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# Monsoon Journal


A parfait media publication


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## Allow Sri Lankans to seek the protection of Canada while overseas - B'nai Brith Canada


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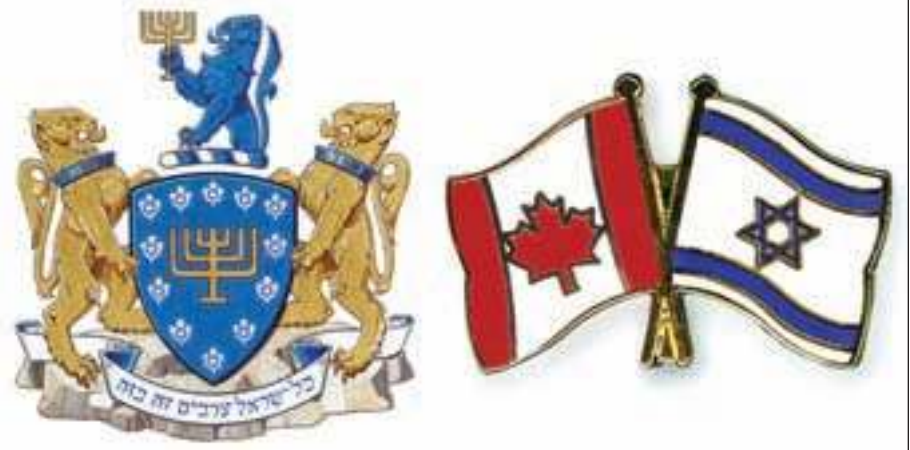
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B'nai Brith International ("Sons of the Covenant") is the oldest continually operating Jewish service organization in the world. It was initially founded as the Independent Order of B'nai Brith in New York City, on October 13, 1843, by Henry Jones and 11 others.

The Canadian chapter, B'nai Brith Canada is widely respected for its groundbreaking work on matters relating to antisemitism, racism and human rights, its strong advocacy on the pressing issues of the day, and the important social services it provides.

Recently B'nai Brith Canada called for measures to address Tamil refugee issues; the recom-

mendations and comments on the matter were reported in its official publication - The Jewish Tribune as follows:

As public debate regarding the plight of the 492 Tamil refugee claimants intensifies, B'nai Brith Canada has warned against allowing racism to creep into public discourse on the issue and recommended three proactive solutions.

Frank Dimant, CEO of B'nai Brith Canada, said, "Let us learn from our past. As discussed in our coming National Holocaust Task Force Student Resource on the history of Canadian immigration policy, there have been tragic

incidents in Canada's not-so-distant history, where boatloads of refugees were turned away from our shores due to attitudes laced with racism.

"We should remember the Komagata Maru and the MS St. Louis. In today's world, there are certainly legitimate concerns that must be addressed such as security threats and the horrors of human smuggling, but right now the refugee determination system can address questions relating to refugees who have already reached Canada."


David Matas, senior legal counsel for B'nai Brith Canada, added, "There are several addi-

tional measures that Canada should consider immediately to address the underlying issues: adding Sri Lanka to the source country class so that Sri Lankans could seek the protection of Canada while overseas, pressing the government of Sri Lanka to end human rights violations against its minority population and urging the government of Thailand - from where some of the boat people come - to sign and ratify the UN Refugee Convention."

"Safeguards come not from shutting the door on human suffering, but from addressing the real issues head-on," concluded Dimant.

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# Government of Canada working to speed up foreign credential recognition for medical doctors

The Government of Canada is funding a project that will make the process of obtaining a medical licence faster for internationally trained physicians. The Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, made the announcement today on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development.

The Medical Council of Canada will receive over \$2.8 million in Foreign Credential Recognition Program funding for its project entitled National Registration Process for Internationally Educated Physicians.

"Canadians with loved ones who are sick or injured want foreign-trained medical doctors in

the emergency room or the doctor's office doing what they do best," said Minister Kenney. "This investment is part of the federal government's overall action plan to work with the provinces and territories to ensure that licensing bodies put in place better programs to recognize foreign credentials."

Since 2006, the Government of Canada has made foreign credential recognition a top priority. The Government created the Foreign Credentials Referral Office in 2007 with an initial investment of \$37.2 million over five years, which was increased by \$7.5 million in Budget 2009 and subsequently by \$6 million in 2010-2011.

Through Canada's Economic



**Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism**  
Action Plan, the Government also invested \$50 million to improve foreign credential recognition. Our government put foreign credentials on the agenda at the First

Ministers Meeting in 2009, which led to the creation of a pan-Canadian framework for the recognition of foreign qualifications, developed in partnership with the provinces and territories and other stakeholders.

The Medical Council of Canada's project will create a registration process that will allow foreign-trained physicians to apply for a medical licence electronically, in any province or territory. This includes an online portal where international medical graduates can access licensing information and apply for eligibility assessments for entry into practice or postgraduate programs in Canada.

The Council will also collaborate with governments, regulatory



agencies, faculties of medicine and other assessment organizations to create a national credentials database for physician documents, in order to further streamline the application process.

"Once the application for medical registration launches in 2012, the process to apply for a medical licence will become much easier," said Dr. Trevor Theman, Vice-President of the Medical Council of Canada's Executive Board. "Physicians will only have to submit a pre-populated electronic application and provide access to authenticated credentials."

To learn more about Canada's Economic Action Plan, visit [www.actionplan.gc.ca](http://www.actionplan.gc.ca).

## Minister Kenney Encourages Groups to Sponsor Refugees to Come to Canada



Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney today met with community groups to encourage them to consider sponsoring refugees to come to Canada.

"Canada has a long history of helping those most in need," said Minister Kenney. "I'm encouraging the groups I've been meeting with, and others across the country who are interested, to be part of this history in a very personal and direct way."

To promote the program to a diversity of groups, Minister Kenney has travelled to Vancouver, Kitchener and Toronto so far this summer to meet with community groups. He is encouraging them to become private sponsors and to help resettle people who are in desperate need of Canada's protection.

Groups who sponsor refugees commit to providing financial assistance for one year or until

the refugees can support themselves financially, whichever comes first. This assistance includes accommodation, clothing and food. Beyond providing for their physical needs, sponsors also offer emotional support and friendship to the refugees for the duration of the sponsorship period, and often well beyond.

"I am proud that Canada has one of the world's largest refugee resettlement programs. It reflects Canadians' long-standing humanitarian tradition of offering protection to the displaced and persecuted," said Minister Kenney.

Through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program, Canada has welcomed more than 200,000 refugees from all over the world, over and above the number of refugees resettled through the Government-Assisted Refugees Program.

As part of the Balanced Refugee Reform Act, which was

passed into law earlier this summer, the Government of Canada will increase the number of resettled refugees per year by 20 percent. This includes 2,000 more spots in the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.

Since 2007, Canada has doubled refugee targets in the Middle East to allow for more resettlement of Iraqi refugees. Canada's commitment to the protection of Iraqi refugees is ongoing and, since 2002, over 11,000 Iraqi refugees have been resettled in Canada.

In 2008, the latest date for which data are available, Canada was second only to the United States among all industrialized countries for providing protection to refugees from abroad and at home.

For more information on Canada's resettlement program, visit CIC's website.

## NDP MP VISITS TAMIL ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN B.C.

**Peter Julian concerned over human rights, access to services, support and translators**

BURNABY - New Democrat MP Peter Julian (Burnaby-New Westminster) is concerned about the human rights situation of the recent 492 Tamil asylum-seekers currently detained in British Columbia.

"I had an opportunity to meet with the refugees in two of the three detention centres and it is clear that they have inadequate access to support and services, such as translators," said Julian. "Canadians of Tamil origin have contributed greatly to Canada, and the Tamil community in Canada has offered to provide a full range of professional support services free of charge to the refugees. Why hasn't the government allowed them to provide this support?" asked Julian.

Since the arrival of the Tamil refugees earlier this month, Julian has met with the leadership of the Canadian Tamil Congress and lawyers from the Immigration and Refugee Board. He has also participated in meetings (including a town hall) with the community and activists.

"During my visit to the detention centre, I learned that the refugees have not yet had access to religious services or spiritual guidance. Even convicted prisoners have an opportunity to meet with spiritual leaders - why haven't these Tamils been provided that right? I am growing more and more concerned about their



**Peter Julian**

treatment, as are many Canadians."

Rathika Sitsabaiesan, the NDP's candidate for Scarborough-Rouge River, stressed that the Conservative government must treat asylum-seekers as asylum-seekers and not criminals.

"Canada has an obligation to treat these Tamils with compassion and fairness," said Sitsabaiesan. "We must uphold their human rights and provide safe, humanitarian conditions. We must also place the women and children into the supportive Tamil-Canadian community to provide them with security and a safe environment, instead of waiting and languishing in the detention centres."

For more information, please contact:

Rupinder Kaur, press secretary: 613-222-5048 or [rupinder@ndp.ca](mailto:rupinder@ndp.ca)



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 because oneness is the secret  
 of everything"**  
 - Swami Vivekananda

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**From the Publisher's Desk ...**

# Celebrating Gandhi's life

**By Krishni Loganathan  
 BA (Hons)  
 Political Science and History**

"Be the change that you want to see in the world" Mahatma Gandhi. October 2 marks the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Celebrations are held all over the world to commemorate his life and his teachings. His actions and words are still taught and remembered across the globe. Gandhi Jayanti is one of 3 national holidays in India and he is officially known as the "Father of the Nation".

On June 15, 2007 The United Nations also took a step in marking October 2nd as a special day known as the "International Day of Non-Violence" to honour and remember the life of Gandhi.

Gandhi has made his mark in history as the teacher of ahimsa or non-violence. With his help, he

gained Independence for India through the Indian Independence Movement. His actions were not exclusive to only India, civil rights and freedom movements were taking place all over the world as his teachings spread.

His leadership in the Indian National Congress allowed him to begin national campaigns against poverty and discrimination. His weapons of choice were non-violence, non-cooperation and truth or Satya. With these tools to help him fight off the British from their reign in India he encouraged others to follow him in this same path. "There are many causes that I am prepared to die for but no causes that I am prepared to kill for." Mahatma Gandhi

His life continues to teach others on how to love one another and treat them with respect and dignity. Gandhi's role in the world

has left a lasting mark and he will forever be remembered and honoured. He taught people to celebrate life and continue to learn and educate yourself to be better and make the world a better place. Everyone has a role to play despite the status that you have.

He wanted to eliminate the "untouchables" in India and the cast system from continuing much longer; this was the cause of violence, the mentality that people associated with their cast. Equality is what he preached and he wanted it for everyone, women, low income families and anyone else that was discriminated against.

Everyone should be able to receive the same opportunities in life that he had. He was well educated and was called to the bar on June 10, 1891 after studying law at the University College London.

He practiced law and used his knowledge to eliminate corruption first in South Africa and then finally in India with the Indian Independence Movement. Gandhi's life was taken from him on January 30th, 1948 as he was walking to a platform to where he was going to address a prayer meeting. Although his life was cut short his teachings will last forever.

Gandhi's life is as exceptional as his words.

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." "You can chain me, you can torture me, you can even destroy this body, but you will never imprison my mind."

Monsoon Journal joins the humanitarians of the world in celebrating Gandhi Jayanti and marking the "International Day of Non-Violence".

# Sri Lanka urged to ensure safety of detained former asylum-seekers

**Amnesty International  
 Press Release**



**"This is an appalling situation that calls into question the actions of both the Sri Lankan and Australian governments"**

- Madhu Malhotra,  
 Deputy Director for Asia ,  
 Amnesty International



Madhu Malhotra

Amnesty International has called on the Sri Lankan government to ensure the safety of three men who have been tortured and jailed following their forced return from Australia in 2009.

Two of the men, Sumith Mendis and Lasantha Wijeratne, were transferred to a hospital to be examined by a judicial medical officer on 1 September amid claims that they were beaten and tortured following an alleged new attempt to migrate to Australia. It is not clear if they are still in hospital or have returned to prison.

All three are at risk of further abuse from guards and prisoners when they are returned to prison where Sumith's brother, Indika, is already being held.

"This is an appalling situation that calls into question the actions of both the Sri Lankan and

Australian governments," said Madhu Malhotra, Amnesty International's Deputy Director for Asia.

"Both governments are culpable in the forced return and mistreatment these men have endured, and both must bear responsibility for the results of their policies and procedures."

Sumith Mendis and Indika Mendis were detained in 2009 at the Christmas Island detention centre after the boat they were crew members on was stopped by Australian authorities and found to be carrying Sri Lankan asylum-seekers.

They were deported to Sri Lanka and promptly arrested and handed over to the Central Investigative Department (CID).

Sumith Mendis was released, but Indika Mendis was tortured in CID custody, sustaining severe ear injuries before being transferred to the notorious Negombo prison where he was held for eight months.

On 14 August 2010, the brothers were arrested again, apparently on suspicion that they were again planning to migrate to Australia. Sumith Mendis was then tortured by the CID for six days, experiencing beatings and psychological abuse.

On 22 August, the brothers were taken to Negombo prison, along with Lasantha Wijeratne, another Sri Lankan who had also been deported from Australia and tortured in custody.

Following examination by a

judicial medical officer, Sumith Mendis and Lasantha Wijeratne were transferred to the hospital.

They now face the risk of abuse by both prisoners and guards when they are again taken to Negombo prison unless authorities take the necessary steps to ensure their safety.

"The Sri Lankan Authorities must ensure that all three men are not subject to any more torture or ill-treatment, either at the hands of the CID or prisoners or guards in Negombo prison," said Madhu Malhotra.

"The Australian government must re-examine its claims that asylum-seekers returned to countries they are fleeing from are not subjected to torture and mistreatment."

# The Scarborough Hospital to open new geriatric urgent care clinic



## Seniors to benefit from specialized care, reduced wait times

As part of our mission to provide an outstanding care experience that meets the unique needs of each and every patient, The Scarborough Hospital is establishing a geriatric urgent care clinic for seniors, expected to be up and running by this winter. It will be one of four Geriatric Assessment and Intervention Network (GAIN) clinics set up in hospitals across the Central East LHIN.

GAIN is a network of many initiatives geared to supporting frail seniors and comprises key stakeholders across different sectors: hospitals, CCAC, community agencies and community representatives. It allows emergency and community-based physicians to refer patients to this clinic, which will be staffed by a highly trained inter-professional geriatric team for specialized assessment

and intervention. If required, patients will be admitted to an inpatient unit specially designed to care for frail seniors and/or link them to community support services so that they can return home with the care they need.

"This is a very proactive and upstream initiative - a comprehensive clinic comprised of geriatric nurses, geriatricians, social workers, occupational therapists/physical therapists, pharmacy, laboratory and diagnostic imaging," explains Nancy Veloso, Interim Patient Care Director for Medicine and Geriatrics at TSH. "This is a coordinated expert team providing a full range of services to frail seniors who are coming to Emerg or who can be diverted from Emerg and admitting. It is also an opportunity to see seniors coming directly to the



clinic from the community, and diverting them from an Emerg visit altogether."

"This is very exciting as it will help keep our seniors independent and in the community much longer, while preventing unnecessary hospital admissions," explains Dr. Joel Maser, Internal Medicine and Geriatric Specialist.

TSH is already at the forefront of several initiatives aimed at reducing wait times and diverting

frail elderly patients from the Emergency Department or from being admitted to hospital. Our Nurse Practitioner Outreach Teams and Geriatric Emergency Management (GEM) are just two examples. More information about these existing programs is available online at [http://www.tsh.to/img/AtIssue\\_April2010\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.tsh.to/img/AtIssue_April2010_WEB.pdf)

With financial resources now being directed through GAIN, TSH will provide 'one-stop shopping' for frail elderly who often visit Emergency Departments with multiple and complex health issues.

"We can provide a more comprehensive, in-depth assessment that identifies exactly what our frail elderly patients need to support them in their homes," says Elaine Laine, a Clinical Nurse

Specialist who is part of the GEM program.

"Many times, when seniors are admitted for two or three days, they become physically deconditioned and that can lead to return visits to the hospital. But if we don't have to admit them in the first place and can provide them with services that can be provided at home, it's a win-win for the patient."

By the numbers (both campuses):

- Number of patients age 70+ visiting ER: 19,257 (2009/10)
- Number of inpatients age 70+: 8,355 (2009/2010)
- Percentage of patients assessed by GEM nurses and discharged from ED (April 1 to June 30, 2010): 64%
- Ontario's senior population will double within 20 years.

# Canada has been a home to refugees - Michael Ignatieff

Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff speaking recently to News 1130 in Vancouver about Tamil New comers aboard MV Sun Sea said that "Every person on the ship deserves a fair hearing".

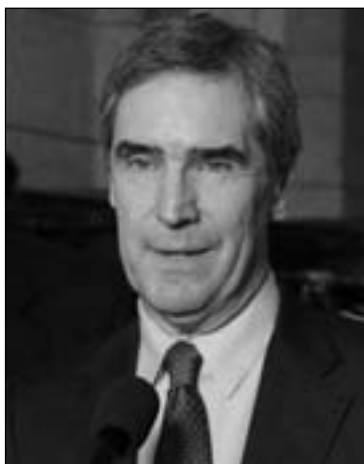
According to a News 1130 report, the Liberal leader said the Conservative government is trying to scare Canadians by telling them terrorists were on board the MV Sun Sea.

Commenting further in the interview, the Liberal leader emphasized to "put our faith in

the refugee system to weed out those who don't deserve asylum in Canada."

"Let's just lower that rhetoric here. Let's lower the temperature. Give our officials a chance to sort out who's who. And also never forget that this country has been a home to refugees, and I think it should remain so," Michael Ignatieff added.

Ignatieff's father sought refuge in Canada, after escaping Communist Russia.



Michael Ignatieff

# Helping Children Be Healthy and Active McGuinty Government Introducing Children's Activity Tax Credit

Ontario is proposing a new permanent, refundable tax credit that would make it a little easier for parents to get their children involved in sports, arts and other activities.

Under the proposed tax credit, parents would be able to claim up to \$500 of eligible expenses per child. They would receive a refundable tax credit worth up to \$50 per child, or up to \$100 for a child with a disability. The tax credit could benefit over 1.8 million children.

Ontario's tax credit would build on a similar federal government program. However, Ontario's tax credit would be broader in scope -- it would apply

to more than just sports activities -- and it would be a refundable credit that benefits all families, including those with low incomes.

The province intends to introduce legislation this fall, which will provide details about the new tax credit. This credit would apply to any eligible expenses incurred on or after January 1, 2010, meaning parents would receive a credit after they file their 2010 tax returns.

"This new measure would help children get involved in activities where they can enjoy themselves, feel a sense of accomplishment and make friends. At the same time, we want to make it easier for parents to provide

those opportunities by saving them money and helping their budget."

**- Dalton McGuinty  
Premier of Ontario**

" Refundable tax credits ensure that low-income parents - - who pay little or no tax -- would also benefit.

" Physical activities that are eligible for the federal Children's Fitness Tax Credit would automatically be eligible for the Ontario Children's Activity Tax Credit.

Eligible non-physical extracurricular activities would have to be supervised, suitable for children and not part of a school's curriculum.

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"There has been a surge by Banks to open branches in the North and East. But the idea is not to open shop and mop up all the deposits to be brought to Colombo. There has to be commitment or legislation to ensure that a certain percentage of the deposits are redeployed in those areas. If this does not happen there would not be equitable growth", says Mr. Rajendra Theagarajah, CEO of Hatton National Bank in Sri Lanka. He was addressing an investor forum organized by CT Smith Stockbrokers. Mr. Theagarajah is also the President of the Sri Lanka Bankers Association.

"With low interest rates and a recent policy rate cut, the country's commercial banks are still cautious in their lending, preferring to invest excessive rupee holdings in government securities, but a top banker says this must change with more lending directed to rural entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises, as they would drive the country's economy forward, until large, long term investments come in, more so for the North and East.", he remarked.

Mr. Theagarajah said Sri Lanka's banks were investing too heavily in government securities while being trapped in a collateral security based lending system.

"Banks are either in flight to quality mode or are too tight fist-ed. The challenge now is to unclench the tight fists because too many of them are enjoying investing in 100 percent risk free instruments," he said.

He said if Sri Lanka's per capita income was to double in five years in line with the government's vision, and if incomes were to be equally distributed,

# "A certain percentage of Deposits collected by Banks in Northern & Eastern Sri Lanka should be deployed in those areas", says Hatton National Bank Chief Rajendra Theagarajah



banks would have to lend to smaller players in the economy.

"We believe the economy would be driven by the small and medium sector and at the moment, the country's commercial banks have neglected this sector. While waiting for the large long-term investments to come in, helping this sector would actually provide the base on which FDIs could grow," he said. Foreign Direct Investments have dropped during the first six months of this year as against the corresponding period of last year.

Bank loans to the private sec-

tor have grown at 6.2 percent while loans to the government and public corporations have increased by 19 percent and 119 percent respectively. The Central Bank earlier this year said loans to the private sector must double from current levels if the per capita income was to double and urged the government to curb reckless spending and tap into external sources to bridge high deficits.

In recent months, the banking sector has been holding on to excessive rupee levels, averaging Rs. 30 billion each day for the

past three months according to dealers.

These funds have been used to invest in government securities and bonds, which saw rates come down to below 9 percent for Treasury bills. Commercial Bank dealers said the Central Bank may have to cut policy rates further in order to kick start bank lending to the private sector.

Theagarajah said banks were

also trapped in a collateral security based lending model which prevented them from lending to SME sector and micro entrepreneurs and there was a need to shift to cash flow based lending.

"If a man has a single cow, he cannot purchase another which could increase his income because he has no collateral to place as security when borrowing from a bank."

While, decrying the lack of bank support to the micro and SME sectors of the economy, Theagarajah cautioned that banks should not rush into it.

