plan. Get all the facts (and good advice) from your professional advisor to make sure your retirement dreams blossom into enjoyable reality.

**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, nor is it intended to provide investment / tax advice.*





# Special Feature

## Good health is needed to perform duties well

by Dr. Kanayalal Raina



'Life is priceless.' Most people would probably agree with this statement. Good health is considered as the most important element in any kind of work, studies and in order to lead a happy and satisfactory life. Without good health even the possible seems impossible. Good Health starts from the very infancy. It is here that protection and care is needed, so that each organ functions well, each organ develops naturally, and there are no disabilities, diseases and no children remain neglected. Good health at all stages should be everybody's top most priority as it is something that can determine individual's success and future life. Therefore an individual must have a proper diet plan along with physical activity, work and other programmes to remain healthy, fit and competent.

Health is real wealth. A healthy person is an asset to himself, to his family and to his community. On the other hand an ailing person is a burden on all. He is a danger for coming generations because heredity plays an important part in this respect. When people talk about health, they usually refer to the condition of the body. However, health does not merely mean being free from physical pain or the symptoms of disease.

According to World Health Organisation, 'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being, and not merely the absence of disease. Many people do not realize the importance of good health, and even if they do, they may still disregard it. Whether we work at home or in an office, we need good health in order to perform our duties well. The necessity of good health is not limited to a particular religion, caste, creed or gender. Thus all the persons at all times need a healthy body and clear and calm mind. While many people may not have material problems,

they may be unhappy or agitated at the psychological level. They may suffer from insomnia due to stress, or feel depressed, irritable and aimless. All these are the result of an unbalanced mind which is a situation of bad health.

The health of individuals and their communities are affected by a wide range of contributory factors. People's good health is determined by the number of factors:

### THE LEVEL OF INCOME IN THE FAMILY AND SOCIAL STATUS:

The higher a person's income level is, the more likely he is to enjoy good health. The link is a clear one. Income level affects all members of the family, including newborn babies. An Australian study found that women of lower income status are less likely to breastfeed their newborn babies which will have an impact on the health of the baby just as he enters the world.

### EDUCATIONAL LEVEL:

People with lower levels of education generally have a higher risk of experiencing bad health. Their levels of stress will most likely be higher, compared to people with higher academic qualifications. A person with a high level of education will probably have higher self-esteem. James Smith, a health economist found a link between a few additional years of education and longer life spans and large improvements in health during old age. Adriana Lleras-Muney, an assistant professor carried out a study at Princeton University, found that individuals with less education might have shorter life spans because they have less ability to plan for the future.

### THE STATE OF ENVIRONMENT SURROUNDING US:

A clean environment is essential for human health and well-being. Noise and polluted air are emerging environment and health issues in these days. Climate change, depletion of ozone layer, loss of biodiversity, and land degradation can also affect human health. If our drinking water is clean and safe, the air we breathe is pure, the workplace is healthy, the house where we live is comfortable and safe, and in these situations individuals are more likely to enjoy good health as compared to those who are not enjoying these facilities.

### JOB PROSPECTS AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS:

It is now widely recognised that unemployed's have adverse effect not only on their ability at work but also on their general health and well-being. If an individual has a job, statistics show that he is more likely to enjoy better health



than people who are unemployed. A study by researchers at State University of New York at Albany found that workers who lost their job, over the next 18 months that they developed a new illness, such as high blood pressure, diabetes or heart disease.

### THE RELATIONSHIP WITH FRIENDS, PEER GROUPS AND FAMILY:

We all want to be in healthy relationships which impact our health in a long way. Healthy relationships help us feel better about ourselves and about our place in the world. They make us feel happy and safe. Unhealthy relationships make us feel unhappy, insecure, or even unsafe. If we have family support, as well as support from friends and our community, our chances of enjoying good health are far greater than that of others who have none of these things. A study carried out at the University of Washington found that strong family support is a protective measure for reducing future suicidal behavior among young adults when they have experienced depression and frustration.

### THE TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS:

The traditions and customs of a society and how a family responds to them play an important role in people's health. The impact could be either good or bad for health.

For example, the vegetarian families might feel deficiencies of those nutrients which they could get from non-vegetarian foods. A study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health found that when young people dress according to the customs of their own ethnic group, they may be less likely to have mental health problems later in life.

### GENETIC INHERITANCE:

Many diseases like diabetes, asthma

and certain types of cancer have a strong genetic link. This means that if our relative has the disorder, we have an increased risk of having it ourselves. People's longevity, general health, and propensity to certain diseases are partly determined by their genetic makeup. Researchers from Duke University, USA found that people's genes play a key role in how they respond both biologically and psychologically to stress in their environment.

### WHAT WE EAT, ACCESS AND USE OF HEALTH SERVICES:

What we eat, our physical activity, whether or not we smoke or drink or take drugs, and how we cope with stress play an important role on our health. A society that has access and uses good quality health services is more likely to enjoy better health than one that doesn't. For example, developed countries which have universal health care services enjoy longer life expectancies for their people as compared to under developed countries which lack these services.

### GENDER:

Men and women are susceptible to some different diseases, conditions and physical experiences, which play a role in our general health. For example, childbirth, ovarian cancer, and cervical cancer, are experienced only by women, while prostate cancer, testicular cancer are only experienced by men. During wars more men than women tend to be called up to fight, and subsequently become injured or die. Adult women are more likely to be the physical victims of domestic abuse, compared to adult men. In some societies women are not given the same access to education as men that in turn influence their health badly. Many studies have revealed gender disparities in healthcare services, even in developed countries.



# Special Feature



## Premier Dalton McGuinty's speech about keeping Ontario's deficit elimination on track in a speech at the Canadian Club

Premier Dalton McGuinty spoke about keeping Ontario's deficit elimination on track in a speech to the Canadian Club. Premier McGuinty said that eliminating the deficit by 2017-18 with steady and relentless progress will help keep Ontario's economy on track.

Attached to this email you'll find a copy of the Premier's remarks, as well as photos and the news release available in both English and French. The news release is also pasted below.

Deficit Elimination Critical For Job Creation And Economic Growth

Premier McGuinty Says Keeping Deficit Elimination on Track Will Add To Fundamental Strengths Of Province

### NEWS

January 24, 2012

Premier Dalton McGuinty today said that eliminating the deficit by 2017-18 with steady and relentless progress will help keep Ontario's economy on track.

In a speech to the Canadian Club of Toronto, the Premier said that new action will be taken to eliminate the deficit that was accumulated during the worst of the global economic recession. Those actions are necessary to ensure that families, businesses and international investors continue to look to Ontario as a great place to live and work.

Ontario's economy grew at 2.7 per cent in the third quarter of 2011, and the unemployment rate has dropped from 9.4 per cent to 7.7 per cent.

### QUOTES

"Our plan to achieve our goal of living within our means is a multiyear plan. It cannot be achieved overnight. Success will take time and an unwavering commitment. Ontarians have everything it takes to get there — including our track record of success."

— Premier Dalton McGuinty

### QUICK FACTS

Last year, 121,000 net new jobs were created in Ontario.

The Ontario government has eliminated capital taxes and reduced corporate taxes — along with other tax measures, cut the tax rate on new business nearly in half and cutting personal income taxes for 93 per cent of Ontario taxpayers.

Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario's Remarks to the Canadian Club of Toronto on January 24, 2012

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues,

J'aimerais commencer aujourd'hui par vous remercier pour votre travail, pour les emplois et les débouchés que



Premier McGuinty speaking with packed crowd at the Canadian Club

vous offrez aux familles de la province et pour votre détermination à continuer de faire progresser l'Ontario.

I want to start today by thanking all of you for the work you do, each in your own way, to help build a strong Ontario, supported by a strong economy.

Of course, my subject, today, is the economy. And more specifically, I want to talk about the next step in our plan to build a stronger Ontario economy, an economy that supports good jobs and quality public services for all of us.

I will begin by touching on the fundamentals, because they are the foundation for growth and prosperity. I am talking about our tax and regulatory environment, our power grid, our infrastructure and our workforce.

First, our tax environment. To make sure Ontario is competitive, we eliminated capital taxes and reduced corporate taxes. Our corporate tax rates are now lower than every U.S. state and lower than the OECD average. The long and the short of it is we've cut the tax rate on new business investment by almost half. We've also adopted the HST, letting Ontario businesses compete on a level playing field with competitors in over 140 countries who already enjoyed the distinct advantage of a value-added tax. We've reduced personal income taxes for 93 percent of Ontarians who are now paying less in tax today than they did

four years ago. What's more, we've eliminated 80,000 business regulatory requirements that stood in the way of jobs and growth. We've aggressively expanded international trade, doubling our trade with India and China. And we continue to offer our strong support to the federal government as it seeks to enter into new trade agreements beyond North America.