"You cannot service this sector from Colombo and you cannot approach them with cufflinks and tie. You should understand the sector," he said, adding that HNB, which has three percent of its total loans in this sector, recruited agriculture graduates to managerial levels so that they would understand the agriculture sector much better.

"With one thirds of the land area and two thirds of the coastal area opening up after the war, agriculture and fisheries are two sectors that can grow and banks would have to understand these sectors if they are to lend effectively," he said. Mr. Theagarajah said commercial banks should make a voluntary commitment to utilize funds collected in the North and East in those areas.

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# Fiscal reform to War Crimes probe: Key political risks to watch in Sri Lanka



BY Reuters - AlertNet

COLOMBO, Sept 4 (Reuters) - Sri Lanka's President Mahinda Rajapaksa has attracted enough support from lawmakers to secure a two-thirds majority in parliament, enabling him to change the constitution. He has also embarked on ambitious plans to transform the nation's economy following the end of a quarter-century civil war in May 2009.

Following is a summary of key risks to watch in Sri Lanka:

**\* FISCAL REFORM**

An International Monetary Fund review in August said Sri Lanka's progress on key economic policy reforms was on track and it would recommend the payment of the fourth tranche of a \$2.6 billion loan. It was a key vote of confidence in the country's economic policies, following a six-month delay in releasing the third tranche of the loan because Sri Lanka's budget deficit last year was well above the IMF target.

Although the IMF has released the latest loan tranche, Sri Lanka's budget deficit target of 8 percent this year is more than the 7 percent the IMF wants. So the country is under pressure to deliver on plans to boost revenue, rationalise a byzantine, costly tax code and above all, tighten fiscal discipline.

**What to watch:**

-- Whether Rajapaksa's administration gives into the classic temptation of all Sri Lankan leaders: dipping into public coffers to boost subsidies or dole out state jobs.

-- Whether the government takes concrete steps to make state-run entities revenue earners. Most of the deficit reduction plan hinges on completely turning around loss-making state ventures hampered by subsidy schemes or mismanagement.

-- The recommendations of a presidential tax reform commission.

**\* STATE SECTOR LABOUR UNREST**

Rajapaksa has yet to make good on a promised pay hike for Sri Lanka's state employees. He kept the pressure off since

his election in 2005 by appealing to workers to wait so he could pay for the war against the Tamil Tiger separatists.

But since the war ended in May 2009, public sector trade unions have been demanding he deliver. The government says the rise will come in 2011 but impatience is growing.

Already, university students have held strikes, which traditionally presage labour union unrest. A handful of state workers in the last month have held token strikes.

**What to watch:**

-- The tenor and frequency of student and labour strikes. If they rise above token acts, that's a clear sign of more to come.

-- Whether trade unions drop their support for Rajapaksa and drift back toward the now-rudderless opposition. Union members in Sri Lanka have traditionally been quick to lose fealty to leaders they view as doing too little for them.

**\* THE RAJAPAKSA FACTOR**

The president and his family together have direct control of nearly 70 percent of this year's budget through the portfolios they hold. Three brothers occupy key positions. One is the parliament speaker and another runs the state security apparatus with a special brief to develop prime state-owned property in Colombo. A third runs a new ministry overseeing tourism, nation building and investment promotion, which encompasses just about all the lucrative post-war investment and development areas. The president is also the finance minister, so in short, any big investment decision needs a Rajapaksa blessing.

**What to watch:**

-- Whether Rajapaksa and his family show evenhandedness in the development of public-private investment partnerships.

-- Whether Rajapaksa can shake off concerns among wealthy local investors that his government will interfere with investments to settle political scores, or for coercion.

**\* CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES**

The president's ruling alliance has secured the two-thirds parliamentary majority he needs to change the constitution. Rajapaksa and opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe struck a deal on July 13 to return Sri Lanka to leadership by an executive prime minister.

The agreement in principle also contemplates changes to reduce the president's vast powers, but a similar deal in 2000 fell apart at the last minute so there are no guarantees.

If Sri Lanka returns to a prime ministerial system of leadership, the president would be free to pursue that post and bypass the existing two-term limit he now faces.

Sri Lanka has had a relatively disastrous history of changes wrought by constitution and many Sri Lankans are watching to see if Rajapaksa follows a more virtuous path.

**What to watch:**

-- Pronouncements from either side about the deal, and any signs of progress. Few expect anything to happen until Rajapaksa takes his oath for a second term in November.

-- Whether Wickremesinghe, facing internal calls from his United National Party to step down, holds on and stays true to the agreement. He backed out of the 2000 deal.

**\* WAR CRIMES PROBE**

A raucous protest against a U.N. war crimes panel further soured already bad relations between Colombo and the world body, after a cabinet minister close to the president had demonstrators surround the U.N. office in Colombo.

Over Sri Lankan objections, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in June appointed a three-member panel to advise him on accountability issues related to the end of the war last year.

Thousands of civilians died and rights watchdogs have alleged that surrendering Tamil Tigers were gunned down.

Sri Lanka insists its own presidential commission can probe any war crimes, but the country has a dismal record of investigating rights violations over the last four decades.

**What to watch:**

-- The panel's recommendations, and whether those lead to the start of an international probe, demanded by rights watchdogs.

-- How far China and Russia are willing to go to block any moves to get an outside probe going. Both countries have already blasted the panel's creation as unnecessary. (Editing by Andrew Marshall)

**For more humanitarian news and analysis, please visit [www.alertnet.org](http://www.alertnet.org)**

## Sonia Gandhi Elected as Indian Congress Party Leader again

Sonia Gandhi, the widowed wife of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has been re-elected once again the Leader of the All India Congress Party which currently rules India.

Sonia's re-election is a fourth consecutive term of office for her and becomes the first person to hold such office for four terms. Her nomination was backed by Congress leaders including Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, Home Minister Chidambaram and her son Rahul Gandhi who is the General Secretary of the All India Congress Party. Her first election as Congress Party leader was in 1998. The election is held once in four years.



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## Muscle Contraction or Pressure Headache Following Injury\*

\*Adapted with permission from Multi-Health Systems & Dr. J. Douglas Salmon, Jr. from Rehabilitation Education and Coping Pamphlet Series

By: Dr. J. Douglas Salmon, Jr.

Following an injury to the head or neck, the muscles around the head or neck may become bruised, stretched, or torn, giving rise to headaches. Injury to the back or shoulders also can lead to similar headaches due to added stress or the neck muscles.

The pain of muscle contractions or tension headaches is often so severe as to prevent study or work. The band or pressure-like pain in the bad, of your head, your forehead, or temples is often associated with spasm in the muscles of the neck. Injury to the head/neck muscles often causes steady traction or pulling on the covering of the scalp when they are in spasm. This traction quickly overcomes the small muscles in the forehead, causing them to be pulled tightly, which produces the headache.

How does the neck/head muscle spasm come about? We use our neck muscles for many purposes. In fact, they are used for more purposes than any other muscles in the body. These muscles are used to turn our heads to help us locate the source of a sound, to help with the fine-tuned movements that are involved in reading, and to hold our heads in a rigid position so that we can see. They help provide balance for the head as it relates to the rest of the body, always producing fine, quick movements to correct changes in our posture. We frequently brace or contract the neck muscles in anticipation of, or in situations of anxiety, fear, worry, or pain.

Prolonged contraction of the jaw, or head/neck muscles may result in an accumulation of waste products - mainly lactic acid. These waste products cause the muscle to contract more intensely, and result in stiff, tender, or knotted areas. Once a muscle has been contracting steadily for several hours, it cannot relax of its own accord, and a headache becomes inevitable.

### Hurt Does Not Mean Harm

It is important to remember that while these headaches are painful, they do not actually harm the body in any way, nor are they dangerous or life-threatening.

Rather, they are a nuisance with which the person must learn to cope. There is no specific amount of time that such headaches may last following injury. While for some people these headaches never completely go away, generally patients



successfully return to work and later report that the headaches are no longer disabling because they have learned to adjust and cope with them over time.

### Things You Can Do To Reduce and Relieve Your Headache

" Since the muscles respond to cold by contracting, try sleeping in a warm bedroom and wearing a scarf during the cold weather to avoid this form of muscle pain.

" Frequently, just holding the neck muscles in a strange and rigid position during sleep at night on a big pillow will be enough to throw you into a tension headache. Placing a small, rolled towel under the nape of your neck can frequently relieve this problem.

" If you wear glasses, be sure that your eyes have been examined recently for any change that might have occurred in your vision. Wearing an incorrect prescription of glasses may produce squinting, which causes tension of the facial muscles. You will relieve a lot of tension in the neck muscles which would otherwise be constantly contracted.

" Many people who have these headaches tend to droop their shoulders and lean their head forward as a constant habit. Improving your posture will help reduce painful symptoms.

" Massage uncomfortable muscle areas as you feel tension building, gently working out any tight areas (consult your physician first).

" Exercise your neck and shoulders frequently, especially during a busy or tense day, by rolling your head around in a 360 degree circle and by rolling your

shoulders both forward and backward. These two exercises enable the muscles to alternately relax and contract, and thereby rid themselves of harmful waste products, and assume a more warm and relaxed state of contraction. These exercises, if done 4 or 5 times during the morning hours, can prevent headaches that would otherwise occur in late afternoon and evening.

" The daily practice of deep relaxation exercises (20 - 30 minutes at least once per day) can significantly decrease the likelihood of muscle tension developing in any part of the body, including the neck musculature. Depending on the nature of any injury you may have, it is suggested that you consult with your therapist for advice concerning the most appropriate and comfortable posture to adopt in practicing these techniques.

" Remain as active as possible

so as to distract yourself from the pain.

### What To Do When You Have a Headache

" Try lying down and resting for a little while. Massage the muscles with a gentle kneading action, paying particular attention to the small knots that develop in the body of the muscles. Having a friend put constant pressure on these knots will force out the edema fluid and relieve the spasm. A half hour of sleep is often all that is necessary to relieve the muscle spasm.

" If medicine is required to control muscle contraction headaches, be careful not to use it in excess or to the exclusion of the above-mentioned relaxation techniques. Be careful of the overuse of aspirin or acetaminophen, and be particularly careful about stronger drugs, such as Valium, Percodan, Idbrium, Darvon, Ceconal, or Fiorinal,

many of which may dull your senses and affect your day-to-day lifestyle.

If you find that you cannot control your headaches very well with the means listed above, a short course of biofeedback training may be helpful in teaching you how to relax all the muscles of your body including your neck muscles. Along with EMG training (Biofeedback assisted muscle relaxation training), you will need to learn relaxation strategies that will allow you to let go of muscle tension on particularly stressful days. Getting into biofeedback training means making a commitment of the time necessary to learn relaxation strategies and to practice these strategies daily. Just as it is difficult to play the violin in 5 easy lessons or lose 40 pounds in 2 weeks, learning to become skilled at deep relaxation takes time and commitment to master.

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# 'Hope for Pakistan' Campaign Launches to Maximize Outcome of Canadian Government's Dollar-to-Dollar Matching Commitment for Pakistan Flood Relief

TORONTO, ONTARIO [CANADA] - August 30, 2010 - A GTA-based grassroots campaign, Hope for Pakistan, announced its launch today in an effort to create awareness and raise donations following the devastating flooding that hit Pakistan in late July this year. The campaign has been motivated by the Canadian government's dollar-to-dollar matching commitment. "We were pleased with the federal government's announcement and felt the responsibility to let others know in order to maximize its outcome," said Sadia Qureshi, Hope for Pakistan's Executive Associate Director.

Running until September 12, 2010, the last date by which donations will be matched, the campaign will drive donations through its website (hopeforpakistan.ca). Its growing team of forty plus volunteers will also target high-traffic commercial areas frequented by the GTA's South Asian community, such as grocery and clothing stores. "We will be wearing orange t-shirts, and will be placing orange posters and donation boxes in many of our favourite local spots, so look out for us," said Saira Sheikh, also Associate Executive Director of the campaign.

According to the 2006 Census, Pakistan is the third largest source country of newcomers to



Some Hope for Pakistan volunteers stand for a picture after putting together 200 donation boxes that they will be distributing to South Asian stores across the GTA to raise donations for Pakistan flood relief, in light of the federal government's matching commitment.

**Top Row (From left to right):** Zack Muqtadir, Imran Khan, Samad Zubairi, Sadia Qureshi, Saira Sheikh, Hina Sheikh, Aisha Azam.  
**Bottom Row (From left to right):** Yaseen Sheikh, Rabia Ameer, Amira Zubairi, Asad Sheikh, Sandleen Azam.

the Toronto area. Pakistan's national language, Urdu, also experienced the largest growth in Canada of all non-official language mother tongues, from 87,000 in 2001 to 156,000 in 2006. South Asians also form Canada's largest visible minority community. "We are confident that through a proactive approach, members of our local communities will come through, if even by donating a few dollars each. In Pakistan, one Canadian dollar can feed a family of four for one day so it is no understatement to say that your dollar will

really go a long way," said Qureshi. Key GTA-based media and businesses have committed to spreading the word and will be featured at hopeforpakistan.ca.

Matching commitments made by the federal government in response to global disasters apply only to donations given to registered Canadian charities. Given the need to act within the period of the government's commitment, Hope for Pakistan chose the Canadian Red Cross and Islamic Relief Canada as the conduits to their mutual cause. "Every minute is crucial, as instances of

fatal water-borne diseases and other preventable circumstances are sweeping over many of the approximately 20 million displaced victims, particularly in Punjab and Sindh provinces," said Qureshi.

The Canadian public's aid response has been far less than expected, even in light of the United Nations confirmation that the floods have affected more people than the Southeast Asian tsunami and the recent earthquakes in Kashmir and Haiti combined. This has been attributed, in part, to an image deficit facing



Pakistan. Hope for Pakistan's website includes photos of displaced Pakistanis, taken by local relatives and friends. These are in an effort to show real images of victims, complementary to the media's efforts, in order to help alleviate Pakistan's image deficit. The website also features an official campaign song that aims to do the same.

"Given Canada's outstanding reputation in providing international disaster relief, we were saddened by the Canadian public's response to the floods since concerns that may be hampering aid to Pakistan have absolutely no direct link to the vast majority of Pakistani women, children and men," said Qureshi. "We understand that there are elements out of our control at play, but our team believes that this crisis begs to be seen through more of a humanitarian lens when the World Health Organization itself has concluded that there are at least six million people in need of life-saving assistance."

Please visit [www.hopeforpakistan.ca](http://www.hopeforpakistan.ca).

For information: Sadia Qureshi, Associate Executive Director, Hope for Pakistan, 416.823.8978, [sadia@hopeforpakistan.ca](mailto:sadia@hopeforpakistan.ca)

## Tamilnadu gets a woman Chief Secretary - Ms. Malathi

Ms. Malathi, an experienced and talented member of the Indian Administrative Service has been appointed as the Chief Secretary in the Tamilnadu Government. She succeeds Mr. Sripathi who will go into retirement. Malathi was holding the position of Vigilance Commissioner and Commissioner of Administrative Reforms before her new appointment.

Ms. Malathi's appointment comes in the wake of the eve of Tamilnadu elections. Ms Malathi was closely associated with main opposition leader Ms J Jayalalitha when she was the Chief Minister.

Ms Malathi, an officer of Indian Administrative Service belonging to the 1977 batch, on Tuesday assumed duties as the 39th Chief Secretary of the State. Ms. Malathi is the second woman to occupy the post, the first being Lakshmi

Pranesh (December 2002-April 2005) in Ms Jayalalitha's regime.

Hailing from the Thanjavur District, Ms Malathi began her government service as Assistant Collector (training) Tiruchi in 1978. Eight years later, she became the Deputy Commissioner of the Chennai Corporation and in 1987 she was posted Collector for North Arcot District during MGR's regime. During the past thirty odd years she held different positions such as the Agriculture Director (1989), Additional/Special Secretary in the Finance Department (1993-1994). As Secretary of the Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department for five full years (1996-2001), she presided over the execution of several development projects in the urban areas of the State.

Ms. Malathi was the Commi-



ssioner and Special Commissioner of Economics and Statistics during 2001-2006. She briefly held the post of Special Commissioner and Commissioner of Commercial Taxes during 2006-2007 and in January 2007, she became Home Secretary, the post she held nearly for three-and-a-half years.

## Re-united with her Mother after 31 years



Susan Mary Chandima Vikman originally from Sri Lanka and who as a five-month old infant was given to a Swedish couple for adoption, was reunited with her biological mother and sister after 31 years.

Susan, now 31, a native of Veyangoda, holds a management degree and runs her own business in Sweden. She said she hoped to take her mother to Sweden. Susan is seen with her mother and sister at the airport after her arrival in Sri Lanka recently.

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The Voice of the Vedas Cultural Sabha celebrated a historic day on the 26th August 2010 marking the grand Opening Ceremony of Anand Bhavan a "Seniors Residence". This function was held at 15 Garden Avenue, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada in the presence of several hundred devotees and distinguished guests. Two plaques were unveiled on this occasion, one on the outside entrance of the building honouring Steve Gupta Chairman of Anand Bhavan Seniors Residence Committee and other one inside the building was dedicated to philanthropist Vasudeva Chanchalani. The Mandir Pandits chanted mantras while these plaques were unveiled.

Incidentally Dr. Budhendra-nauth Doobay, Chairman of the board of Vishnu Mandir not only inaugurated the new facility but celebrated his milestone 70th birthday. Earlier a prayer meeting was held at the Mandir in honour of Dr Doobay's birthday celebrations. Bhajans were sung for this occasion and several prominent leaders offered best wishes, continued good health and long life Dr Doobay. Mr. Kris Misir the newly appointed President of Vishnu Mandir and Mr Steve Gupta and Mayor Dave Barrow of Richmond Hill, along with his colleagues and councillors, Police Chief Armand La Barge and Pandit Roopnauth Sharma President of Hindu Federation along with other Presidents from GTA temples attended the ceremony to unveil the new building for the first, "Hindu Seniors Residence."

## Anand Bhavan - first Hindu Seniors Residence

Dr. Budhendra-nauth Doobay, addressed the ceremony enthusiastically stating that this project is the most prestigious and passionate project of the Voice of the Vedas Cultural Sabha (VOV) to build "Anand Bhavan" a dream house for seniors to reside in. He praised Steve Gupta for his devotion and commitment to this project, as the later was instrumental to see the completion of the building on schedule. Mr Steve Gupta, is the chairman of Anand Bhavan Senior Residence Committee and Chairman of Easton Group which owns 10 corporate and leisure 4 star hotels with 650 rooms in Canada's commercial hub in GTA.

It was mentioned that the idea of a seniors home was started way back in 2001, by Dr. Doobey, who assembled a group of dedicated volunteers to execute this project under Steve Gupta. In his address, Mr Steve Gupta, pointed out that the building has been under construction since April 2009 as lot of time was taken by the municipal city officials to get the site plan approved. He, however seized this opportunity and informed the gathering that more homes for seniors for those who are 65 or older this age bracket, being our fastest growing population segment shall be undertaken by him in future. These seniors are increasingly being persuaded, cajoled and otherwise prevailed upon by their children to seek shelter in such homes. He declared that he would like to see another 120 to 125-room apartment building for seniors to come soon.

In the speech given by Mayor Dave Barrow, he stated, "The development and

prosperity of the community requires and relies on resources more and more homes for seniors. Earlier Dr Doobay was proud to announce that the municipal city of Richmond Hill provided great support towards the successful completion of Anand Bhavan and even assisting on the development charges.

Nevertheless, Dr Doobay also said that he wanted the city to assist with the other charges relating to the project. This Seniors Residence is funded by all three levels of Government, private individuals and donations from the community at large. This senior's residence is a new 2-storey building adjacent to the Vishnu Temple, 15 Garden Avenue, Richmond Hill, Ontario, is not yet fully completed and that it may take another 4 - 6 weeks for completion.

Some the salient features of the project are:-

This residence comprises of 25 fully furnished units, consisting of 20 one-bedroom apartments and five two-bedroom apartments spread over 24,000 sq feet. It has a common meeting area for seniors. Besides this is a common dining area, with a modern kitchen and a full service elevator. Replying to a query raised, Mr Steve Gupta said that the rentals have to be in line with the guide lines provided by the Affordable



Housing Project. The rental does not include breakfast, lunch and dinner as these meals are charged separately to residents, but it does include heat, water and hydro. Applications for seniors who desire to reside at the facility are available at <http://www.anandbhavan.ca/>

It was mentioned by the General Secretary, Mr. Harry Bisnauth that many applications have been received so far, which are pending review and selection

of the tenants shall be done based on the criteria outlined in the guidelines of the Affordable Housing Program. If you are interested in living at Anand Bhavan please fill out an application and mail it or drop it off at Vishnu Mandir.

For any additional information please call Mr Harry Bisnauth at 905-450-6766 x 226 or email him at [hbisnauth@dundeewealth.com](mailto:hbisnauth@dundeewealth.com).

**Kanayalal Raina**

## Tropical storm Earl hits Canada's coast at Nova Scotia Heavy Storm blasts Eastern Canada



About 200,000 homes lost power after the storm "Tropical Storm Earl" hit the eastern parts of Canada. One man died in the province of Nova Scotia after securing a boat that had slipped its moorings, police said.

The storm has brought heavy winds and rain, toppling trees and power lines through the region and cutting electricity to about 200,000 homes. Earl was moving quickly north-east, with sustained winds of 102km/h, the Canadian Hurricane Centre said. Canadian authorities said Earl made landfall

near the boundary between Shelburne and Queens counties at about 1030 (1330 GMT).

Police said Johnny Mitchell Jr, 54, had died trying to swim ashore after helping secure a loose boat in Blind Bay, 25km from Halifax. Roads throughout Nova Scotia, including in the main city of Halifax, were littered with fallen trees. Power cuts were reported across the province. The hurricane centre issued a tropical storm warning for parts of Newfoundland as Earl approached the province.

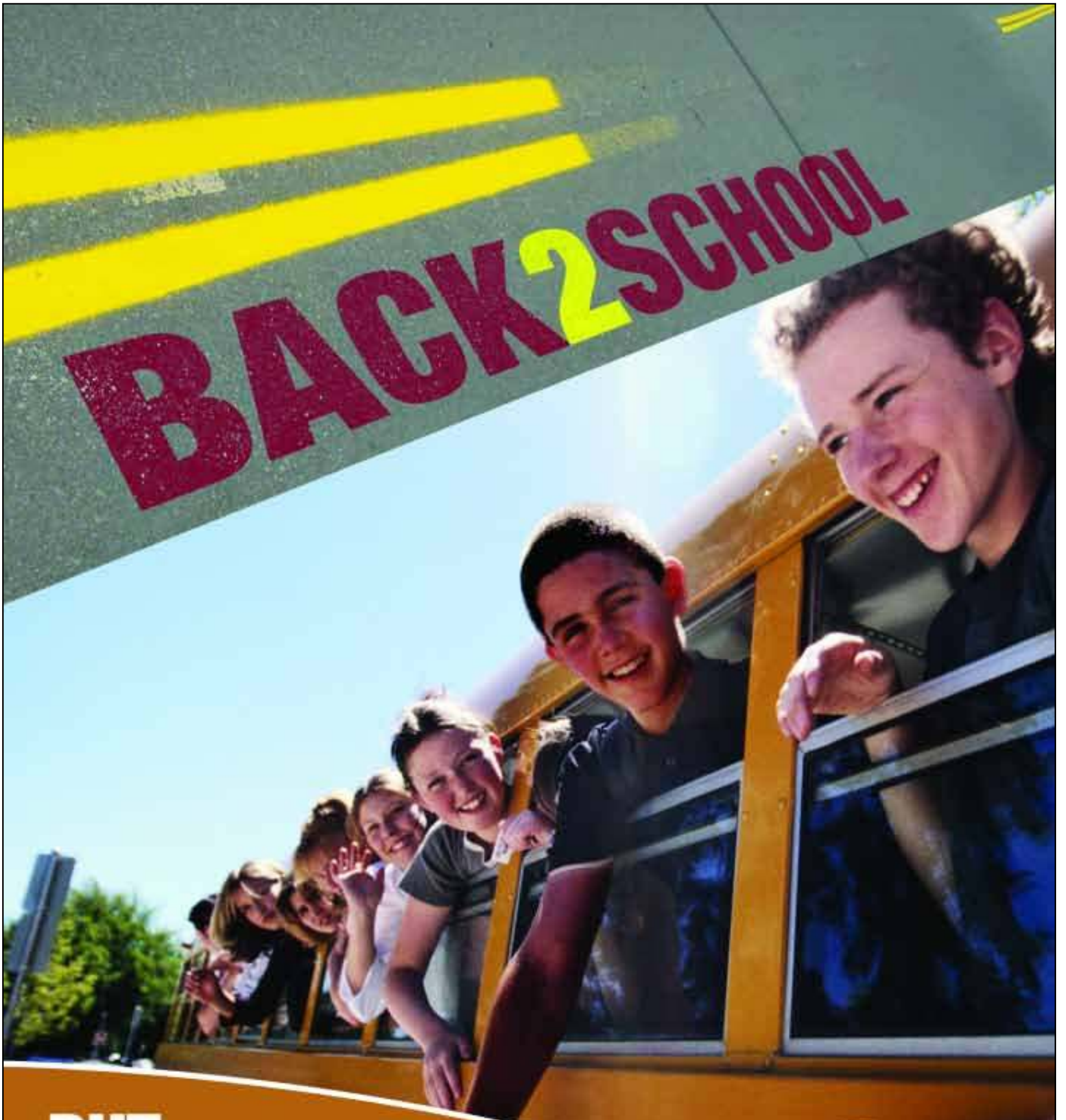
## Amazing Squirrel



On Saturday Aug 21, 2010 around 8:30 am, this cute little squirrel found in the back yard, went towards and climbed all the way top of the head without any fear. The squirrel was fed with some peanuts and water. The squirrel spent about an hour with the family and went to the woods in their back yard.

**In Photo: Gnane Gnanendran**  
**Photo taken by: Soumiya**





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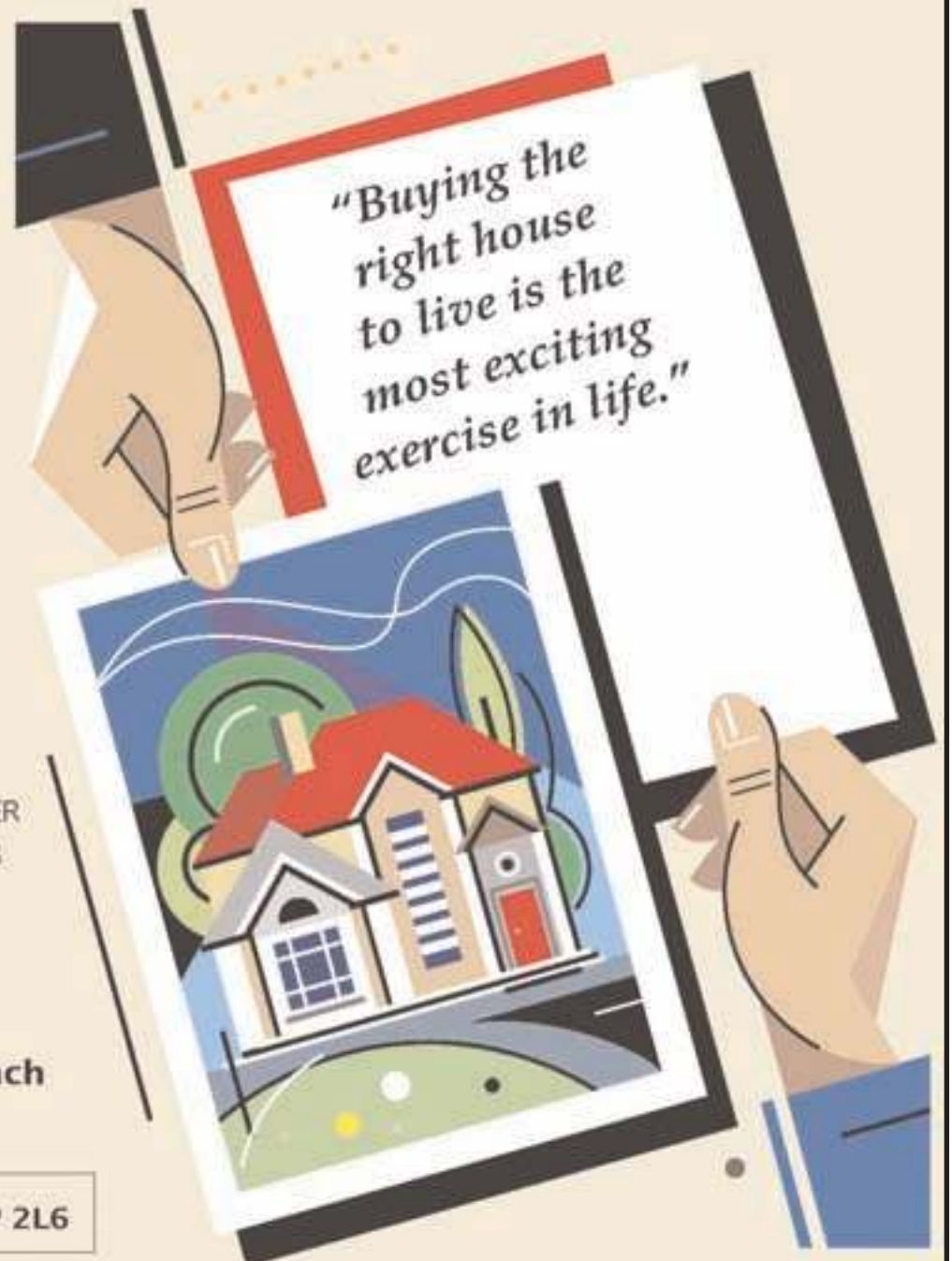
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# Sinthanai Pookkal Pathmanathan's book release on Aug 21, 2010 at Markham Civic Centre



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Samy Appadurai

"Do not be panicky" stated the head line of the editorial written by the chief editor of the Toronto Star, newspaper on 14th August 2010, a day after the arrival of 492 Tamil refugees at the sea port of Vancouver after being on the cargo ship called the Sun Sea for more than three months; the journey having started from Thailand through the Indian ocean to the Pacific. Though they

## Do Not Panic - Tamil Refugees

arrived in the Canadian section of the international waters in the Pacific Ocean on 13th August, the cat was out of the bag a couple of weeks earlier. The ship originally set sail to reach an island near Australia but somehow their entry was denied and the course was changed to Canada where the highest numbers of Tamils have been residing. Canada would not have been the first choice on the list if not for its generosity and the gate for immigration being wide open. The Refugee claimant process in Canada is much easier and the refugee policy itself is quite different from other refugee receiving countries. All of the other receiving countries accept refugees from various countries where they are being persecuted and allow them to temporarily reside until the situation in their country of origin returns to normal and safety is assured. In Canada, refugees have been welcome to make their claims and along with certain conditions applicable to all new immigrants, such as medical exams, eventually they become members of our family.

Such a privilege is one of the main factors that attract many refugees from around the world and once someone has been accepted as a convention refugee and maintains law and order and all that is expected of them, their permanent residency and naturalized citizenship is almost guaranteed. The generosity of our refugee policy and its implementation in particular and Immigration in general have been considered a weaker part of the process. Of course there are some loopholes in any system. Although more restrictions, modifications and new criteria have been evolving in the family class sponsorship and independent class immigration policies and processes; the case of the refugee system since Canada

accepted the Refugee Act of 1951 of the UNO, has not been fundamentally changed, rather, the genuine refugees have been welcomed. Comparatively the percentage of the acceptance of refugees from the claimants and the ratio of accepting refugees in Canada is pretty high. The recent statistics (1984-2008) of the annually granted permanent resident status from the category of refugees reveal that just over ten percent of the total immigrants with the exception of as high as 19.9% in 1985 and as low as 8.8% in 2008 were accepted. As you can see by these numbers, Canada is not stingy.

Though America and Canada follow the same immigration poli-

cy of the UNO, many refugees are very much inclined towards claiming refugee status in Canada due to various reasons, including better treatment and the possible notion on their part that if the case is prolonged long enough eventually the claimants are allowed to stay. Both Canada and America however encourage safer means of reaching their borders, such as land and air and discourage any potential refugee claimants from taking unnecessary risks that could lead to danger.

The Hon. Jason Kenny, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, brought a shift of emphasis in the refugee policy by encouraging the acceptance of refugees from the land where they are persecuted and discourage those who reach our border illegally to claim refugee status. Those who come into Canada illegally and claim refugee status are in a sense jumping the queue compared with other potential refugees.

The government has no reservation in accommodating genuine refugees but is careful in weeding out the bogus refugees. Pre September 11, 2001 the focus on bogus refugees was centered on economic refugees who pretended to be refugees but their primary concern was to gain economic benefits. Since the terrorist attacks in the states in 2001, the focus has shifted towards terrorists. The Canadian government does not want Canada to be a fertile ground for terrorists who can then export their activities to other countries.

The right honourable Prime Minister Stephen Harper said about the recent arrival of the 492 boat people at a press conference on 17th August 2010 in Mississauga that "Canada is a land of refuge" ... We are responsible for the security of our borders, and the ability to welcome

people, or not welcome people, when they come" ... "Canadians are pretty concerned when a whole boat of people comes-not through any normal application process, not through any normal arrival channel- just simply lands"

Now the primary concern is not on the mass exodus of refugees arriving in Canada. Rather it is the suspected involvement in this case by a banned terrorist organization. Either some of the refugees might have come in disguise as ordinary citizens or operated the entire journey or had financial commitments in this operation. It is a matter of security and the concerned departments may have something to

Canada to finance an illegal project, and human trafficking are all being considered. Furthermore the next concern of the government might be that if these factors are true, where does the profit of this business go and will it be to the business entity or any other organization?

There is another concern that some Canadians think that there is potential link between the so called boat Tamils numbering 76 who arrived last October and the current refugees. There is also another rumour circulating in some pockets of the atmosphere that in conjunction with the current ship another two of these ships will be arriving sooner or later. Though this cannot be ver-



back up these concerns and communicated these with government. The two letters written by the refugees and some of the evidence given by some of them suggests that they came on their own as citizens and have no involvements with any groups. There is a tug of war between the supportive forces of the Sri Lankan government and the sympathisers of the Tamil refugees who are concerned about regaining and preserving their fundamental rights. There are views by some Canadian lawyers and media analysts that if the Tamils have not been granted their basic human rights even a year after the war ended on May 18, 2009, human rights violations are still happening. If such problems had indeed been solved, the root cause of fleeing refugees would have stopped. It would not be easy for other nations to unilaterally interfere in the matters of a sovereign state but the international organizations would be able to do so. The United Nations Organization has praised the Canadian government in allowing those refugees to enter into Canada and processing their papers. The government is looking at this case through many lenses. For example, the rumours that those refugees might have paid between \$40,000.00 and \$50,000.00 per head, that a portion of it might have gone from

ified, I believe that these accounts may have been fabricated to a certain extent.

Canada has been one of the few countries that gives more weight to the refugees from all continents, irrespective of their socio-ethnic and other elements of their backgrounds. Even after receiving them, they have been looked after pretty well. I have met a couple of Canadians who are the second and third generations of refugees in Canada and some of them do not want to recall all of the persecution, atrocities, tortures and all sort of abuses and victimizations that they under went in their respective countries. In spite of it, to almost all of them, this land was viewed as a strange and foreign place but eventually they felt that they were very fortunate and some said lucky to become citizens of this country. A few others said that even though they had been residing in Canada over the last two decades, they love their ancestral nation and they do not want to forgo their citizenship and become Canadians. Canada accepted 37,500 Hungarian refugees in 1956-1957. When there was political turmoil in the former Czechoslovakia, Canada accepted 11,000 refugees in 1968/69 and when the Asians who had been residing for a few generations in Uganda, some holding British passports were

sent out in a very abrupt way, Canada acted quickly and received 6175 of them in 1972. In 1973 Canada accepted over 6,000 Chileans and welcomed 9,000 Indochinese and then over 60,000 of the Vietnamese in 1979/80, after the end of the Vietnam War. 155 Tamils, who came from Germany under the pretence of coming from Sri Lanka, were given Ministers Permits while they were in the Canadian shores of the Atlantic Ocean. When the earth quake, one of the worst natural calamities affected Haiti, Canada was generous enough in accepting a couple hundred of the victims.

Generally Canadians have very high hopes and are confident that the Canadian government will not let these refugees down. Some of them became offended at the remarks made that implied the boat people were associated with terrorism and money laundering. They believe that these comments bring about negative feelings towards refugees. In some cases the means are justified by linking the fact that if it were not for the troubles back home, these people would not be in this position of having to flee on a cargo ship. They also feel that the gravity of the entire situation is not clearly understood by many western nations.

The Canadian government would not single out the Tamil boat people from the global asylum seekers. The location of the refugees fleeing has been shifting from time to time due to natural calamities and manmade wars, but certain formulas are similar and a common solution is required. Mostly all of the major opposition political parties have remained silent to an extent and would not want to utter any serious comments. But one of the candidates for mayor of Toronto opposes the arrival of those refugees to Toronto. According to him, the income against the expenses for the Torontonians of 2.5 million is insufficient and if another one million new comers, particularly the refugees come, and then there will not be enough money to go around. This candidate has since said that they will not withdraw the comment.

In the end, we should all wait and see the truth and proceed from there. I think that we do not have to panic because Canada has handled many other serious issues in our own quiet way. I believe what the Prime Minister has said is true Canada is a land of refuge and to that I add, let's give these people a chance.

*Samy Appadurai is a renowned broadcast journalist, author, educator and public speaker who makes his home in Toronto.*



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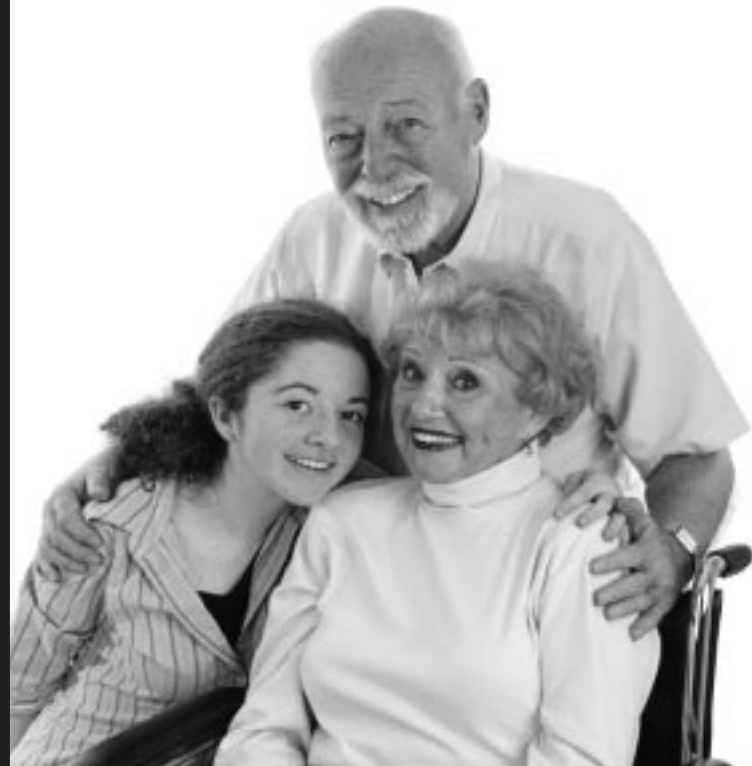
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Some of the photos taken at the Temple.



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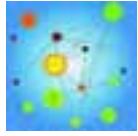
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# Collective trauma in the Vanni - a qualitative inquiry into the mental health of the internally displaced due to the civil war in Sri Lanka

## Background

*Tham Thimithimthom Thaiyathom*

*Tham Thimithimthom*

*Living we were- on Vanni soil*

*Living we were*

*Educating ourselves we were - Joyfully*

*Educating ourselves we were*

*Running around we were - with friends*

*Running around we were*

*Came the airplanes- on us*

*Throwing bombs*

*Died relations- our*

*Relations fell*

*Race destroyed- Tamil*

*Race disappeared*

*Life destroyed- our*

*Life scattered*

*Suffering saw- we*

*Sadness imposed*

*Caged by war- we were*

*Trapped in suffering*

*Enough the sorrow- we*

*Escape to survive*

Song/Poem by

Vanni IDP school student

What happened in the Vanni and to its people from August 2006 onwards, particularly from January 2009 to May 2009, has been described in apocalyptic (in the local Tamil as pralayam) terms [1-4]. The total destruction of civilian infrastructure that ensued in the bitter fight to the end between the Sri Lankan military forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) with an estimated civilian population of around 300,000 trapped in between is an ineffable human calamity. A common refrain from people who were there has been 'varthayal varnicca mudiyathavai (it is beyond description by words)' [5]. When one meets or sees survivors even in January, 2010 in the various internment camps, public places like bus stands or in private homes, they are obviously in a thithupona (daze) state, not having comprehended or come to terms with what happened. They stand out from the rest of humanity. Much of what happened is still shrouded in mystery and secrecy. There are several contested versions, discourses battling to establish their perspective. The Sri Lankan state and military have actively striven to suppress the truth of the ensuing carnage for fear of investigations for war crimes [4,6-8]. There also appears to be a more long term effort to frame and reconstruct the collective memories and historical record in line with the political agendas of different actors. The Lankan state and Sinhala nationalist would like to paint it as a war against terrorism, deny an ethnic or minority problem and portray the Tamils as of relatively recent origin, migrants or invaders from South India in the last millennium [9-11]. Indeed, internationally the LTTE had become branded as a terrorist organization by several countries including India, U.S., U.K.,

Canada, European Union, Australia, Malaysia and others. In contrast, Tamil nationalists depict the conflict as a liberation struggle of a suppressed minority, claiming the Tamils have inhabited the North and East from the beginning of history [12-14]. However, the psychosocial and mental health impact on the civilian population and the interventions for their recovery remains a major concern addressed by this qualitative study.

Since the work of Sigmund Freud, it has become a basic principal aim of psychotherapy to bring out the repressed memories and associated emotions as a process of healing. This cathartic effect is believed to help people come to terms with what has happened and carry on with their lives. Following massive ethnic conflicts in South Africa, Rwanda and Bosnia there were attempts at reconciliation through 'healing of memories' using techniques like truth commissions. If people can be given an opportunity to express their stories through words, poems, songs, drama, drawings or other creative arts, it is believed that would help in their recovery. It would provide some meaning for the enormous suffering they have undergone, hope for the future and trust in the world. It would also help others understand what has happened as well as create an enabling atmosphere for resolving contrasting views.

Memories can change over time depending on internal and external conditions. This is always a challenge in psychoanalysis and narrative ethnography. Child abuse, trauma, depression, grief, fear, wishes, desires and other strong emotions can repress or distort memories. Similarly, the external political environment or socio-cultural milieu can determine what can and what cannot be said. Silence in a situation of 'repressive ecology' [15] is a survival strategy that can become ingrained and permanent. Thus peoples' memories can become a field of intense contest, memories can be erased, and others created or changed. This paper will attempt to give a voice, narrate the stories, access the memories and describe the lived experience of those caught up in the fateful Vanni episodes from different perspectives as a psychosocial method of catharsis, a healing of memories.