The second fundamental we strengthened was our electricity system. Because we all understand that a reliable supply of electricity is the lifeblood of a growing economy. Our plan will rebuild 80 percent of the system over 20 years. Already, we've built over 5,000 kilometres of new transmission and 8,000 MW of new generation. At the same time, our energy policies have given birth to an exciting, renewable energy sector in Ontario, creating 20,000 jobs so far. Yes, there has been some controversy around our clean energy plan. But it's especially important in matters of controversy that people know where you stand. Our government stands for clean energy, clean energy jobs and clean air. And we won't waiver on that. We are going to keep moving forward with our clean energy plan, always looking for ways, of course, to improve it.

Just as we have kept moving forward on the third fundamental -- and that's infrastructure. Our work together has meant new hospitals, schools, roads,

bridges, sewers and public transit. On average, we are investing three times as much in infrastructure every year as the previous government did — because we need it. In Toronto alone, we have construction underway on a subway to York University, a rail link to Pearson Airport and a rapid transit line across Eglinton. And I think everybody here would agree: there is still more to do.

This brings me to our fourth economic fundamental, and that is a strong workforce. It's just a hard fact: you can't compete in the race to the top without a highly skilled and educated workforce. So we have made dramatic, new investments in the education and skills of Ontarians ranging all the way from full-day kindergarten for our youngest learners all the way up to more grad school spaces. And the results, my friends, have been nothing short of breathtaking: our schools are now recognized as the best in the English-speaking world; our test scores and high school graduation rates are way up; enrolment in our colleges and universities is up by 26 percent — that's double the increase in the rest of Canada; and our workforce is now better educated than any of the 34 OECD countries.

Ontario families know: education is a great investment. And to make that investment more affordable, we recently announced a 30 percent tuition grant. It





# Special Feature

will help 300,000 college and university students from low and middle-income families. It's been said that while we can't build the future for our kids, we can build our kids for the future. That's what education is really all about. And I think it's noteworthy that, just last year, as we were coming out of recession, while Ontarians with a high school education experienced a 9,000 jobs net loss, our college and university grads experienced a 119,000 jobs net gain. Our plan will keep making Ontario more competitive by making Ontarians themselves more competitive.

So, my friends, when you consider the fundamentals — our tax and regulatory environment, our power grid, our infrastructure and our workforce — we are stronger. Yes, of course, there's more to do, but there is no doubt about it: we are stronger; we're more competitive; we're better poised for growth.

And when it comes to growth, the Ontario indicators are all pointing in the right direction. Our latest sounding has our economy growing at 2.7 percent. Unemployment has dropped from a high of 9.4 to 7.7 percent today. And our champions, like manufacturing and financial

surplus. And you should know that to this very day our government spends the least per capita among Canada's 10 provinces. But, just as the recession took a bite out of household budgets across Ontario, it took its toll on the provincial budget, too. Government revenues went down and the need for government support went up: support for workers who lost their jobs, for employers who needed help to keep jobs, and support for infrastructure projects to create jobs. All this extra help for Ontarians combined with weaker revenues created a \$16 billion deficit. That's how we got here.

So, why do we need to get out? Well, just as it was right for our government to run a deficit to protect Ontarians from the worst of an economic storm, so now that the storm is over, it's right for you and I to rededicate ourselves to our plan to eliminate that deficit. Borrowing money to help Ontarians through a terrible recession is one thing, but living beyond our means, constantly adding to the debt we are leaving to our children, well, that's quite another thing. That would be wrong -- for our children and for us.

I don't have to tell you: when it comes

receive from the opposition.

Éliminer le déficit ne sera pas une tâche aisée. Pour ce faire, nous devons toutes et tous faire le maximum. Dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de son plan certains prétendront que le gouvernement va trop vite, et d'autres qu'il progresse trop lentement.

Eliminating the deficit won't be easy and getting the job done will call upon the very best we have to offer. I'm pretty sure that as our government moves forward with our plan some will say, 'You're moving too quickly.' Others are going to say, 'You're moving too slowly.' I think Wilfrid Laurier offered some pretty sound advice 120 years ago when he said: "...see the goal and towards that goal direct your efforts, discarding the impetuous frowns of the rash and the cautious advice of the timid." So I want to assure Ontarians: we won't be rash and we won't be timid. Our progress will be steady, measured and relentless.