Complex situations that follow war and natural disasters have a psychosocial impact on not only the individual but also on the family, community and society. Just as the mental health effects on the individual psyche can result in non pathological distress as well as a variety of psychiatric disorders like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); massive and widespread trauma and loss can impact on family and social processes causing changes at the family, community and societal levels. A better understanding of the supra-individual reality can be

sought through the ecological model of Bronfenbrenner [16] with the micro, meso, exo and macro systems or the individual nested in the family nested in the community [17,18]. Previous workers had already drawn attention to the community level problems caused by disasters. Kai Erikson [19] gives a graphic account of Collective Trauma as 'loss of communality' following the Buffalo Creek disaster in the US. He and colleagues described the 'broken cultures' in North American Indians and 'destruction of the entire fabric of their culture' due to the forced displacements and dispossession from traditional lands into reservations, separations, massacres, loss of their way of life, relationships and spiritual beliefs [20]. Similar tearing of the 'social fabric' has been described in Australian aboriginal populations [21]. There was a description of 'cultural bereavement' due to the loss of cultural traditions and rituals in Indochinese refugees in the US [22] and collective trauma due to the chronic effects of war [23]. More recently, a number of discerning workers in the field have been draw-

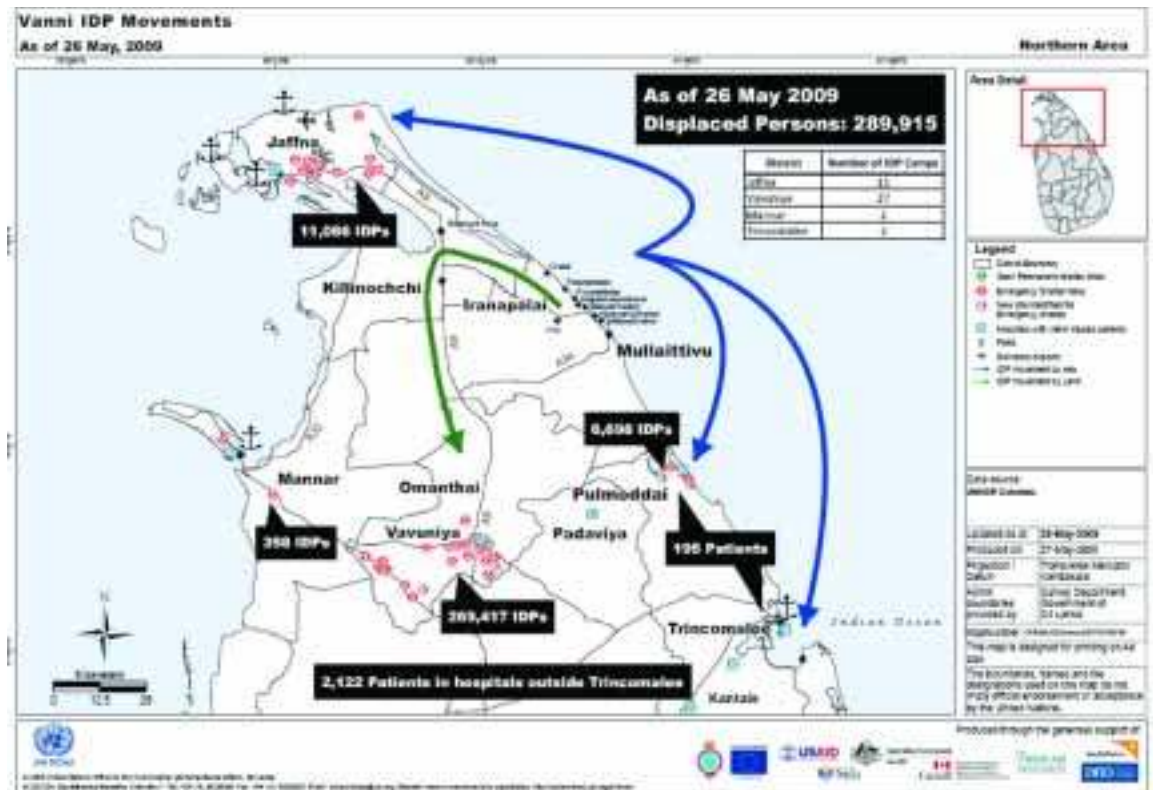
## Daya Somasundaram

remains controversial [2].

### Folk lore, myth and history

The hoary beginnings of the people of the Vanni (Vanniar) ruled over by chieftains called Vannians [33,34] has not been clearly established but settlements have been dated back 2000 years [35]. There is mention in the Konesar culvet and old vya song of sixty Vanniar coming from Madurai in South India accompanying the royal bride for the king at Anuradhapura in the first century BC [36]. They were settled in Adangapattu (Unsuppressed place) [37] while one became a Dishava in Kandy. Interestingly for long periods from the 1990's the whole of the Vanni together with other areas in northeast under LTTE control were called 'uncleared' (meaning not under state control) areas by the state. Adangapattu district is again mentioned as the residence of Paranda Vanniyan in Colonial British accounts. Vanni came into the historical limelight around the beginning of the eleventh century [33,34,38,39]

accounts, ascribe the breakdown to internal dynastic power struggles [43,44] and the neglect of the hydraulic infrastructure of the ancient civilization and consequent breeding of pernicious malarial Anopheles mosquitoes [45]. The malaria ridden forests of the Vanni functioned as a buffer zone between the North and the South and could have been one of the primary causes for the separate evolution of the two ethnic identities. The Vanni chieftains appear to have paid some tributary to the more powerful rulers in the north or south as the power balance happened to be at that time, but had an independent spirit with a distinct naddar culture [46,47] and dialect (language) of their own. Dissident and defiant groups found safe haven in the impenetrable forests of the Vanni from where they mounted reprisal attacks. However, this original group of peoples, way of life and language have now been assimilated into the mainstream cultures. Historically, the Vanni encom-



Map of Vanni IDP's [72]. Movement of the Vanni IDP's

ing attention to the importance of looking at the family [24-27] and cultural dimension [28-31] following disasters. Finally, Abramowitz [32] has given a moving picture of 'collective trauma' in six Guinean communities exposed to war.

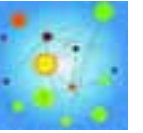
### Context

The area called the Vanni comprises mainly the Districts of Killinochchi and Mullaithivu and adjoining parts of Vavuniya and Mannar Districts in Northern Sri Lanka (see map- fig. 1). With the more recent migrations, an estimate of the total population would have been between 300,000 to 400,000 consisting exclusively of Tamils. Due to conflicting political compulsions the exact number

when the Cholas from South India exerted their influence over Jaffna and encouraged settlements in the Vanni. And later, more prominently in the thirteenth century, the political space for the Vanni opened up to assert itself when according to partisan versions, 'invasions by (South) Indian mercenaries', Magha from 'Kalinga' the most notorious of them, were blamed for the fragmentation of the Anuradhapura and Pollanaruwa Kingdoms of the Rajarata civilization [40]. These ethnocentric, somewhat mythic, accounts of the past feed into present day ethnic emotions, consciousness, polarized perceptions, relations and conflict [41,42]. However, other, more scholarly

passed Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee, Pollanaruwa, Batticaloa, Ampara and Puttalam hinterlands [33]. The name Vanni is said to be derived from the Sanskrit and Tamil word for forest (vannam) or fire (vanni), but there is also some historical evidence in Culverts and old songs that the Vanniar could have originally come from the large Vanniar clan/caste from North Arcot in South India [33]. One of the traditional old temples is at Vattapallai dedicated to Kannahi or Pattini deyo in Sinhala. It is from here that an annual pilgrimage (paddayattarai) goes along the coast and then through forests to Kattirgamam (Kattiragamma in Sinhala) in the South East. In the

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEMS



western, Mannar side of the Vanni, Thirkatheeswaram temple and the Catholic Christian Madhu church, built on an old Amman temple, are popular places of pilgrimage of 'Hindu' Tamils, 'Buddhist' Sinhalese, 'Christians' and others.

The Vanniar are also reputed to belong to the warrior caste with heroic and marital skills. According to folklore, seven Vanni chieftains who fought unsuccessfully against the Dutch committed suicide to avoid capture. They are still revered as heroic devas (gods) at Natchimar temples in the Vanni and Jaffna where lamps will be lit and drums beaten in their names every Tuesday and Friday [Ahalankan, unpublished manuscript]. The most famous of the Vanni chieftains was Pandara Vanniyan or Wannu Bandara in Sinhalese, the last king of the Vanni who fought against the Dutch and British colonial powers [48,49]. In alliance with the Kandy kingdom he drove Lt. von Driberg and his garrison from the Mullaithivu fort capturing their canons and 'overran the whole of the northern districts (Vanni) and the boldness to penetrate as far as Elephant pass into the Jaffna Peninsula' [50]. From conventional warfare, he resorted to guerilla attacks and was finally defeated by Lt. von Driberg when the British organized a three pronged attack from Jaffna, Mannar and Trincomalee around 1803. This was followed by 'burning of all his houses and his people were dispersed into the jungle, and eventually out of the Vanni. The power of the Vanni Chiefs was thus finally and effectually extinguished' [50]. Interestingly, folklore has it that Lt. von Driberg was originally with the Dutch forces where he felt humiliated by Pandara Vanniyan for having defeated him several times, including in personal combat, and had been permitted to withdraw. He had stayed on after the Dutch were ousted by the British to fight on to defeat Pandara Vanniyan. The similarity to Gen. Sarath Fonseka who developed a passionate zeal to defeat the LTTE and Prabhakaran after being trapped in the early 1990's at Pompamadu near Chettikulam in the Vanni by the LTTE

when a Lt. Colonel and later, surviving a near fatal suicide attack is striking. He led the war in the Vanni and was responsible for systematically and relentlessly pursuing the LTTE till they were completely destroyed. He became a Sinhala national hero of epic proportions but ironically, with the twist of power politics, he is to be court martialed for treason for revealing evidence of war crimes [51]. Pandara Vanniyan was declared a national hero by the prime minister and a statue of him was opened in 1982 with much fanfare in Vavuniya at the main junction where the A-9 Highway between Jaffna and Kandy (and Colombo) meets the road to Mannar (and further down the road to Trincomalee) [49]. More recently, the LTTE leader, Prabhakaran, has been compared to him by present day Tamil nationalists, Karunanidhi the current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, India in his book, Payum Puli Pandara Vanniyan, and Nedumaran. The historical parallels to what happened in the Vanni recently are remarkable except ordinary civilians were not used as hostages.

The old village, agricultural settlements of the Vanniar were mainly centered around water resources such as tanks and ponds outside the present Vavuniya town called Villangkulam earlier. The villages were reputed for their cooperative activities and absence of much caste or class distinctions or conflict. The settlements were mainly Tamil except in the north east and south eastern parts of Vavuniya there were a mixture of Sinhala and Tamil families while on the western side there were Muslim and Tamils, all of whom lived peacefully together. Vavuniya town developed with the opening of road and railway connection by the British between Jaffna in the North and Kandy and Colombo in the South. Those who came on official duties or traders settled in the town. The town grew to its present size after it became a border town with the LTTE controlled areas to the north, a centre of trade and goods moving north and later haven for refugees from other areas.

Killinochchi and Mullaithivu districts were sparsely populated, jungle areas with agricultural settlements around tanks like Iranaimadu and some permanent but largely migrant (from the western coast during their southwest monsoon) fishing villages on the Eastern coast. During the 1970's there were concerted efforts to settle unemployed, educated youth in the Vanni and involve them in agriculture and animal husbandry. Following the state acquisition of British owned estates in 1974 resulting in starvation on the estates [52] and the 1977, 1983 anti-Tamil pogroms, Tamils from the south and hill country settled in increasing numbers in the Vanni. With the Lankan operation Riviresa to retake the Jaffna peninsula, the LTTE engineered the 1995 exodus from Jaffna which saw around 200,000 people with the LTTE moving to the Vanni [53]. If the people had been cornered with the LTTE in Jaffna there may have been a high number of civilian casualties then [54] as happened later in the Vanni in 2009. With the 2002-6 peace accord, some of these people moved back to their original homes, several of whom were targeted by state-affiliated killer squads after the resumption of war in 2006.

The LTTE leadership and cadres faced annihilation when they took on the Indian army in the form of Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in 1987 in Jaffna [55]. Eventually they had to withdraw into the Vanni and into the Mullaithivu jungles. Several efforts by the IPKF to round up the LTTE leadership culminated in an operation called 'Check mate' using the famed Gurkha regiment to go into the Mullaithivu jungles [56] where they cornered the LTTE, but were not permitted to proceed by Indian politics. The Indian generals complained they had to fight with one hand tied behind their back. Prabhakaran had appealed to Karunanidhi, with a personal letter addressing him as the only hope, the star of the Tamils. In the 2009 final battle too, the LTTE had pinned considerable hope on Tamil Nadu politics. Karunanidhi the chief minister in Tamil Nadu had gone on a publicity fast but called it off when the Lankan state

promised not to use heavy weapons and offered a ceasefire. Some of the narrative accounts mentioned people listening intently on the radio amidst the raging battle for news of the election results from India that came in just before the last onslaught, dashing all hopes.

However, at that time the LTTE was still using guerilla tactics using civilians as shields and contrived civilian casualties [55]. With the withdrawal of the IPKF in 1990, the LTTE gradually consolidated their hold in the Vanni and gradually changed from a guerilla force into a conventional army holding onto territory. They had some spectacular military successes in expelling the Lankan state forces from several garrison military complexes in the Vanni, particularly Mankulam, Killinochchi, Mullaithivu, Pooneryn, and Elephant Pass inflicting enormous casualties and capturing heavy weapons. Over the years, they managed to stave off several attempts by the Lankan state forces to retake or even create in roads into the Vanni. Killinochchi changed hands several times and a concerted operation ('Jayasikuru'- victory assured) to bisect the Vanni along the A9 highway was beaten back by counter attacks called 'unceasing waves' by the LTTE. Nevertheless, the Lankan state held onto the Southeastern Vanni renamed Weli-o-ya from the Tamil name, Manal aru in 1984 by expelling the Tamil population and creating garrison settlements [57]. This successful policy may foreshadow what may now be attempted for the rest of the Vanni.

With the consolidation of their military control over the Vanni, the LTTE gradually built up an alternate administrative structure in the Vanni amounting to an autonomous, separate de facto state [12]. There were separate police, judicial, financial (tax, bank), administrative, medical, social and other services. When the major A9 was opened up after the 2002 peace accord, there were tight custom, immigration and emigration control at the border crossing points. There was always some form of blockade of goods going into the Vanni by the state, as a result outside goods were always in short supply and cost much higher. Local produce sold at a lower price.

There was a certain atmosphere of Tamil nationalism, a feeling of autonomous independence, a Camelot of sorts- a Tamil de facto state with the illusion of liberation. Tamil language and culture was in unhindered if not exclusive use. The head of the UNICEF programme in the Vanni, an Australian with long experience in Sri Lanka, described the children there as being different from those that she had seen elsewhere in the North East. It was only in the Vanni that children could be seen to play freely, frolicking and jumping into and swimming in the water tanks and irrigation channels. Outside visitors were amazed at the order, organization, sanitation and activity. The Sarvodaya leader from the south remarked that in the whole of Sri Lanka it was only in the LTTE controlled areas that women felt safe to walk by themselves late in the night. Unlike in the rest of Sri Lanka, military weapons, check points, barbed wire and round ups were not visible. The 2002-2006 peace period had particularly been specially propitious in this respect. However, the LTTE maintained a fascist, totalitarian control

over the civilian population with a network of prisons for dissidents and enemies (throhies) [58] who were killed or tortured and a strict pass system that did not allow people under their control to leave the Vanni. They effectively dispelled the whole Muslim population from the North in 1990 and the Sinhala population much earlier. However, the Sinhala state managed to maintain a garrison Sinhala population at Manaluru (changed to Weli-o-ya in Sinhala) in the South East of the Vanni [57]. With the resumption of hostilities in 2006, the A9 highway was closed in August. However, the Lankan forces concentrated first on Eastern Lanka and brought it under their control before moving to retake the Vanni. For the Sri Lankan state there was the historic opportunity to destroy the LTTE once and for all, a designated terrorist organization that had been plaguing the country for a quarter of a century in a long drawn out debilitating civil war situation. They had marshaled all their resources, prepared, planned well from past lessons and apparently garnered international sanction in the post 9/11 'war against terror' climate. They attempted to separate the civilians from the LTTE, to coax and pressurize them to leave the fighting areas. However, they would not allow humanitarian concern for civilian casualties get in the way of the chance to finish off the LTTE. From the Lankan state perspective, the Vanni civilians were not exactly innocent: by staying on in the Vanni under LTTE control they had compromised themselves. "High-level statements have indicated that the ethnic Tamil population trapped in the war zone can be presumed to be siding with the LTTE and treated as combatants, effectively sanctioning unlawful attacks" [1]. In September, 2008 the state ordered the UN and other international humanitarian agencies to leave the Vanni [59]. They did not allow journalists or independent human rights monitors into the area. Journalists, media and opposition politicians who reported adversely about the state or forces were intimidated, killed or silenced. According to reliable health workers in the field and civilian testimony, the maximum damage, both civilian deaths and injuries, was from the massive, relentless shelling of the civilian population, declared safety zones and hospitals. The Vanni population had already experienced the full brunt of state terror and had all the reasons to be afraid of the advancing army [60,61]. In the recent collective memory would have been the killing of 61 school children and youth in an air raid in Mullaithivu in August, 2006 reported by UNICEF and the Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission (SLMM) [62]. Seventeen aid workers (working for the French International Non Governmental Organisation Action Contre La Faim (ACF) had been executed by the advancing state forces at Muttur in the East [63]. Over 120 civilians seeking refuge at St. Peter's Church in Navaly had been killed by bombing in 1995 [64]. There had been many such massacres of civilians by state forces [65] in the living memory of the Vanni people, some of which they themselves had barely survived. Many had lost a relation or faced the wrath of the forces. An epidemiological survey by a team from

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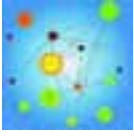
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the University of Konstanz, Germany using the UCLA PTSD Child Reaction Index with expert validation (Kappa .80) carried out in the Vanni in early 2000's had found that 92% of primary school children had been exposed to potentially terrorizing experiences including combat, shelling, and witnessing the death of loved ones. Twenty five met the criteria for PTSD[66]. There was ever ongoing abductions, torture, disappearances and extrajudicial killings of Tamils by the state forces and the paramilitaries allied with them[67]. For the LTTE as the structures of their de facto state and territory crumbled all around them in face of the State forces' juggernaut, they desperately clung onto the civilians as human shields towards the later stages. They apparently hoped that the unfolding human tragedy would precipitate an international intervention [5]. The LTTE also forcefully recruited men, women and children, gave them increasingly minimum training and pressed them into battle. As a consequence many died and the returning bodies caused increasing friction with the once loyal and passive Vanni civilians. Thus the twin forces of onslaught of the state forces and the LTTE's trapped the civilians. The Vanni population and the Tamils had learned to live between the terror and the counter terror, the parallel authorities and violence of the LTTE and the state [68], but nothing had prepared them for what was to come.

The forces launched well planned, concerted attacks from multiple fronts but the main advance was from the west. As the Lankan forces advanced using heavy artillery shelling and bombing from the air, people fled eastward and then northeastward, through Killinochchi to Mullaithivu to end up in a sliver of land on the East coast. Food became scarce and expensive, there were reported deaths due to starvation, clean water difficult to find, medical help and supplies became non-existent as people fled from one place to another seeking some respite from the continuous shelling and firing. People lay dead on the streets and in their hastily dug bunkers. Some 20,000 to 40,000 are estimated to have died in the apocalyptic carnage [2,8,69,70]. The injured cried for help, while bleeding to death where no one stopped to give a lending hand in their own desperation to escape. The elderly and disabled were left behind. Orphaned children were wandering aimlessly amidst the chaos of blocked roads and desperate humanity. Those who managed to escape this unfolding human tragedy were fired upon by both sides, were injured or killed, had to wade through deep waters, becoming separated and losing all their belongings. Once on the army side, they were checked, some separated and never seen again. They were then herded into buses and taken to temporary shelters and finally interned for months in barbed wire camps for months without access to the outside world [71]. The total thus interned in various Internally Displaced Camps (IDP) camps in Vavuniya, Mannar and Jaffna was just under 300,000 [72] (see Figure 1). The narratives, drawings, poems and interviews presented here are from those interned in these camps and those outside in hospitals and living with friends and relations.

## Methodology

This paper is mainly a qualitative inquiry [73-76] into the psychosocial situation of the Vanni IDPs and their ethnography using narratives and observations obtained through participant observation; in depth interviews; key informant, family and extended family interviews; and focus groups using a prescribed, semi structured open ended questionnaire. Ethical clearance for the study was sought from the Ethical Review Committee of the University of Jaffna. Informed consent was obtained before administration of the questionnaire. Interviews were carried out by the author and by trained psychosocial workers who are involved in assisting the Vanni IDPs. The sampling frame were all those who had lived in the Vanni of northern Sri Lanka and been affected by the outbreak of the war between the state forces and LTTE in the period 2008-9 and eventually displaced as so called IDPs to Vavuniya, Mannar and Jaffna. Generally the sampling has been purposive and convenient such as clinic, hospital patients; displaced and refugee populations; and those accessible living with friends or relations. The transcripts and translations were verified with those involved wherever possible. The author did the translations from Tamil into English for this paper. There were severe limitations to access to IDP camps and to obtaining 'information'. The narratives, drawings, letters and poems as well as data from observations, key informant interviews, extended family, focus group discussions and media reports were analysed for impact at the family and community levels. The key informants included government (Assistant Government Agent (AGA), Gamma Sevakas (GS), Social services, Women affairs, Child Rights and other officers from AGA office, International Non Governmental Organization (INGO), NGO workers, doctors, health staff, Teachers, priests, Camp officers, community leaders (e.g. chairman, president and other members of committees, organizations)- all working with Vanni IDP population. Groups included, camp groups, women groups, extended family groups, community groups (adolescents, religious, mothers, teachers, doctors, health staff). Qualitative analysis of data used standard qualitative techniques like Narrative analysis (content, idioms and structure analysis to locate common epiphanies, contexts, themes, processes, unique features, and semiotics); Phenomenology (personal and family experiences in essence, meaning, experiential description); Grounded theory (selective coding and interrelate categories to develop propositions, conditional matrix, alternate interpretations, themes, hypothesis, and theory); ethnography (cultural, religious and social contexts, events, actors, themes and patterned regularities to interpret how the culture worked in this situation); Case studies (using categorical aggregation to establish themes and patterns, direct interpretation and natural generalizations to extract in-depth picture of cases); and Discourse analysis (read and interrogate the data for patterns, perspectives; historical, mythical and sociopolitical contexts; actions, implications and social reality). The attempt was to 'extract the meaning and implications, to reveal patterns or [and] to stitch together descriptions of events into a

coherent narrative' (quoted from Corbin & Strauss 2008)[72]

The resettlement of the Vanni IDPs is being planned and implemented. The paper pleads for their trauma and psychosocial needs be taken into consideration for their necessary healing and success of rehabilitation and development process. The Tamil community needs these narratives to come out to show the extent of their suffering, for their own review of what has happened and where they are going and for the outside world to understand. For the nation, the eventual process of reconciliation needed for her survival and future progress, the stories of ordinary people has to be told. Social justice, at least steps towards acknowledgement of what has happened would help towards long term psychosocial well being.

The psychosocial phenomena of collective trauma is explored and interventions suggested. The term collective trauma is being introduced to represent the negative impact at the collective level, that is on the social processes, networks, relationships, institutions, functions, dynamics, practices, capital and resources; to the wounding and injury to the social fabric. The long lasting impact at the collective level or some have called it tearing in the social fabric [21] would then result in social transformation [77], of a sociopathic nature that can be called collective trauma. Collective events and consequences may have more significance in collectivistic communities than in individualistic societies [78]. The individual becomes embedded within the family and community so much so that traumatic events are experienced through the larger unit and the impact will also manifest at that level.

## Results Narratives

Many ended up in the Vanni after many previous displacements to escape the chronic terror of continuing warfare. The following youthful narrative starts when the person was a young child but is quite typical and shows the complexities:

As a child we were living in Jaffna when the first major blow in life happened in the 10th month of 1995 with the announcement to leave Valikammam. My friends said that we would be just going today and returning tomorrow. With the clothes I was wearing and two old hand baggage (on foot) we reached the Navatkulli bridge which was rumoured to be broken by nightfall. In our haste, we crossed through mud that reached my neck, lost one of my bags and somehow made it to Chavakachcheri in two days. Here there was the appeal that "Vanni soil will make you live" and some compulsion (by the LTTE, though not named) that made us join thousands of people to journey by sea to the Vanni. We experienced two strong emotions during this journey, one was the terror for the navy- when they would cut us up (people crossing the Killali lagoon were set upon by navy patrols) and other was the longing when we would return to Jaffna. The nostalgia for Jaffna lasted for days turning into a day dream that continued for years. After this we were displaced again from Killinochchi in 1996. I lost both my parents in 1998. Then my brother was killed in a bomb blast. I came down with malaria several times. (Health officials reported a high (epidemic) number of

deaths due to malaria during that period. But public health measures brought it under control). I went to school and sat for the national exams from Killinochchi. After that the Killinochchi resettlement process. We gradually became part of the Vanni soil (Vanni man vasihal). The thoughts of Jaffna faded slowly from our minds. Our longing was for freedom. Not necessarily by arms but that we should govern in our land. We wanted rule by the people because our past ethnic leaders had made many historical blunders (varallattu thavaruhal). Whether we liked it or not, we were forced to accept the struggle (porratam). Although many of our expectations may not come to pass, at least one day, freedom and after that dawn (vidivu). This was the longing of many. Many lost much for this goal. But now we regret that the last 30 years have all been in vain. This anguish is greater than all the suffering we have been through.

The 4th phase of the Eelam war resulted in enormous suffering for the people that cannot be described. In 2006 August, the pathway to Jaffna and prize of the peace process, the A-9 highway was closed (puddu villa). Then began the forced conscription with the call, "one person for each house to guard the nation, come forward swiftly (virainthu vareer)". We'll hear loud wailing for the dead (marana olam). When we went to inquire, we would be informed that it was due to forced conscription. It was the oppari (wailing) by the conscripts and their relations. I learnt the reason for the wailing later. Many who were taken never returned. This was coerced. Some parents willingly gave their children. Willing or unwilling, some joined because of others. They hoped that somehow a change will come. Subsequently the displacements took hold like a cancer. A common saying became, "we gave our child and eventually we have to leave our home".

Our displacement from Killinochchi started in October, 2008. The reason was that shells from Mallavi and aerial attacks. The planes would drop their bombs somewhere but the pieces would spread to cause damage elsewhere. Among the planes the MIG 29 was a demon. Its sound still rings in my ears. First displacement was to Visvadamu. Everything except the walls of the house were

removed. Some even took the bricks that were not cemented. This was due to the bad experiences from the last displacement (on returning they found everything possible to remove had been looted). Our household loaded two 'kandar' (heavy vehicle). Everything from a broomstick were carefully loaded and secured before moving. Somehow we will take everything possible. Then we will return with everything safely was the misplaced belief. Some even uprooted their croton plants to take with them. There was relief, a pleasure in the feeling that we had loaded all our belongings in a heavy vehicle (see Figure 2: Displacements[79]. What happened was different. We were displaced 8 times. For folks from Mannar district it was 16 times. The heavy vehicle finally became by foot (changing from tractor, land master, motor cycle, to bicycle). The items taken became finally one or two handbags, in this the story of those who crossed a waterway to reach (army) control is distressing: some finally even lost their identity card. The first displacement did not appear that major to us. In the belief that they would soon return people said, "the army will come up to Paranthan, after they have all come, they will be chased back by those responsible (the word LTTE was not used). After that we can return, no." Even after our 8th displacement, these were the words of faith used by people. After that they added safe to Visvadamu and declared it the safety zone. Relief was twofold. But it didn't last even 28 days. Attacks towards Visvadamu started. This was the most terrible harvest of the 30 years of war. With it rain floods became frightening. Nature also played with our people. Chickens that people had brought with them were swept away in their cages. Tharappal (tarpaulin- plastic sheet) cottages were swept away. Water will seep through the ground of the huts that we built. We became used to these hardships. With these burdens, sweet news reached us of worldwide ahimsa protests by the Diaspora and the neighbouring country's political drama all gave us fresh hope. It was like the person longing for rice receiving buriyani that was sweet only to our ears.

There was a strong expectation that India would do something among the Vanni people. At least they would put a stop to the shelling. The reason

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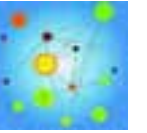
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# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEMS



was the political drama that unfolded in Tamil Nadu in 2008. This appeared to us to be a big change there. After that was the dream of the Indian relief boat. Even in the midst of the horrible war the story spread of the Indian ship coming with food and clothes. We waited two months and spent two days (standing in queues) to finally get the parcel. Before enjoying it, the next displacement came. We had to leave many of the items behind. One thing became clear that people had a strong belief to the last that India would come to their rescue. One could see the sticker from the parcel, "From the Indian people" stuck on the tharapan shacks of the people for a long while afterwards. The next displacement was to Mullaithivu's Vallipunam. We could not stay here safely even for one week. Many shells landed suddenly close by. In the morning people had cooked the chickens they had been carrying as they were becoming tired of carting them around. But before they could eat their meal they had to flee leaving the food behind. With the loud explosions the ground shook. We fell to the ground on top of each other crying, "O God". Many died in that multibarrel attack (24 to 56 shells are fired almost simultaneously as a single salvo). There was a young woman very close by with a child bleeding from its mouth. I do not know how to describe the scene. She was leaning onto a tree. When I approached I found there was life. With the neighbours help I had her sent to the hospital on my motorcycle. Afterwards as we were rushing to Thevipuram, which had been declared a safety zone by the state, a child cried, 'brother look somebody's leg is lying there'. I didn't even turn to look as I pushed on in a hurry with an elder on my cycle. People were rushing in all directions not knowing where to go. The next day when I rose my heart was beating fast. As the shelling had subsided, I returned to the earlier place and inquired from those there about the child. They said that on reaching the hospital, the child had survived for just one hour before dying. This had happened in front of my eyes. I had begged God that child should not die. The news of its death caused terror in me. I had comforted many, but could not comfort myself.

Severe terror started in Thevipuram. Both sides played firing shells in turn. If you fire ten, I will fire hundred, raining shells. Some of these did not fail to fall on ordinary people. At this stage, many people from Irudumadu and Suthanthirapuram crossed over to army controlled areas. Not easily but amidst great difficulty: "come" they call but continue to shell. "Do not go, stay" and they (LTTE) continued shelling. We also do not want to go. "Our own place, our livelihood, we know the journey (struggle) we have already undergone, but who sir, is going to save us? Are we made of steel?" Shells were raining down on us. Parents with the children they have borne. Many obstacles: water comes up to the legs, a child can be carried on the hips; water comes up to the neck, the child can be put on the head; but when the water goes above the head, the mother puts aside the child she has carried so far with great difficulty to try and save herself. People will run... if someone is injured, they would leave the person and continue running. There were parents who left their injured child

behind. I saw this with my own eyes at the Mother Mullai church. Again the safety zone became a place of danger. At this point I had to go the Mathanan hospital to send an elderly person by the ICRC ship. For this I had to stay one week at the hospital (now the area from Mathanan to Vaduvahal has been declared the safety zone). While staying at the hospital I came to realize in reality what I had imagined hell to be like. Without a hand, without a leg, bowels protruding out, burnt bodies without any portion left to burn, without eyes and so on of human suffering that one cannot think of. The injured would be brought in continuously from time to time. Of these, those who died on the way to hospital and those dying with or without treatment would be registered at the hospital. Who would take those who had already died due to injuries? Some died as a family. Some bodies would be lying by the side of the road. But I would like to record one thing, the selfless service of the TRO workers who interred the dead bodies to preserve human dignity cannot be forgotten. (Tamil Rehabilitation Organization a local NGO under the LTTE that did yeoman service for the public [80] but was categorized as part of the 'terrorist' organization by the state).

I first learnt of kotu kundu (clus-



Displacements [79]

ter bombs) in Mathalan. One would hear the click of the shell being loaded but would begin to think there is no explosion, perhaps it is a dud before there would be multiple 'parapara' sounds. Then that area would be mayhem. Not one or two but many would come and fall. In one day, it was not intervals between shelling but their absence would last only for a small time. Most had dug bunkers. Many lived in open bunkers. Some trusted the open skies as their roof. In the last four months, most of our life was spent in bunkers. What has to be noted here is the continuous displacement, people had to move on. With other important things, the logs for the bunkers had also to be carried along. The last place that was declared as the safety zone was bare land used for drying fish. If one dug bunkers there, within one feet there would be water. So many built shelter bunkers above the ground. The sea-coast became public toilets. Close by people had to put up their tharapan shacks and live densely as there was no space. If one attended to their toilet needs in the early morning, they had to be patient till nightfall. Females suffered particularly. Some controlled their urination the whole day before passing it once it became dark. One could observe this directly. Many said

they restricted their eating and drinking because of this. Then came the move to Mullivaikal...

Youths and children with dreams and hopes of life were killed. Conscription of a person for each house changed to whole households being taken for the war effort. Church doors were broken open and my close friend together with other youths (males and females) were conscripted whilst they were praying inside. He was a very spiritual person. I was also on my way to the church in search of succor. The state of the church made me cry, "Is this your fate, the place where people come searching for comfort?" The words of Jesus, "If this is the fate of a green tree, what would become of the dry?" came to mind as I went in search for my friend. I saw the mother's crying face. She could not speak. The family had already sacrificed one member for the war, and now those left had also been conscripted leaving the mother as the lone tree. I learnt later that my friend escaped in two weeks to return to his mother. Words cannot describe the hardships they went through to avoid conscription again. Female and male youth, even children tried many ways to save themselves from conscription. Some hid in holes dug in concealed places. Some hid in jungles. Some

Some made themselves leaders. They made their own laws and were the cause of the split from the people. The selfishness of some, those who put their families and their own selves above others became the cause of problem. They stopped us saying the devil (army) was out there, but then sent on their own families. People finally asked, "To whom are you showing the devil?"

Mullivaikal became very scary. Our environs were hit by multibarrel (40) shells. We did not know what was happening. The surrounding palmyrah were burning. I fell without realization. After a few moments, I look around. Everywhere there was oppari (wailing). The elder in the next shack was killed while eating. I had just talked to him. He had said that he had not eaten in the morning (due to shortage of food), only at midday. I had seen the 14 year old female child next door cooking a rotti. It was around 12 noon. The shells hit at around 1 PM. The white rice the elder was eating had turned red. One of the rotti's that the child had been cooking was thrown on top of our torn tharapan roof. The child's abdomen had been torn asunder and was eventually sent by ship to Pulmoddai. Deaths became common. Some died inside the bunkers. They would then all be simply buried therein.

The World Food Programme (WFP) would distribute relief items. We had to stand in queues for it. It would start shelling and we would have to run. Even when dry rations were obtained amidst all these difficulties, there was always shortage. There was floor, sugar, dhal and oil. We became habituated to just Rice and dhal. There was not even an ulli to add. We developed diarrhea and had to go to the toilet often. Shells would come at any time. The price of food items skyrocketed. One coconut was Rs. 1000. Spinach Rs. 150. Once some spoil carrot and pumpkin came by boat. Unripe mango was Rs. 100 to 150. Some mothers cried for rice...

Gunshots also started to target people in Mullivaikal. When we looked outside from the bunkers we would see the trees riddled with bullets. Some described as 'dumdum' a type of bullet. An achchi (elderly lady) was sitting by our side when a 'dum' sound was heard. Later she realized her leg was broken. We later realized that a channam (round or bullet) had struck her leg and then exploded again within. Another type of missile was called

'cannon'. These were later fired continuous and many died as a result. One does not hear the 'canon' being fired or know it is coming, only after it has exploded. After this even the thorn bush at Mullivaikal couldn't stand up. Continuous missiles, rockets, gunfire, and with that bombardment from the sea. The bunkers were built facing the sea, to avoid the multipronged attacks from the land. But now shells started coming from the seaside also. For comfort we ran towards Vellammullivaikal. This was only 500 m away. In the middle the night, a hidden arms dump had exploded with burning flames. We are afraid to come out (of bunkers) in the fire light. Vandu (unmanned aircraft) are taking pictures from the sky. If people leave the bunkers to come out, at least five shells will come there. Somehow we manage to run towards Vellammullivaikal. On the way we duck for cover, but that turns out to be more frightening than where we had been. There was a school in Vellammullivaikal where the injured were being brought. This was the Vanni hospital. If I am to describe all this it would take a book. However, in short: in the front yard there were many injured. Some were corpses; by the side were the badly injured without anyone to care for them. If it was head injury nobody would even turn to look. There were two or three government doctors. However, trained local doctors (TEHS) saved many people. (Thamil Eelam Health Service was part of the elaborate de facto state infrastructures and institutions evolved by the LTTE. The parallel[68] health service consisted of medical services to the militant cadres that included doctors trained in their medical school, nurses and other medics running frontline first aid centres, field hospitals and base hospitals that carried out complicated surgeries, blood transfusions and rehabilitation[81]. Theelapan Memorial Health Services provided primary health care to civilians throughout areas under their control. Other institutional structures included White Pigeon Artificial limb organization, Centre For Health Care(CHC), Ponnambalam Memorial Hospitals and expatriate visiting specialists).

This hospital also sustained attacks. The sad part was that the place where people came searching for medicine became their grave. Shells fell on those who were already

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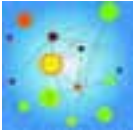


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# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEMS

dead. There was saying that even after death devastation continues became a reality here. Before coming to Vellamullivaikal we celebrated our last mass in the Vanni. Under a tharapan, the priest and people had done the pusai (mass) sitting on the floor (this was my first such experience) as there was no space and gunshots were crossing overhead. The day and time when ICRC ships used to come gave people some respite as shells became less. Yet, some who trusted this and got out died.

13/5/2009. World War I remembrance day. I am reading the bible in my bunker while heavy attacks are going on around. I feel my face being covered by mud. Immediately I come out of the bunker and start running. An artillery shells falls nearby covering a bunker with mud. Five children are in the bunker. Thank god they are alive. We dig them out. I turn to look, a woman is squatting on the ground with her head bent. "lyoo, it's a known girl". I turn her head. She is still alive but there is blood pouring from her nose and ear. Immediately we run from there. 100 m from there we get into another bunker with other known people. A girl who had been talking to us leaves the bunker to come back bent over, holding her abdomen with tears rolling down her eyes. She is immediately taken to the same hospital. There were no vehicles. So two sticks are put through a sarong that functions as the stretcher. She is soon operated on and sent back. She lives with us for three days in the crowded bunker. She would cry for water but we could not give even water because of the abdominal injury. On the third night, while looking at her two children she passed away. The funeral was held inside the bunker. Within three hours we buried her in our hut by the bunker. We also cooked and were eating when an arms dump (store) nearby starts burning. This happens in many places. People grab what they can carry by hand and run where they can. Everywhere it was the same situation. This was the last stage for the Vanni. Those who believed in something became disoriented. Many of these were highly vulnerable innocents. Our faith till the last had been with god. We were very keen to listen to news till the end. Every expected the UN to intervene. NATO will send in troops. Many believed the US statement to the last (Obama administration had at one stage suggested plans to send US Air Force and Navy units attached to its Pacific Command (PACOM) to evacuate the civilians). Those concerned (LTTE) would surrender their arms to a third party. Civilians will be rescued from the government announced safety zone (up to Vadduvahal) by the intervention of outsiders and taken to a safe place. But the truth was that instead of saving the people the world nations and UN committees respected the sovereignty of a weaker developing country more. But will they avoid intervening needlessly in a sovereign country when their interest is at stake? Laws are for man, man is not restrained by laws. Laws are important but we who were facing death did not have anybody to comfort us at the end. Those who believed till the end kept looking towards the sea for a saviour. The last hope dissolved with the Indian election results. Many did not know what was happening to the end. They just stayed in the bunkers.

What has happened to them?

On the last day we cross the Vaddukaval bridge. Even at the end they (LTTE) block us. But the flood of people had to cross the final blockade. After 30 years of war, more than the changes in the map or the changes in the economics and structure of Illangai (Sri Lanka), who will fill the wounds and trauma in the minds of the people who have suffered these horrors? We, who have learnt to be patient, will wait for peaceful coexistence.

In this case the displacements had started in 1977:

## Despair

We were originally from Alaveddy in Jaffna. My father was transferred as the post master to Anuradhapura in 1948. We settled in at the post office quarters in new town Anuradhapura. My four younger sisters, one younger brother and myself were born in Anuradhapura. My mother was a good entrepreneur. Through her efforts we saved on our expenses, invested in land, cattle and paddy fields. We built a big house behind St. Joseph's Church and I studied at the Convent in Sinhalese. Talking and talking Sinhala we forgot our Tamil. Our neighbours were Sinhalese, Muslims and Burghers. They were good people. We had no problems. We shared our good and bad times. They helped us a lot. As my mother had many cows and sold milk she was fondly called 'kiriamma' (milk lady) by the Sinhala folks.

The '56 disturbances did not affect us much. The '77 disturbance cannot be forgotten. People who had eaten and drunk from us came with knives, poles and axes to cut us. A few who were grateful to us saved us. We hid for 2 days in the Thisava irrigation canals and jungles without thanni venni (anything). We were sent to Jaffna with police security. With just the clothes we wore we landed at Duraippah stadium in a lorry. Like us there were many others. We stayed at the mission house of the catholic Fathers at Parathithurai. My mother did not like Jaffna. We bought land in Killinochchi and moved there in '77 itself. The refuge life that started in '77 has not ended yet. Unable to live with the Sinhalese we came to Tamil land, but here also it is so. All our property, goats, cattle, chickens, household goods, everything was taken by those around us. My mother will become upset if Sinhalese is spoken, "They have betrayed (irandaham) the house where they ate". Rather than believe in them, we can live in our land, it will be only for a short time..." the lady repeated and passed away crying.

"If we could not live there in peace, we came to Tamil land but after '85 this has become hell" she said with perumuchu (deep, sighing breathing- A common Tamil cultural idiom of distress [82,83].... "When are we going to be able to live in peace?"...

My sister returned to Anuradhapura but I stayed on in Killinochchi with my children. The children would go to my sisters' at Anuradhapura during school holidays. My second daughter was 8 years old. She had gone to my sisters' for the March holidays in '85. The palapona (decadent) iyyakam movement (LTTE) one day shot many Sinhala folks. If they are shot would they just wait? They hunted down Tamils. Ours

somehow reached the army camp and sought refuge there. A soldier who went berserk (irathaveri) started shooting killing and injuring many Tamils. In that my innocent daughter was also killed. I did not even get to see her body. She was buried there. From that day I have not stopped crying thinking of her.