While the specific details of our plan will be laid out in our budget, in the balance of my remarks, I want to share with you some of the broader strokes. Our plan will balance the budget in the fiscal year 2017/2018. Getting there will require that we slow down our spending significantly. As I have said before, we will protect health care and education, the most important public services upon which families rely. We will not raise taxes. Instead, we will find ways, through reform, to deliver government services more efficiently. Health care, which accounts for over 40 percent of program spending, is overflowing with opportunities for reform. Shortly, Minister Matthews will lay out an exciting plan for health care transformation. Quite simply, our plan will provide Ontarians with better health care by getting better value for our health care dollars.

And speaking of dollars, one half of all government spending — about 55 billion dollars — is invested in wages and salaries. That's not at all unusual. In fact, that's as it should be. Most taxpayer dollars should go into paying the people who work on the front lines and deliver the services — like our nurses, our doctors, our teachers, our water and meat inspectors. We need them and we need them to do a good job. That means they need to be well trained and fairly compensated. And they are.

But because half the province's budget is spent on wages, it is just not possible to reduce spending without addressing salary expenditures. We will do that by respecting the collective bargaining process. Respect isn't something you check at the door in the face of a big challenge. In fact, it's when things get difficult that you need it the most. Now, just as we will respect the people who deliver our public services, so will we also respect the right of all Ontario families to a government that is fiscally responsible, one that maintains confidence in the economy they depend on for their jobs, their schools, their health care, their

future. So we will negotiate firmly to a result that keeps us on a sure and steady path to a balanced budget, something that is in everyone's interest.

Of course, our plan to achieve our goal of living within our means is a multi-year plan. It can't be achieved overnight. There are no quick fixes. There are no easy solutions. Success will take time and an unwavering commitment. And I have every confidence we will achieve our goal because Ontarians have everything it takes to get there, including our track record in getting the fundamentals right — our workforce, our taxes and our infrastructure.

But there is another fundamental strength we possess as Ontarians, one that underlies all our great successes: and that is our willingness to work and build together. Think about this: together we built our schools, our colleges, our universities — the foundation of our powerful workforce and our research excellence. We built our health care system from the neighbourhood clinic to our world class teaching hospitals with access for everybody. We built our communities, safe, strong and growing, because newcomers from around the world keep choosing Ontario as the best place to begin a new life. We built our truly remarkable system of roads and highways, covering a geography, by the way, four times the size of the UK to serve a population one fifth their size. We built a vital and peaceful democracy where the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, each get one vote. And, together, we built a strong, caring, progressive society inspired by the ideal that every child from every home will have every opportunity to become the best they can be.

That's what Ontarians have achieved. It's nothing short of amazing. And our future is equally bright so long as we keep working and building together.

My friends, Ontarians have placed their confidence in our government to keep a steady hand on the tiller and steer us towards a stronger economy. And that is exactly what we are going to do. We will keep strengthening our economic fundamentals. We will eliminate our deficit. And we will maintain confidence in our economy.

This is about a lot more than a dry exercise to satisfy accountants. It's about satisfying the real expectations of Ontario families that their economy will inspire their confidence, and the world's confidence, too. It's about building the rock-solid foundation families need to support their jobs, their schools, their health care, their future. It's about acting responsibly. It's about building a bright future for our children and grandchildren. It's about staying strong and being who we are. We are Ontario. We're the greatest province in the best country in the world.

Thank you.



Premier McGuinty Speaking at the Canadian Club

services, are experiencing steady growth. So we're moving in the right direction on pretty much all the major fronts.

Now, we need to take further action on another important fundamental and that is the deficit. It stands at \$16 billion this year. And it's not going away on its own.

Nous devons prendre la prochaine mesure vitale pour créer une économie qui soutient de bons emplois et des services publics de qualité. Nous avons besoin de nous attaquer au déficit de l'Ontario.

Tackling the deficit is simply an essential step in building the strong economy we all want and need, one that supports good jobs and quality public services.

But before I get to what we need to do, I want to speak to how we got here and why it is we need to get out.

First, how did we get here? Before the global recession hit, Ontario had balanced three budgets in a row. We were in

to the economy, confidence is very important. If Ontarians see their government managing responsibly and keeping a steady hand on the tiller, just as they are doing at home and in business, they are going to feel more confident. And when international businesses see that we are taking action, it gives them the confidence to invest here, bringing jobs to Ontario, for Ontario families. And if the lending community sees that we are tackling our deficit confidently and in earnest, it reassures them and that keeps our borrowing costs down. Confidence in our economy is an indispensable, economic fundamental. And eliminating the deficit is key to maintaining the confidence of Ontarians, and the world, and growing our economy.