In '90 my 3rd son joined the movement. From that day my nim-mathi (contentment) also went. Day and night, I begged God that nothing would happen to him. Palapona God also had no compassion, he took him in 2000. In 2001 my brothers son had gone to Vavuniya. He died in a clamore that had been set for someone else. We were displaced repeatedly living in sheds. When peace comes we would come back to our own place. Like this we have experienced untold difficulties and tortures to live with the land. In 2002 with the peace agreement, we repaired our home, hoping to life with contentment when the palapona war started again in 2008. Artillery did not let us live in peace. The beatings of the heart from the sound of Kifir drives us into bunkers. The army had come out of Mannar to reach Akarayan. We were not able to stand the shelling and Kifir attacks, the children removed our roof, doors, windows and everything and moved to Visuvamadu. We did not live there with contentment for even 2 months. Leaving most of our goods, we moved to Vallipunam but the Sinhalese did not let us be there for even 2 weeks. With whatever they could get, the children made shelters. They took us to Iranaipallai. Like that we changed places again and again to finally reach Mullivaikal. It was there that I was injured in my arm by a multibarrel shell. My children sent me by ICRC ship (to Trincomalee). My children experienced all types of difficulties to walk from Mullivaikal to Vadduvan to reach the army. They were in Menik farm for 4 months and underwent all the difficulties there. Now we are all in Mannar. God has spared our lives. But so many people have died. All the hard earned assets have gone with the wind.

Last month we went to Killinochchi. Everything was flattened. There was nothing to identify our place. Everything was overgrown like a jungle and paladainthu (in ruins). It would be verrupu (despair) to stay there. Everywhere there is only the army. They have razed the Maveerar maythanam (Heroes (LTTE) cemetery) to the ground and ploughed it. The place of my son's tombstone cannot be recognized. Before one day of each month I would go and cry at his tombstone. This time we were not even aware that Maveerar day had come and gone. When we lived at Killinochchi, the boys with my son would come often addressing me as ammah (mother). Now who is there for me?

We went to over 15 places (for assistance) to repair our houses. To whom shall we ask? When looking at what has happened to the Tamils from '77, it creates a great despair. Like the story of a illavu patha killi (parrot that waited for its portion) our story has ended... (with a perumuchchu). How many people were sacrificed; hands and feet lost; houses and property destroyed; ran around as people without a country; bearing so many hardships for liberty to come again to a life of subjugation. God has also become

blind. Like before I do not repeat the rosaries, do not have the heart to go to church. Only anger and sorrow comes. Before we would celebrate Christmas and New Year in a big way. This time they just came and went. Cake was not made, nor palaharam (sweet eats). Whom to give? In Killinochchi all our neighbours and community would come. I only go to church on Sundays because my children insist. What have we done to anybody? We have sacrificed so many people asking for freedom but only ended up without even a kachai thundu (loin cloth). We could have gone in contentment to have been killed by a shell rather than see this end. Prabhakaran has gone creating the situation where to see our house we have to get permission from the army. When thinking of everything anger wells up. I feel like burning up. There is no sleep. All the difficulties we faced keep running like a movie. Tossing and turning, there is no sleep.

There were many stories of multiple displacements. Eventually everyone was displaced several times with decreasing periods in one place and increasing pressures from all sides, devastation and hardships. The following account by a teacher from the Mannar district maps the long convoluted journey, keeping just ahead of the direct fighting [84] up to Feb., 2009:

2.3.08- We were displaced from our village to Maddu. During this period the LTTE started to forcefully conscript our youth. Many parents, male and female youth were affected psychologically by this. Some attempted suicide by taking poison. All male and female youth were cosseted in the Madhu church while parents guarded them. Finally people were forcefully sent to other places.

3.4.08- From Madhu we were displaced to Thachinamaruthamadu. People suffered without basic facilities. Here also forced conscription continued. Some hid their children. They moved them between bunkers and jungles. Many were affected psychologically. There were many civilian casualties due to heavy shelling and aerial bombardment. Some were killed by the army's deep penetration unit claymore mines. The bus taking school children from Thachinamaruthamadu to Madhu was hit by claymore mines. Many died or were injured by this attack. Due to these attacks the free movement of people became restricted.

15.5.08 We were displaced to Periamadhu. Here some basic facilities

were arranged for the people. Even here, people were subject to problems like claymore attacks, shelling and forced conscription. Many students became mentally deranged, dropping out of school and staying at home.

18.6.08 People were displaced to Ganeshapuram. NGO's and service organizations helped the people. Here also people faced continuous problems. Continuing deaths affected many mentally. There was severe shortage of water. Shelling and aerial bombardment took place.

23.7.08 We reached Anaivilunthan. As people had to leave many of their belongings on the way, they were affected psychologically. Shelling caused injuries and deaths. The successive displacements disturbed people. The education of students suffered.

11.8.08 We were displaced to a place called Puthu murrupu. Here also the same problems were encountered. People were pushed to grave difficulties. Some ran out of money. Deaths increased, house to house there were funerals.

25.8.08 Displacement to Vaddakachchi. Here also all the same problems. People endured severe hardships. Forced conscription was done by beating the people and taking male and female youths. Conscripts escaped from the LTTE and returned home to be hidden there.

7.10.08 We moved towards Tharmapuram. People had to struggle through heavy rains and flooding. Huts went underwater. Other problems cropped up. People betrayed each other to the authorities (LTTE). Youngsters were caught and taken away at night, at midnight. In the name of conscription, some were beaten up, some were taken away tied to poles. Male and female youth were kept in hiding. Some became frustrated and joined. There was no one to give comfort to the people, they became desolate. They were broken by shelling and gunshots. Some were taken away for border duty and other work. Some dead youth were returned to the families in coffins with their faces concealed. Everywhere there were funerals. Everyone talked about death. Youth spent their time in hiding away from their studies.

13.1.09 People moved to Visavamadu area. Streets were crowded with moving people. Funerals were ubiquitous with smell of corpses. Bodies were buried day and night. Witnessing all this, many became mentally deranged. People were stricken by the loss of their

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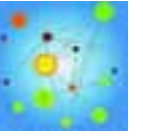
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# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEMS



**Apocalyptic Images**

belongings struggled without basic facilities grieved for the deaths of kith and kin. Many died unnecessarily by the shelling. Dead children to elders, lay around orphaned. Air bombings increased. Some succumbed to army firing.

30.1.09 Many people moving to Irudumadu were killed by shelling. Some left everything in a bid to survive. People were psychologically affected.

3.2.09 People moved towards Suthanthipuram. There was no drinking water, people dug holes and drank the water there. Shelling was particularly heavy. People were bewildered. On one side there was forced conscription, on the other there was continuous shelling. People lost everything, did not know where to go, what to take, what to do. Shelling was heavy even in what had been declared as the Safety Zone. Children who had lost their parents, parents who had lost their children. It was a scene that one could not look at. Bodies were buried in bunkers as it was not possible to bury them properly. Some bodies were wrapped with clothes and buried two to three feet deep. Some could not bury the dead, they simply left them and ran. Some had lost their hands, other bodies were shattered, people suffered greatly. In the hospital, there was a shortage of medicines and medical workers. People starved without adequate food. Rice and Dhal were the only food. Some broke into the stores of cooperative societies, service organizations and shops to meet their needs. There was no clean drinking water. At the same time, the LTTE shot those trying to escape into army controlled areas. Hospitals were crowded. They suffered without medical facilities. Some days were spent only in bunkers. Only for short intervals was it possible to come out. It was in this place that they faced many difficulties. People gave up leaving it to God's will. Nobody knew who will look after whom, who will provide comfort. We experienced suffering here that cannot be described. Many were widowed. Most people, beyond age differences, were physically and mentally affected.

The following account describes the final days at Mullivaikal in apocalyptic terms (see Figure 3[85]). There is deep emotion and resentment mixed with an earnestness to give voice to those who died there:

Mullivaikal was where the Vanni Thamilan (Tamil persons) had their hair shorn and mouth gagged while nails were driven through their hands and legs like the scene at Calvary while 80 million (world) Tamils looked on. Out of their national interest, the ruling regime washed their hands off Tamils to kill and destroy under attractive terms such as 'war for peace' and

'humanitarian action'. 300,000 Tamils were rained with shells causing rivers of blood to soak that land. Daily, I want to forget those days but the memory of the thousands who died makes me want to show the outside world happened there. That would be giving the dead souls athma shanthi (paying respect, letting them rest in peace).

Everyone ask us who survived that death land why we went behind them (LTTE)? Aren't you just ordinary civilians? From Killinochchi we were displaced to Vallipunam (Puthukudirrupu). We made a house there and stayed for a month. Shells that were falling kilometers away started falling in our yard. Seeing the dead and injured in neighboring houses our minds became disturbed and we joined those running to go where our legs took us. We changed places four to five times within a village. Wherever we went we dug bunkers like soldiers and brought together our kith and ken. We struggled to obtain food and water. It became quite clear that this war was against everything living in the Vanni. According to my reckoning there was one death for every 10 persons. Ordinary people were asked to go to Suthanthipuram as it was made the safety zone. We found out what hell would be like there. When we saw people die in hoards with their bodies strewn, we decided to move to Iranapalai. Iranapalai was also declared a safety zone. We thought this was also a killing field. Tank shells, Kifir (aircraft) bombs, multi barrel missiles, kothu (cluster) bombs and 50 caliber gunshots targeted the people. My mind became benumbed seeing young infants to the elderly being injured and dying. Tears did not come when relations were killed. The current corpses were surrounded by future corpses cowering in bunkers. We kept hearing that people were surrendering to the army. Death was certain if we stayed. We were driven to choose. There was no food, no medicine but

my family and relations were like cats that had seen fire. Because on an earlier occasion, when we had sought refuge in an army camp in Anuradhapura (birthplace of many of my relations), they had opened fire killing and injuring many. We had escaped to Killinochchi and then Jaffna where we were bombed with explosives and faeces (barrels filled with faeces) that smeared out bodies. From that time we had lost hope that as civilians we would be spared. It was imprinted in our minds that if we run in the opposite direction to the army we may somehow survive. That belief was confirmed on many occasions. But at Mullivaikal the opposite direction was the sea! When we were at Vellaimullivakal, the Tamil Nadu (in India) Chief Minister's fasting drama created some hope of a ceasefire, a restriction on the use of heavy weaponry. There was brightening in the faces of people. There was no food to eat, no water to drink, no medicine for wounds but we believed the person who represented 60 million Tamils.

Only that night the peak of heavy weaponry power was displayed. Artillery shells with phosphorus fell near our bunker and caught fire. Everywhere there was marana olam (death wailing). Even at night, with the fond hope of saving the lives of our children we ran where our legs took us. We rested on the sea shore sands. We did not believe we would be alive the next day. My aunt had been burning after being struck by a shell when we ran. When we came the next day, only her head and chest remained for us to bury in the nearby bunker. In every bunker two to three people had died. We joined those camped on the seashore. Fear of death had created a sense of comradeship with others. We were ready to share anything we had.

Death was ubiquitous ( see Figure 4). People who come out of the bunker to have a tea, fell back dead. Shells did not spare those in bunkers. My elder sister in law was injured in her head by a 'canon' attack and died due to lack of medical attention. Elders and children standing in queues for bread were slaughtered. Those who stood for gruel, to buy milk powder all went in the carnage.

While running to Vadvalah we had to duck for cover in a palmyrah cluster by an open bunker. There were altogether ten children from my family and relations when a shell fell by the side killing our neighbor. The children were covered by sand. I was dazed thinking they had all died, when on pulling out one child, it was unharmed. When the other children were also unharmed, a belief that

there was a God became strong. Finally we reached Vaddivahal. My brother was injured on the way while another was missing. The injured brother was taken away by the army and lost all his money but he survived. When we approached Vaddivahal a soldier called us females and showed it by signs. Why were men called this way? Later, why were we locked up like prisoners? There were many questions but no one to answer us.

Many of the militants (LTTE cadres) who surrendered in front of our eyes were not in the ICRC register. Many said they had been shot. When will we be allowed to resettle in our own places? With the armed groups destroyed, will ordinary civil-

admitted to Vavuniya Hospital. His mental state was disturbed by memories and images of dead bodies lying around, skeletons without flesh, the scene of his mother's shattered leg due to the landmine, smell of explosives when he breathes, images of running blood and smell of blood appeared to happen repeatedly. In his sleep he hears voices, " why have you not gone to the movement? Don't you know how to fight?" He is now separated from his family. He has forebodings about his future.

The principal of the school had referred this IDP student with educational difficulties. She was found to respond poorly to questions or activities, be withdrawn, not mixing with



**Treacherous Pathways**

ians like us be given freedom of opinion, freedom to protect our lives? Only the world can give an answer.

This is a much more individualistic presentation elicited by a doctor from a medico-psychiatric perspective that was diagnosed as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):

**Horrendous memories**

Eighteen year old Thevan was a student. His native land is Paranthan. His childhood had been happy. He had aadipaadi (played, literally sing and dance) joyfully with his companions. He was studying at high school with a goal of becoming an engineer. All his dreams were shattered by the war. Horrible shelling, artillery fire and bombings had thihil adaya (create turmoil) among appavi (innocent) folks. Thevan sought safety in many places carrying only a few belongings. Everywhere there were bunkers. On one side there was channa nerikaddi (pressure from crowds of people) while on the other side were marana olangal (wailings from death), and paddiniyal vaduhintra (starving) people. Because of the terrible war, Thevan's family entered the army controlled area on 20.4.09. They were enjoying the relief of having escaped with their lives when on the irregular, rough pathway(see Figure 5[86]), they were unexpectedly caught up in a land mine explosion. His mother (41 years) and brother (21 years) lost their legs right there. That horrible scene happened right in front of his eyes. Thevan was also injured badly. While coming on the way, there were many dead bodies lying around. On one side there were other injured, bleeding people while on the other side there were those crying loudly for the relations who had died or been separated. Dead children's bodies were floating in the lagoon (Fleeing people had to cross a deep lagoon (Nandikadal) to reach the army controlled area. Many, particularly children and elderly drowned in the crossing). Thevan was terrified by these scenes. After great difficulty he was

other students, showing fear and startling easily to small sounds. A similar situation was reported about many of the Vanni IDP students. The teacher found that the student continued to be frightened of danger to her life. Her eyes conveyed extreme fear, ever vigilant. She would startle easily, even when her name was called softly. She tended to isolate herself, not mixing with others, cried often and breathed heavily with sighs (perumuchu). She was apprehensive that people in uniform will abduct her. She felt that life was over, what was there for the future? Death was certain. She felt that there was a risk in speaking, that she would be put in jail. This was her story:

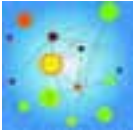
From the beginning of the final war, we had been displaced 14 times. There are no words to describe what we underwent. The war continued relentlessly in the Vanni. People were constantly being displaced. Wherever we went, shells would fall and explode, injured people would struggle in pools of blood and die. Unbearable sorrow.... Father, mother and two younger sisters- we were living happily when this war took away our freedom. Not only the shells, bombings from planes, and gunfire but to escape the recruitment by the Tigers (LTTE), we had to be shut in bunkers and kerosene barrels. Tigers would come in vans and drag us into the van. Once inside, they would cut our hair as identification of being conscripted. After that it would be danger from both sides. My (school) mates who had been taken on one day would be dumped back in their homes as corpses the next day. My parents did not want this to happen to me and my sisters. As soon as people became aware that pillai piddikarar (child catchers-LTTE) had come signals were passed on. Immediately we would have to descend into kerosene oil barrels that were buried underground in the backyard. They would close the lid



**Ubiquitous death**

**Contd. in next page...**





# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEMS



**Caught in between.** Drawing by Vanni IDP school student showing herself (in yellow) escaping from pillai piddikarar (LTTE recruiters in black) amidst shelling from the Sri Lanka army through huts towards (Pudu)mathalan beachfront area.  
- Somasundaram International Journal of Mental Health Systems

and sprinkle soil on top. There will be a small tube fitted for breathing. Waiting for about an hour or so till they leave is thihil (nerve-racking). We can't hear what is happening outside. Besides sweating, trembling and thinnal (quake) inside, it would appear not to matter if we are caught if only we could come out of there.

As the shelling and airplane attacks were ahorum (horrible), we moved at 1 AM at night to Pokkanai. We had by then lost all our belongings. We thought that if we could just save our lives that would be enough. There were many other like us there who had put up huts. In the dry environment, the sand was hot, there was no water, no food. We had to live amidst abductions, robberies and killings without food and clothes to wear. One day, my father had gone in search of food, my mother and sisters in search of water. I was all alone. Shells continued to fall. Feeling frightened to be alone, I had come out. As I was crossing several huts, I saw that the place was surrounded by over 20 pillai piddi karar. To escape from them I started fleeing. They came chasing after me. With trepidation and desperation to escape, I hid behind huts and ran towards Puthumattalan. I got some relief only after they left. I stayed with an aunt at Puthumattalan. My parents and sisters came there by nightfall and with 150 others we decided to go into the army controlled area. The tigers came running on all four sides (to prevent this) firing guns, shouting "dei, dei", hitting people with coconut stems and sticks. My heart started to pound. We didn't know what to do. We kept crying out, "help us, help us". Tigers fired wildly. Parents fought against the tigers. Some were dragged away by the tigers. The struggle went on till the next morning. The army then saved us and sent us to the Vavuniya camp. From there we were sent to Jaffna and I am still alive to be able to talk to you today.

When asked to draw what disturbed her most, she drew the picture (see Figure 6) showing herself (in yellow) escaping from the pillaipiddikarar (in black) amidst the continuing shelling through the huts towards

(Puthu) mathalan (beach front).

The following case histories were taken from civilians recovering from serious war injuries who had been transported out with one bystander (a carer relation) to various hospitals, mainly Vavuniya. A Medicine Sans Frontiers (MSF) Nurse [87] described them: "Wounded, shocked and distressed. After fleeing heavy fighting in the Vanni, people arriving in Vavuniya hospital need both medical care and counselling. People arrive here in a state of extreme anxiety and fear. They have been separated from their families and often have no news about their fate. Young children and elderly travelling with their caretakers claim they were separated at a checkpoint. The caretakers or family members who were healthy were forced to go to camps, whilst those wounded and sick had to go to the hospital. Children at the hospital are unaccompanied. They scream and call out for their mothers. Elderly people are on their own. Some people have bad wounds, some have been amputated or badly hurt by shrapnel."

#### Look at the state I am in

"I am 54 years old. I lived happily and comfortably with my wife and 8 children. I am very well educated, I know all three languages. We worshipped our farm work. We owned many properties and land. My children studied well, two of them even received university admissions but they (LTTE) didn't allow it. (LTTE had a strict pass system, particularly for those in the recruitable age group. Some were allowed out of their area of control if someone else stood surety for them). Why do you think I sent two of my daughters overseas to be married? Not only that, I have 11 siblings. Because of the current war situation we had been displaced 8 times, living in bunkers. One day a shell fell close by injuring my hand and leg. I was taken to a hospital and then to Trincomalee. Despite having so many relations I am now all alone. My family, estate, health and relatives - I have lost them all, if only the shell that fell had hit me, we could have died together", he said with agony.

#### Suffering from separation

I was 44 years old living with my husband and 4 children happily in our

village. Our 4 children used to attend school while we were farmers. Due to the war situation we were displaced 11 times. To save our lives we dug bunkers wherever we went. On 8.4.09 a shell fell on top of the bunker and my daughter, son and husband were injured. While being taken to Mathalan hospital, they (LTTE) caught my 17 year old daughter and 15 year old son. I am here with my injured daughter. We had protected them all the way but on the way this has happened. We should have all died there. I have lost everything to become alone. "What would be the state of my husband and children?" she asked with grief.

#### Anguish of a 10 year old

I had a father, mother and two siblings. My native place is Killinochchi. I am a fifth year student. Due to the current war, we were continuously displaced from 7 to 8 places. When my father and I went to the shop to buy food, a Kifir rained bombs. My father died immediately. I was lying on the street with injuries in my stomach and leg, bleeding profusely. I cried to be taken to hospital. People going on the street just looked at me. No one picked me up. Afterwards someone took me to hospital by bicycle. I came by (ICRC) ship to Padaviya and then to Vavuniya hospital with my mother. What happened comes continuously as a nightmare. I am scared. I am sad when I think of my father.

#### What a life

I am a 47 year old male from Killinochchi. I was married with two female and one male child. A beautiful family. We were living with good facilities. Started the war. Continuous displacements. We had to live in Tharappan shacks and bunkers. Life became terrible. We had just reached Suthanthipuram, it was not even an hour had gone by when continuous shelling... , one fell on our shack. In that place two of my daughters died. Son lost both his hands and a leg. I could not even properly bury my daughters. I have brought my son here. They did not allow my wife. No news. I have searched in all the camps. Is this a life? Life has deteriorated, children are also gone, wife is also not to be found, what is the pur-

pose of living?

#### I was not able

I am a 47 year old married woman with two female children. Native place is Mannar District. We were doing well. Started the war. 13 times displaced. We were four siblings. I was the last. My mother was 87 years old. She was living with me. Because of this cursed war I left her with my brother. We all left together. My brother had come before. We had to cross a river on the way. My mother had left early. There were many people. I left my mother in my brother's care. My brother left my mother on the other side of the river. How much my mother would have suffered? I was not able to bring her to this side. I left her with my brother's family. I wanted to save my children and came across. I could not save her. She must have suffered so. Nobody is there to help her. Didn't she also leave because she wanted to survive? I do not know what to do....

#### Trembling

I was a 48 year old male living happily with my wife and four male children. I was a fisherman. We had no shortcomings. I educated my four lions (sons). At this time the war started. I lost my occupation, I lost my beautiful house and property. We were displaced to three places. As we were going with what was left, there was heavy shelling. People scattered. We became separated from my four children. Suddenly to see, I was in a vehicle with my wife, one leg and hand was not there. I suffered in that state. On the way in a bus, they separated my wife and sent me alone to the Vavuniya hospital. There is no news of my children. Are they alive or not? Where is my wife? I am trembling all alone.

#### How to go on living?

Although I was 27 year old woman, I looked after my disabled brother, another school going brother and elderly mother who was ill, while doing handwork at home to earn a living. My father had died 7 years previously and my mother had become sickly as a result. I cared for all three, did the housework and in the time remaining made mixture (short eats) to sell. I was hoping that my brother would study and start working but it did not happen. Shelling and aerial bombardment did not allow us to stay in one place with any peace. We were displaced to seven places and faced a lot of economic difficulties. At this stage in the eighth place while in a bunker with another family, I took my mother to the toilet and my brother went to fetch water when I heard a loud noise. When I looked he was lying on the ground, when I got closer his legs were missing. I ran carrying him while screaming save, "save him, save him". I kept him in the hospital there for three days. I have no news of my mother nor of my disabled brother. Now I am at the Vavuniya hospital unable to leave my 13 year old brother without legs. I do not know how to go on living.

#### Orphan to an orphan

I am 24 years and my wife is 24 years. It was a love marriage. We have a six month female child. Our relations have cut us off but I had a government job. We were living happily when the war started. Because this we decided to escape to Vavuniya. We left all our property and were displaced to many places. Finally in one place there was a big crowd

and we were under a tree when there was a noise of a kifir bomber. All ran helter skelter. The child was in my hand. Before I realized what was happening they put us in a bus and deposited us elsewhere. I searched for my wife but could not find her. The baby was crying. Finally they brought us to a camp in Vavuniya. I do not know how to care for the baby. I am an orphan and have another orphan. I ask everyone to find my wife.

#### Coming and going

I was 27 years old living happily with my husband and two small children in our native village. Husband was famer with a lot of land. We were able to find enough food. The war situation made us move 3 to 4 times. We were heading for a safe place when there was heavy shelling. I do not know what happened next. When I opened my eyes I was in hospital. My mother and daughter were by my side. I was without a leg and fingers. Daughter is also injured. I learned that my husband and 2 year old daughter had passed away. I am 7 months pregnant. I do not know how I am going to give birth to this child and then bring it up. I am troubled. There are no relations here. How is our future going to be? It is forebidding.

#### Where is peace?

I am a 20 year old female from Urithrapuram, Killinochchi with three brothers. I have studied A/L level (year 12). I was living very happily with my mother, father and brothers who treated me as a chella pillai (favourite, spoilt child). My mother used to practice Ayurveda (traditional) medicine. Then the war started up again. It was mainly a bunker life. We lost our sleep and peace. We struggled to find food even for once a day. When we were displaced and in a bunker, there was sounds of many shells. We crouched in fear. Suddenly there was a loud noise close by. I lost consciousness. (When I regained consciousness) I found that I had lost my leg and hand. My mother was besides me to help. Then we were transferred to this hospital. I am in this handicapped state. Only my mother is here. What has happened to my father and brothers? When will we be together again? Is this my state? To think it is sorrowful (with tears).

#### What a life?

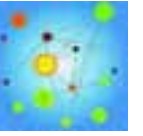
A 60 year old woman was mumbling: I have three married children with 10 grand children. We were displaced 14 times from our home. Food was difficult. Rice was 250, chilli powder 22, coconut 250. Rice and dhal was food. We could not take it anymore. So we tried to leave. When we were in a tarappan shack, a shell fell killing my husband, son in law, grandchildren, all together 8 people died then and there. Daughter and a grandchild were injured. So I was sent as a helper. I do not know what has happened to the rest. We have to beg even for the clothes we wear. We did not even bury the dead. Do we need a life like this? I could have died with them. Why did I come here? Have I to go on living? Those who should live have gone. What is there for me anymore....

#### Where is solace?

I was a 43 year old driver from Killinochchi owning a private bus. We were well off. With 4 children we were displaced 6 times. At that time I had 5 lacks worth of goods in my vehicle. My wife and I were injured when we



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inside the last bunker. They (LTTE) had taken away my eldest daughter. I had three sons aged, 13, 11, 9. I was injured in the head. My wife was injured in her chest. They brought us by ship (ICRC) to Padaviya. They sent my wife and children by ambulance. My wife left us (died) on the way to Vavuniya Hospital. I am not worried about the loss of my property or my well being. The loss of my daughter and wife is my big sorrow. I did not see my wife at her end. My children have also become alone.

### Why should we live?

We have somehow survived. My 13 year old son is by my bedside with a face overwhelmed by sorrow. I suffer continuously from my leg that has been amputated above the knee due to shell injury. I cry all the time. I had tied my leg up with cloth tightly while living in bunkers for six months. We were displaced from Killinochchi three times before staying in Suthanthirapuram. We had not eaten properly for three days due to continuous shelling. Suddenly there was a lull in the shelling and my children wanted to eat some chicken. To fulfill their desire, I skinned a chicken and cooked it. After eating it we wanted to sleep. While lying down, a shell fell on our dwelling killing my wife and two children then and there. Only the two of us survived. We could also have died. What shall I do? Somebody known to us had picked me up and sent us to the Vavuniya Hospital.

### Separation anguish

I am 30 years old. I was married with 4 children living happily. I never expected that our family would come to this state. At first, in January (2009), four people were killed and 30 injured by shelling in our village. After seeing that we no longer wanted to stay there, we wanted to go to a place without shelling. We left only with the clothes we were wearing. But wherever we went, shelling and Kifir bombing followed us. I did not know what to do. There was rain, sun, jungles, roads, schools (as refugee camps), all without food, water, bathing, we suffered terribly. We dug a bunker for safety and were living in a camp one day when the sun heat was unbearable under the tharrappal. We and many others were under a tree. On my lap was my last child, others were playing when suddenly there was the sound of shell exploding. I tried to carry my child to run but couldn't. The shell fell where the children were playing. I looked thinking they all had

died. A daughter was unconscious. I did not know what to do. I left the child in my arms to pick up my daughter who was unconscious and ran. She was injured in her abdomen. She needed to be treated urgently....

### Remorse

Rada is a 41 years old labourer from Killinochchi. He was married with four children. In 1990, to escape from the terrible war they had sought refuge in India. When there was relative improvement in the situation in 1996, they had returned. He was a heart patient taking treatment but was able to educate his children. They were living happily when the war broke out again. Shells started falling and exploding in their area. To safeguard his children they moved to several places with some their belongings. Their life was spent mainly in bunkers. The noise of artillery shells, firearms and bombs terrorized ordinary civilians. People ran helter-skelter seeking safety. On that 4.2.2009 when his wife (30 years) and son (7 years) had just come out of the bunker, when they were badly injured by a shell attack and lay in a pool of blood. Son died there. In the hope of at least saving the life of his wife, they took her to hospital. As the treatment was not successful, she left this world the next morning. When Rada learned of this he did not know what to do, he became benumbed. In the midst of heavy shelling they could not carry out the burial of his wife and son properly. Returning to their shelter with his remaining three children, Rada could not control his mind. He found all his belongings had been destroyed. In this terrible state, on an impulse he tried to consume poison and also give to his children. The children cried loudly. His 16 year old son thwarted the suicidal attempt. Then Rada decided to save the lives of at least his remaining children, joined a crowd of escaping refugees on 7.2.2009 and reached Vavuniya. They are now at the Gamini school camp. Having lost two lives to the horrible war, those thoughts came recurring daily to Rada. He was found to have lack of appetite, sleep, crying without realizing it, unable to socialize with others, suicidal ideation, not knowing what to do next, headache, numbing of the head, worry about the future of his three children and a deep depression. He felt remorse about not doing the funeral rites of his wife and son. He is without the support or help of his relations.

### Guilt

Fifty one year old Siva was born in Killinochchi and worked as farmer. He was married with four children. The eldest was married with a child and his daughter was a school teacher. They had escaped from shell attacks to live in bunkers at Sudanthirapuram. A shell fell there killing the eldest son and daughter. A son was injured in his chest and leg while his wife escaped with minor injuries. His daughter in law and child are in a refugee camp in Vavuniya His injured son is at Mannar hospital while his wife is in another camp. He is with his daughter at the Pampaimadu 7th mile camp unable to contact his siblings or relations and without contact with his injured son, daughter in law and child and wife. He is severely depressed with continuous crying, loss of appetite, lack of sleep, repeated memories of what happened in the Vanni, poor self-care and headache. On counseling, he cried, revealing that images of his two children dying in front of him and their leaving their bodies in the bunker without even carrying out their funeral rites keeps recurring in his mind preventing his sleep. As it was now one month since the event, He felt especially guilty that he was not even able to arrange the customary 45 day remembrance ceremony for them

### Widowed and pregnant

24 year old Mrs. Kavitha was 8 months pregnant and mother of 4 year old son. Her husband was an ordinary labourer. They had been married 5 years and was going in a happy direction when they had to flee for their safety when the dreadful war broke out. Everywhere there were the sights and sounds of shells attacks and reverberating sounds of gunfire. In many places there were the kifir bombings. People experienced allola kallola (pandemonium). They ran seeking shelter. Their daily lives were spent in bunkers. Everywhere there was marana olangal (death wailing) with deaths from very young children to the elderly falling victims to the awful war. It was in these circumstances that Kavitha floundered having lost all her belongings, separated from relations. Facing great difficulty her family tried to reach the army controlled area when her husband was shot by the armed group (LTTE). In that place there were many people with fatal injuries lying in pools of blood. When Kavitha looked at her husband he was in dead posture. To save her child, she left her husband's body and joined other people to attain the army controlled region. She is cur-

rently living in a IDP welfare camp with her four year old child. She is without contact of her relations. She was in deep thought about her upcoming delivery period and future life. She helplessly asked, "Who will look after my four year old when I give birth?" Kavitha was found in a disturbed mental state with loss of appetite, lack of sleep, recurring thoughts relating to her husband being supported by her four year old in the welfare camp.

### Hopelessness

Somu was a 30 year old male married with a 18 months old son. On that day, he had left his wife and child in a safe place to go and bring his mother and sisters. Youngest sister was a final year university student while the other sisters were married. When they had started to leave with their belongings, the army had seen them and started firing. His mother, sister and one baby died then and there. His youngest sister had fled. He had run after her fearing that she would be caught by the army and raped. Bullets pierced his neck and chest. The next day he regained consciousness hearing the voice of soldiers who had come there. They kicked him asking, "where are the others?". He begged them, "you have killed the others, kill me also." He was in a state of extreme distress and frustration at Vavuniya Hospital without knowing what had happened to his sister and without information about his wife and child. It was found that his legs and body would not function. He was unable to lift his neck due to the injury in the neck. He had repeated thoughts about his sister and what had happened that day. He had lost all hope about his state.

### Shattered dreams

My name is Ravi, a 15 year old born and bred in Killinochchi with two sisters, mother and father who was a car mechanic. Being a keen student, I had succeeded in the fifth year scholarship and was continuing my education at the Killinochchi Mahavidyalayam (high school). When the war broke out again in 2006, the Tigers made many attempts to conscript me under their 'veedukoruvar (one person for each house)' policy. While I was returning from school they tried to forcefully abduct me in their vehicle. Somehow I escaped through by-lanes leaving my bicycle behind to reach home. This happened in January, 2008. After that I stopped going to school. My parents also stopped my sisters from attending school. I could not study. I could not

come out of my home. My life was frustrating. In the evenings, I used to play football for an hour at the Thirunagar grounds. That was blocked. People found me full of anger and despair. I would often get into fights with my father. I would say we should have gone to Vavuniya during the peace period. How long not to go to school, tuition and the grounds? If these are not to be, I will go and join them (LTTE). My parents were very concerned about me. They were unable to do anything.

Under our Margosa tree, I had dug a bunker. As soon as I heard the sound of Kifir (planes) I would be the first into the bunker. Then would come my sisters, then mother and finally, father. Every day we would be going inside at least five times. As soon as I heard the sound of Kifir, without realizing it I would develop palpitations and find it difficult to breathe. I would feel agitated. When it dived (high pitched sound of diving) to bomb, I would Veerudu (piercingly) scream. Its (Kifir) sound was that terrorizing.

We had some relief at night. At the beginning we had electricity for two hours. I studied with that help. I would watch TV for a short while. There was only the Nidharshanam (LTTE TV programme) service. They only showed only dramas and pictures (movies) related to war. Daily they would show the ghastly pictures of peoples killed by shells and aerial bombing. My body would tremble when I looked at them. Feelings of antagonism, frustration and hatred towards the government forces would arise in me without my realization.

As the fighting got closer and closer, we first moved from Thirunagar to Tharmapuram. We put up a tent in a small plot and stayed there. We had no toilets or clean water. In the monsoon rains our tent was blown away. We had to live in two feet deep water for two days. With all that, I somehow appeared for the "O" level (year 10 GCE national exam) held last December (2008) at the Tharmapuram school. I still hoped for good results to study "A" level science and become a doctor.

When the fighting passed Paranthan and came towards Tharmapuram, we moved to Visuvamadu. We put up a tent on land belonging to my father's friend and lived there. February 10th (2009) there was heavy shelling. The army was advancing towards Visuvamadu. As our bunker had filled with water we could not stay there. At about 1 PM when we had come out the bunker this horrible incident occurred. A shell that came from nowhere landed on our tent and exploded. Everywhere there was the sound of crying. I lay in a pool of blood, moaning. I could not get up and walk. On my side was my sister without any sound. Only my father was uninjured. When he picked me up crying loudly with oppari (weiling), my two arms were not in my control. I could not move them. I was able to move only my right thumb. Amidst all these difficulties, I was admitted to Puthukudiruppu hospital and underwent surgery. When I opened my eyes the next day my world was darkened. My two sisters who I had uyiruku uyirai nesitha (loved as my own life) had died in the shelling. My father had buried them in that bunker itself. He had brought me and my mother to hospital. My two

Contd. in page 32...



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John Boddy Homes has been voted 'Best Builder' in Ajax/Pickering for the thirteenth year in a row for this year's Readers' Choice Awards and has now 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, semi-detached and townhouses. Homes start at 1,700 square feet and range up to a spacious 3,858 square feet, some with three car garages. 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, walk out basements and a select few backing onto 3.5 acres of mature trees. 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' 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.

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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



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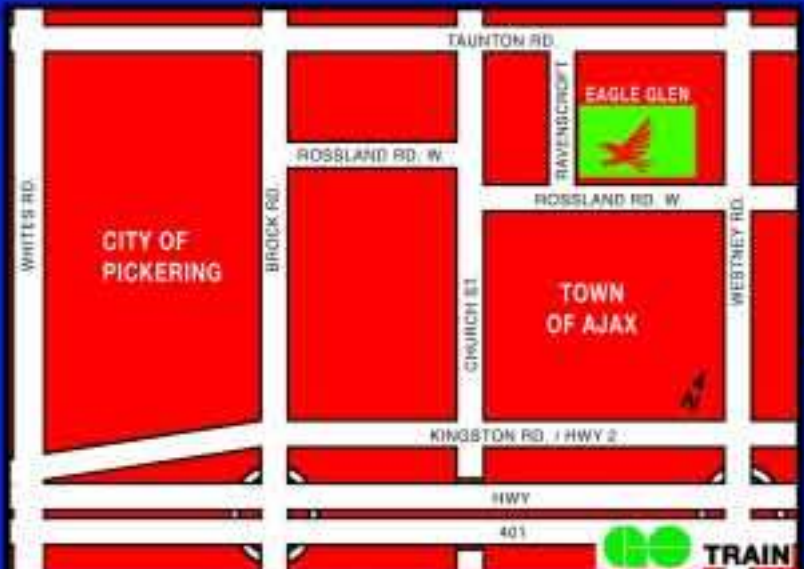
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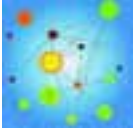


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arms were amputated and my other injures were dressed. On my side lay my mother who had had her right leg amputated below the knee. In this misery, we were taken by the Red Cross (ICRC) ship to Trincomalee Hospital. After one week there, we were sent to Mannar Hospital.

Now my whole life has become full of gloom. I still have the dream of becoming a doctor. "Can I study with prosthetic arms, doctor? Please help me."

## Helplessness

50 year old Vani was a shopkeeper from Tharpuram with three children. The eldest daughter was married with two daughters. The second son had been forcefully taken away by the Iyacam (movement- LTTE) a year ago. When the fighting became severe in January, they loaded their belongings in a landmaster and with other village folk were displaced from place to place. The 13th displacement was to what had been declared a safety zone, Iranaipalam where they stayed for 10 days. People had made tents to live in. As shells had started falling on that day, they loaded their goods onto the landmaster and decided to move on. But her 8 year old granddaughter insisted on having fried fish, they delayed to cook a meal. Varatharany and her daughter busied themselves in cooking while her husband, son and grandchildren were sleeping in the tent. Her Son-in-law had gone to the market.

That day, 21/2/2009, morning at 11:45 AM a shell fired by the army completely buried their families happiness in a deep hole and made them nirkathy (helpless). The shell not only landed on the landmaster burning it, but also pali eduthiduthu (killed) her husband, son and two grandchildren. Varatharany and her daughter were injured. On hearing her daughter wailing "my children are dead", she had gone slowly when she saw her husband lying dead, her grandchildren with their bodies thundikapadu (severed) and her son injured in his head, arms and legs struggling to live. She collapsed there. On hearing her distraught daughter who despite bleeding profusely had run over and was trying to pick up her kuttuyir (barely alive, process of dying) children while lamenting loudly, bystanders had come and taken them to hospital. The son-in-law had come later and buried the dead with the help of others there.

Both of them were treated for two days at Trincomalee hospital, then sent to Vavuniya hospital and currently at the Saiva Prihasa School refugee camp. For the last one month, Varatharani and her daughter have

been continuously crying with constant memories of their children and re-experiencing what happened. They are disturbed by suicidal thoughts, fatigue, insomnia, and guilt feelings. Although they say that her son-in-law is their comfort, when he is alone he laments loudly saying, "We have lost our relations and our belongings. There is no point in having come here. I am useless" (he had survival guilt, of not having been there to help his family when the deaths happened).

## Interviews

Key-informant, family and extended family interviews and focus group discussions regarding family and community level changes indicated mostly negative but also positive developments (see Table 1). Generally there was consensus that family and community life had suffered due to deaths, separations and deprivations. Relationships, trust, cohesion, beliefs and ethical values had declined, some said deteriorated, destroyed. Instead there was an increase in misunderstandings, conflict, selfishness, suspicions, anger, bitterness, virakthy (loss of interest), veruppu (state of detestation), soham (sorrow), alcoholism and sexual laxity. The problems associated with the increase in alcoholism and sexual laxity has been raised consistently by health workers in the camps. Expression of survival guilt was common, particularly after the experiences in the internment camps. After losing so many of their relations or not knowing their whereabouts, many said they could rather have died in the shelling. Outward blame for what happened was common, some blamed the government; others India (vaddakathiyar- northerners) and some the LTTE. There was anger and feelings of betrayal by the LTTE. In the immediate aftermath, many were distraught, dazed and disoriented; there were strong feelings of disillusionment, bewilderment, disbelief, bitterness and utter devastation (see Figure 7[88]). Some said it was the fate of the Tamils (thalaivithiy), 'of having been born Tamil in this country'. Most felt that there had been a decline in religious beliefs and practices, loss of faith and fervour. One widow described how she and her children had left her husband who had been shattered by a shell but still alive and struggling on the road to escape themselves. She is haunted by this memory and blamed God for creating the terrible situation (pallapona kadavul). But others mentioned that it was only religion and faith in god that had sustained them when everything else failed. Their only trust was that God would find a way out for them. Some mentioned an increase in new

relationships; mutual help and co-operation; a sense of unity, comradeship and togetherness by being thrown together against adversity which was marked during the last days of the 'final war' and thereafter for a short period but had progressively decreased. A common observation was that people had become dependent on handouts, used to welfare and decline in efforts to work and earn. People had betrayed (kaddikoduthu) others for benefits and privilege from the army and authorities. But, now with the resettlement process, motivation to rebuild their lives and livelihood was strong. There was a sense with some exceptions (those who had suffered and lost most) that their situation was improving and there was hope for the future compared to how it was one year ago. There were some positive stories of resilience and post-traumatic growth. A senior government officer and writer said that they had gone through great hardship (peravalam), but that they now only needed to get back their infrastructure, resources, occupational opportunities and jobs to rebuild and restart their lives. He denied any ill effects like poor sleep, bad dreams or loss of motivation. He appeared in good health and committed to contribute to the resettlement and rehabilitation process. A recent (2010) observation of what is happening in the Vanni echoes this positive hope, "the spirit of the Tamils in the north has not been extinguished by the long years of war and its brutal end. All indications point that the Tamils will rise again to play a meaningful role in Sri Lanka and prosper. The spirit that is manifesting itself in numerous ways all over the north, despite the all too obvious adversities and disadvantages, is definitely a harbinger of a bright future for the Tamils and Sri Lanka. If they are helped and guided, they will advance faster. If not, they will yet become a great people, though at a slower pace. The Tamils will emerge from their prolonged tragedy and the associated misery, despite their politicians, bureaucrats and malcontents- both within and the Diaspora, to become what they deserve to be in the land of their birth and life. I may not live to see this happen, but will die convinced, it will happen. Tamils are not a species, destined for extinction in Sri Lanka, as many, including me had feared six months back. They are proving that they have what it takes to rebound from adversity and hurdles, to survive and prosper" [89]. A young doctor who had served through the last days of the fighting said that he had seen terrible injuries and deaths, struggled through the heavy shelling and firing at the different hospitals, working without rest. At one stage he had lost all fear and was able to continue working amidst all the chaos. He was ready to do anything. He was now seen to be extraordinarily dedicated, motivated, a tireless worker and administrator appreciated by all. An expatriate medic also described the last days of fighting as harrowing but "After looking at the people dying and dead bodies everywhere, it is like nothing threatens me anymore, it is like I have had the hard time in my life and I think I am prepared to take up whatever happens in life now. I'm not that old Vany that sits down and cries for little things. I'm stronger now after going through and

seeing all that problem. My mind is clear now"[90].