In the coming weeks, we will receive the advice of the Drummond Commission. Minister Duncan will also continue hearing from Ontarians as part of his pre-budget consultations. And we will welcome any thoughtful advice we



# Children's Corner



## Celebrating Valentine's Day

*Roses are red, violets are blue,  
Sugar is sweet, and so are you.*

By Chandrani Warnasuriya

The day before February 14th, children all over the world make valentines by the galore. The most common way valentines are made is by using wall paper on which pictures cut from magazines are pasted, with a verse written inside and then writing at the back From: Guess Who...

In American homes and families a big cardboard box with a slit at the top was set apart with numerous fancy missives till Valentine's Day. At dinner table the box was opened and the valentines distributed. In addition to this, the more popular "store valentines" that are bought by kids as well as adults from a store are used. From the beginning of February window displays in stores of these are a familiar sight These come with decorations of red hearts. Paper-lace cupids and hearts and loving verses.

Children in grade schools buy their valentine boxes from the store in dozens, for these are very cheap, inside of which are written beautiful cards. These are distributed to friends at valentine parties held at school, some of which are mailed. Among adults boxes of candy decorated with hearts and cupids are more popular, and attending parties and dances are a familiar custom.

In former times Valentines were very expensive as much as ten dollars apiece and were real gorgeous decorations. During the Civil war in America Valentines reached the height of their popularity. Valentine's Day came second only to Christmas in festivities.

How did it all start? It started with the name of a Christian saint, St Valentine. Long ago in the days of the Roman Empire, festivals were held to pagan gods. One of these was called Lupercalia, celebrated in honor of the gods Juno and Pan on the 15th of February. It was then a custom of young Romans to put names of maidens in a box and have a draw to choose their partner for the festival. When Christianity took over in Rome, pagan gods were done away with; but the people had got so used to the celebrations of the festivals that could not do away with them. Valentine was a bishop who had married couples without the permission of the emperor. So he was put into jail and executed. His feast day fell on the 14th of February. So the church decided to substitute the Lupercalia with St. Valentine's feast day.

Many superstitious beliefs came to be associated with this festival in England and Europe. But the basic thoughts associated with festival, love, caring and sharing continues to prevail.

### The Valentine Tree

In my garden by the fence  
Is a very special tree  
It has no leaves on its branches,  
Only Valentines free  
In shape they are very pretty,  
Hearts of many colors:  
With fancy laces woven round,  
And ribbons to go with these.  
Some are a beautiful pink,  
With flowers red and white;  
They are the prettiest valentines,  
I ever did see....  
On Valentine's day, I went by the tree,  
I looked up to see, what it has for me;  
Lo! It rolled a Valentine,  
Just right for me.





# Arts and Forms



## Five Students perform Bharathanatya Arangetram together at Richmond Hill Centre for Performing Arts

The new year 2012 began for everyone with something to remember - And for the audience on Jan 6th at the Richmond Hill Centre for Performing Arts, it was a momentous occasion as they witnessed an excellent Bharathanatya Arangetram by 5 students, Memusha Suriyacumaran, Dharsha Baskaranathan, Nilaksa Sivanenthiran, Nishani Ramesh and Sivani Ramesh, disciples of Guru Nagathas Sinnarasa (Vasu) presented by Sathangai Narthanalayam.

They danced artistically and beautifully with so much passion and stole the hearts of the audience. The audience praised them and said that they were so glad to have attended the art performance.

All of the 5 students are cousins; it was like dream that they had the opportunity in life to showcase their talents together on one stage and it was joyful to watch their performance. The hall was packed with many VIPs from all levels of Government, their families, friends and well wishers.

Monsoon Journal extends wishes and congratulations to all 5 students, guru and all who helped in organizing the event and especially their parents for a performance well done.

Some of the photos taken at the event can be seen here



NILAKSA SIVANENTHIRAN



SIVANI RAMESH



NISHANI RAMESH



MENUSHA SURIYACUMARAN



DHARSHA BASKARANATHAN



FIVE COUSINS TOGETHER WITH DIFFERENT ABINAYAS



FIVE COUSINS TOGETHER WITH SAME ABINAYA



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