## Discussion

There are several themes emerging from accounts of what happened. A striking theme to emerge from the narratives is the collective nature of the trauma. All the stories describe what happened to them as a family or in some cases, to the community. Western research and conceptualizations have been primarily individualistic in orientation [91]. The fields of social theory, modern medicine, research and academic activities in general are dominated and monopolized by the western individual oriented paradigm. However, in collectivistic, co-operative societies [78,92], there is a need to go beyond the individual to the family, group, village, community and social levels to more fully understand what is going on in the individual, whether it be his/her development, behaviour, perceptions, consciousness, experiences or responses to stress and trauma as well as design effective interventions to help in the recovery and rehabilitation of not only the affected individuals but also their families and community[93-96]. For when the family and/or community regained their equilibrium and healthy functioning, there was often improvement in the individual member's wellbeing as well. Family and social support, networks, relationships and the sense of community appears to be a vital protective factor for the individual and their families and important in their recovery. This broader, holistic perspective becomes paramount in non-western, 'collectivist' or co-operative cultures which have traditionally been family and community oriented, the individual tending to become submerged in the wider concerns[29,78,92,97]. The family and community are part of the self, their identity and consciousness. The demarcation or boundary between the individual self and the outside becomes blurred. The wellbeing of the individual member is experienced as the wellbeing of the family and community. For example, Tamil families, due to close and strong bonds and cohesiveness in nuclear and extended families, tend to function and respond to external threat or trauma as a unit rather than as individual members. They share the experience and perceive the event in a particular way. During times of traumatic experiences, the family will come together with solidarity to face the threat as a unit and provide mutual support and protection. In time the family will act to define and interpret the traumatic event, give it structure and assign a common meaning, as well as evolve strategies to cope with the stress. Thus it may be more appropriate to talk in terms of family dynamics rather than of individual personalities. There may be some individual variation in manifestation, depending on their responsibilities and roles within the family and personal characteristics, while some may become the scapegoat in the family dynamics that ensues (see family case histories[42]). Similarly, in the Tamil communities, the village and its people, way of life and environment provided organic roots, a sustaining support system, nourishing environment and network of relationships. The village traditions, structures and institutions were the foundations and frame-

work for their daily life. In the Tamil culture, a person's identity was defined to a large extent by their village or uur of origin [98]. Their uur more or less placed the person in a particular socio-cultural matrix. However, within communities, there may be exclusion, ostracization, powerlessness, marginalization, silencing and stigmatization of some members, families, castes or groups while others seek power and privilege. The social institution of a traditional uur has also undergone tremendous breakdown with the chronic war and displacements as well as modernity.

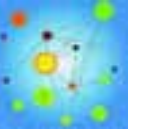
It is becoming clear that social and cultural values, beliefs and perceptions will shape how traumatic events impact on the individual, family and community and the way they respond [99,100]. The meaning attributed to the event(s), the historical and social context, as well as community coping strategies determines the impact and consequences of trauma (Table 1). The narratives clearly show the impact of the war on the family and community. The exclusively individual perspective characteristic of western narratives is completely lacking here. There are hardly any spontaneous complaints of individual symptoms or suffering. Even where a person talks of his or her personal agony, it is framed in general terms, reflecting what happened to the family or community. Undoubtedly, individual symptoms, how the trauma had affected each member can be elicited with direct questioning [42] as in the PTSD example above. But in this study, the narrative was allowed to flow naturally. The story usually began with the family described metaphorically as living happily in their village. It is significant that the happiness or wellbeing is perceived and experienced in terms of the family and community. There is a dynamic equilibrium, harmony within the family and community, a network of mutually supportive relationships and responsibilities, ritualistic practices and living patterns that they have managed to establish despite the harsh socio-economic and political conditions. Their feeling of strength and value is more in those bonds and relationships not so much in the material and external circumstances. The war is seen as an imposition coming from outside, disturbing this atmosphere of contentment where the family and community was progressing, getting on with life. The war is invariably described in very negative terms, por arrakan (war devil), kodum (horrible), peravalam (great calamity). As the narrative unfolds, it is the family that is the focus. The shelling and fighting approaching their homes, their village, impels them to start the displacement process. They describe how they leave as a family, as a community-whole villages, taking whatever they can load onto vehicles, hoping to return in a day to two. The dispersion begins. Initially they are separated from the supportive context of their community, extended family and village. How the new conditions start affecting the family, how each member suffers, the deaths and injuries, how the separations form those who are injured, having to bury the dead without the customary rites, the guilt of leaving relations behind, and the strong yearning to know what happened to other members. The impact of the disaster is felt acutely within



Utter Devastation



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this living fabric of the family and community: the utter hopelessness, helplessness and devastation when the fabric is torn.

In these circumstances the best approach to restore the psychosocial and mental health of the Vanni IDPs according to mental health professionals working in the internment camps as well as clearly recommended in the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines for mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings[101] would have been to re-unify the family, give information on their fate and whereabouts. The second best strategy would have been to release them to find their own way and reunite with their families and community. However, the state strictly resisted these well meant efforts. If one is to extrapolate from the decisions and restrictions being placed by the authorities, discern the pattern behind the policies from past analysis [61] and experience to understand the mindset [51], the operating paradigm, it would appear that the state still fears a regrouping of the destroyed LTTE, but more harbours a deep paranoia based on ethnocentric perceptions of the 'other' [41] to prevent any future minority mobilization. There was only limited psychosocial support, while counselling or cultural healing practices either in the camps or resettlements was severely restricted [2,102,103]. In the post-conflict, military and politically sensitive situation, dealing with the mental health and psychosocial needs of the Vanni IDPs was a difficult and challenging task. A small team of mental health professionals and few NGO's with limited resources attempted to address the immediate and urgent needs. The priority was given to severe mental illness, particularly psychosis, which needed medication and intensive care. Some chronic patients had relapsed or developed exacerbation in their symptoms when they had run out of drugs or simply stopped taking them. A large number had been displaced from long care institutions in the Vanni, Vetti mannai and Santhosam, which were caring for over 100 chronic patients from all over the island. Some had developed psychotic illness anew. Clinics were held in the camps and Vavuniya hospital while in ward treatment was available at the General Hospital. Similar secondary and tertiary care was available in Jaffna and Mannar. However when it came to addressing the psychosocial needs, access was limited. Ingenious strategies had to be adapted to gain access and provide support despite the military presence. A group of community level workers, Community Support Officers (CSO's), who had been trained after the tsunami under a Ministry of Health/WHO programme [104,105] to work with the affected population in the Vanni were among the IDPs in the camps at Vavuniya. They were again mobilized by a Ministry of Health/WHO programme to work among the IDPs. Some other psychosocial NGO's did yeomen service under trying circumstances. Nevertheless, consistent and systemic long term programmes were not allowed. The Mental Health Consultative Forum for the Northern Province consisting of mental health professionals and health administrators from the health department was formed in November, 2009 to deal with the Mental Health needs in the

resettlement process of the IDPs. The Forum has formulated a plan to mobilize those already trained and skilled in community level mental health to form a network of psychosocial support at the periphery (Divisional (AGA) or District Levels (GA)). Other community level and governmental workers can be trained. Training of grass root community level workers in basic mental health knowledge and skills is the easiest way of reaching a large population. They in turn would increase general awareness and disseminate the knowledge as well as do preventive and promotional work. The majority of minor mental health problems could be managed by community level workers and others referred to the appropriate level. The main effort of community level workers would be directed towards strengthening and uniting families; rebuilding and regenerating community structures and institutions; encouraging leaders; facilitating self-support groups; village and traditional resources; using creative arts; cultural, ritualistic practices; as well as linking up with other service sectors like education, social service, local and regional government. However, the state does not recognize the concept of psychosocial needs or support. For example, knowledge that apart from other physical and socio-economic needs, it will take considerable time and psychosocial support for the people to get over their trauma is not accepted. The Vanni IDPs will have to be given an opportunity to mourn for the dead, grieve for the losses and practice the cultural rituals for collective consolation. What happened cannot simply be erased from collective memory. If proper healing and psychosocial restitution is not done properly or they are pushed into activities too quickly, they may not benefit fully from the resettlement, rehabilitation and development efforts. They will lack the motivation and well being to participate fully in their recovery and rebuild their homes, lives and the region. Nevertheless, in the long term, one would expect the Tamil community to eventually recover despite the malfeasance [89]. Although it is a much more complex and chronic sociopoliti-



**Internment Camps**

cal situation in Lanka, the community's resilience that lies in its strong identity, culture, social and spiritual practices will help heal the wounds as happened naturally, despite all the shortcomings and neglect, after hurricane Katrina in New Orleans [106].

A broader and long term psychosocial intervention for collective catharsis and a healing of memories for traumatized families and commu-

nity would be an acknowledgement of what happened. Apparently the state did not want the stories to get out for fear of prosecution for war crimes that was being put forward by some members of the local and International community [2]. It continued to insist that 'not a single drop of civilian blood had been shed' and the 'biggest humanitarian rescue mission in history' had been executed [107]. The politics of memory and history writing are linked to power. Those with the power to impose their version can change memory traces and perceptions of what happened. The LTTE managed to enforce their account of the 1995 exodus in the memory and imagination of Tamils as resulting from state action when they in fact engineered a movement of over 400,000 people from Jaffna [53]. The Jaffna exodus, many of whom ended up in the Vanni, and its context had many similarities to what happened later in the Vanni except that there wasn't such large scale civilian deaths and injuries. The LTTE then chose to withdraw into the Vanni jungles rather than make a last stand in Jaffna with civilians, avoiding a similar humanitarian disaster[54].

Around thirty thousand civilians appear to have been killed and scores more injured in a short period with large scale, repeated displacements, shortages and neglect of basic needs such as food, shelter and medical care. Allegations of war crimes, and crimes against humanity have been raised at the highest levels calling for investigations and persecution by world bodies [1-3,6-8,69,70,108]. There have also been heavy casualties among the army. According to reliable reports around 5000 soldiers died while many times more were injured in the final push [109,110]. Perhaps 7,000 LTTE militants died or were executed in 2009 alone. Many were raw conscripts pressed gang into battle to become cannon fodder. From past experience with such battles and casualty figures, a conservative estimate for the whole Vanni battle may be well over 10,000 killed for each side. The story of ordinary soldiers and militants also needs to be told; their sacrifices, suffering and agony recognized; accepted for healing of

be an important psychosocial intervention for communal harmony and wellbeing as well as the future of the country.

However, another interesting theme that emerges from the narratives is the contest for the loyalty or obedience, the so called 'hearts and minds' exercise, that operated to a large extent at the unconscious level. Evidently the Vanni civilians had some allegiance to the LTTE up to the beginning of the last phase of fighting in 2006. Many believed in the LTTE version of the 'freedom struggle' and had chosen to go to the Vanni, for example during the 1995 exodus from Jaffna [53], and stayed on despite the hardships and shortages. There had been considerable compulsion in making this 'choice' applied by the LTTE which also had a strict pass system preventing people leaving their area of control. Nevertheless, the LTTE and their sympathizers perceived the Vanni people as their loyal subjects with subtle gradation of animosity to Tamils living outside. A view shared by the Sinhala State as shown by their treatment of the Vanni IDPs after the conflict. Their forced internment in barbed wire camps was obviously a collective punishment for their 'crime' of staying in the Vanni with the LTTE (see Figure 8[111]). Those coming later in the battle were considered 'more loyal', particularly those who 'stayed' till the last. They were treated more harshly and punitively with far more restrictions in different zonal camps[112]. After the 1995 exodus, those who had stayed behind in Jaffna were issued 'Army' Identity Cards with differences entitling privileged status. The LTTE and people of the Vanni also considered them as somehow having betrayed the cause and enjoying special luxuries. As the fighting evolved with the Vanni civilians facing increasing harsher conditions of ubiquitous death, injuries, conscription, multiple displacements and shortages of food and other basic necessities; this loyalty could be seen to gradually change. Under the totalitarian fascist control of the LTTE, any kind of dissent or counter views had been eliminated. People had adapted to this state of affairs despite embargos, restrictions and attacks by the state showing considerable resilience. They were content in many ways as expressed in the narratives metaphorically as being 'happy'.

The narratives speak of the beginning of the last phase of the war in particularly apocalyptic terms. But the criticism and antagonism to the actions of the LTTE starts creeping into the narratives much later. Many show a strong reluctance to name the LTTE directly, always using indirect terms. Some completely leave the actions and atrocities being done by the LTTE out of their accounts [80,90]. Apart from their more overt repression and terror, the LTTE had succeeded in establishing this kind of collective internal censor that prevented people seeing their negative side but more insidious, thinking or speaking about it. Partly this was due to terror and a survival strategy, but it was also a result of the discriminatory policies of the state and the harsh actions of its security forces. But as the price for this loyalty mounted with increasing death, injuries and conscription, the tide turned and people became more conscious of the real nature of the LTTE. It would appear that this

was a deliberate 'psyops' military strategy of the state to drive a wedge between the civilians and the LTTE, as they increased the harsh conditions: shelling causing death and injuries even in hospitals and state declared safety zones, restrictions on food, medicine and other basic items[113]. The counter insurgency (CI) strategy appeared to have worked with people becoming more overt in their resistance to the LTTE, more open in criticism and defiance, at times breaking out into direct clashes [2,5]; finally escaping over to army control. Some narratives expressed gratitude to the state forces for having saved them from the LTTE. The state has continued to use this CI strategy to completely wean the Vanni people from the LTTE after the conflict by interning them in IDP camps with callous restrictions. They have sought to impose their version of the discourse in contrast to the ideas of liberation, Tamil homeland and separation. However, instead of using the historic opportunity for national reconciliation, the repressive ethnocentric approach without dealing with the underlying grievances in the long term will only alienate the minorities once again. Apart from the political implications, the contest of the different discourses at stake and the need of the Vanni IDP trauma for healing; if not social justice, the whole national reconciliation process at least needs some acknowledgement of what happened. If there is no healing of memories, merely a repression, the untreated collective trauma could well turn into resentment and rekindle cycles of violence once again.

## Conclusions

The psychosocial and mental health consequences of massive trauma to individuals, families and communities can be profound. The interventions for recovery and regeneration should be holistic, integrated and multisectorial (Table 1). However, the underlying political context and struggle for control, power, discourse and obedience complicates what is allowed and can be done.

The following poem [114], Shady Trees, by a child soldier yearns for the solace from a caring, nurturing elder, community, society that has been laid waste by war:

*In our lives  
There is no peace  
In our trees  
There is no life  
The dead ones become firewood  
The green ones give shade*

*The onlooker...  
You tell us  
Which tree are we  
Will you ease our worries?  
Will you wipe our tears?  
We are waiting  
For the shady trees...*

## Competing interests

Tamil medical officer working in northern Sri Lanka

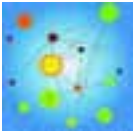
## Authors' contributions

DJS was responsible for the study and writing of the manuscript.

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Anonymous at this stage.





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# Durham Tamil Association's 10th Anniversary BBQ & Sports Meet

The Durham Tamil Association held its 10th Annual barbecue and sports activity fun day at Paulynn Park in Ajax last month. Everyone enjoyed some fresh kottu roti made by Chef Haran with many children in attendance and participating in a variety of fun sports events for kids and adults; includ-

ing soccer, sack and skipping rope races and so much more.

Dignitaries in attendance were Mayor Parish of Ajax, Mayor Dave Ryan and his wife Anne of Pickering, along with MPP Ajax-Pickering, Joe Dickson and MP Ajax-Pickering, Mark Holland and his family, Ward 2 Councillor for

Ajax, Renrick Ashby, and candidate Regional Councillor Wards 3 & 4 of Ajax Kim Dowds, Director of Baha'i community Durham, Roland Rutland and family. DTA expressed its sincere thanks to all and to the sponsor of the event Mr. Sinnadurai Mahendranathan, CGA, owner of MP Accounting and

Finance Services and his family.

The public are invited to the 9th Annual Youth Festival on Saturday October 2nd: Durham Tamil Youth Festival at 6.00 p.m. in Celebration of the Tenth Anniversary at J. Clarke Richardson Collegiate Auditorium located at 1355 Harwood Avenue (North of Rossland) in Ajax. Admission is free and all are welcome. 905.428.7007. www.durhamtamils.com

Seen here are some pictures



taken at the Barbeque event with Ajax Mayor Steve Parish and members of the DTA.



# Durham Tamil Cultural & Academic Society trains Youth in CPR & First Aid Course

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is a process that is done to provide a person, who has suffered cardiac arrest with a chance to live.

This is especially important when the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) requires more than six minutes arriving at the

scene. CPR, in the form of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and rhythmic chest compression, can add vital minutes to a person's life while awaiting the arrival of an EMS.

CPR training helps in medical emergencies other than sudden cardiac arrest. Other situations

CPR may be used include, helping a victim who has drowned, suffocated, overdosed on drugs and electrocuted.

Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham felt that it was important for our members especially the youth to have this training. On July 10th, 2010 TCASD

brought in a certified CPR/First Aid instructor to teach the CPR/First Aid course to the youth.

This course was very informative and eye-opening. Many youth learned valuable skills that will carry on with them for the rest of their lives. Learning CPR was never a priority for many youth

and after this course they felt it changed their outlook on it completely.

It is strongly encouraged and recommended that everyone completes this course, because you'll never know when you will have to save someone!



TCASD youth in training to deal with choking victim



TCASD youth in learning to do first aid



CPR and First Aid certified youth

# Durham Tamil Cultural & Academic Society's "Believe in You 2010" Youth & Children's Event on Sept 25th

Durham Tamil Cultural & Academic Society is organizing their annual youth & children's event "Believe in You 2010" at J. Clarke Richardson Collegiate, Ajax on Saturday 25th. September

Believe in You 2010 provides opportunity for children and youth to come together to share their talents, skills, knowledge and most of all to enjoy and appreciate various cultures through dance, the use of musical instruments, Drama and Singing. Some of the highlights of the show are

classical and non classical Bharatha natya dances, Hip Hop, drama, Walk Down Nursery Lane, Ceremony Trend Setters and an amazing Entertainment Era Dance. Most of the performances are choreographed by the Youth.

Date: September 25th, 2010  
Venue: J. Clarke Richardson Collegiate

Time: 6:30 PM  
Admission: \$5/person children under 3 years old free.

For more information on this

exciting event or those interested in sponsoring should call 416-857-0846

All funds collected from the show will be used towards youth and children academic enrichments and initiatives, Tamil culture awareness programs, health promotion activities and Seniors events.

The Society invites the public to join and support the talents of our youth and children.

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# GANDHI HERITAGE SITES PORTAL TO BE LAUNCHED SOON

Over 34,000 letters written by and to Mahatma Gandhi, documents related to his personal life and freedom struggle will soon be available at the click of a mouse under a Government of India plan, which will also see 2,000 lesser-known places associated with the apostle of peace sporting a new look.

The Government, in association with Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust at Ahmedabad, will soon launch the Gandhi Heritage Sites portal at a cost of Rs. 8 crore.

Besides, the Culture Ministry will also set up Gandhi Heritage Sites Mission at a cost of Rs. 42 crore during a five-year period to spruce up, protect and conserve the sites spread across eight countries including India with a view to showcase them to the younger

“**THE GOVERNMENT, IN ASSOCIATION WITH SABARMATI ASHRAM PRESERVATION AND MEMORIAL TRUST AT AHMEDABAD, WILL SOON LAUNCH THE GANDHI HERITAGE SITES PORTAL AT A COST OF RS. 8 CRORE**”

generation and to tourists. The portal will be set up at the Sabarmati Ashram, as recommended by a panel of eminent Gandhians and historians in the country headed by Gandhi's grandson Gopalakrishna Gandhi and will serve as a one-stop shop for people to know about Gandhi's personal and public life, a senior Culture Ministry official said today.

To establish the portal, government will provide Rs. 8 crore and a corpus fund is being set up, for which Rs. 4 crore is being released to the Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust (SAPMT) this month, the official said.

Sabarmati Ashram has by far the largest collection of carefully preserved manuscripts of Gandhi's writings during his stay in Sabarmati.

“The Library and Archives at Sabarmati

consist of 34,111 letters - either to Gandhiji or from him; original as well as photostat copies. These letters have been microfilmed and entered into register which is also on computer files,” the official said.

All these documents and letters will be available on the portal for public use and the decision was taken to preserve and perpetuate these invaluable heritages with proper research, in an authentic manner to showcase to the younger generation and also to the rest of the world.

The portal will be regularly updated by the Sabarmati Ashram to ensure that all relevant details on Gandhiji are incorporated in one site which will be unique in more than one sense, the official said, adding it will be interactive.

On the Heritage Sites Mission, the official said the sites, most of which are in a dilapidated condition, have been identified by the panel.

The Mission will be assisted by the existing Zonal Cultural Centers in Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

The Gandhi Heritage Sites Mission will be headed by a Chairperson who will be an eminent Gandhian and the Director of the Mission will be an officer of the rank of Joint Secretary.

The Panel has recommended 39 core sites which include Porbandar and Rajkot sites of the childhood period, Tilak Ghat, Chennai, Mani Bhavan, Mumbai, Beliaghata, Kolkata, the venue in Madurai where Gandhiji took to the loin-cloth, the prison cell in Yeravda Jail, Pune, and the prison room in Aga Khan Palace (Pune) etc.

Besides, nearly 2000 sites have been identified by the panel and they have covered almost every single place visited and associated with Gandhiji from 1869 to 1948, in India, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Mauritius, Burma (Myanmar), Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and venues in what now form parts of Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Sources said the committee had submitted a voluminous book detailing how and why the sites are associated with the apostle of peace. Almost all the 2,000 sites were visited by Gandhiji during the freedom struggle.

Under the scheme, the sites will be spruced up, painted properly and will also have signages and lighting arrangements.

The government will also put up sign boards which will educate the tourists about



A labourer walks past the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at Parliament House in New Delhi. A file photo: PTI

how and why Mahatma Gandhi was associated with the place.

The official said the Government is also mulling to appoint guides and volunteers to create awareness about the importance of the sites to both domestic and foreign tourists. The Culture Ministry appointed the committee in April 2006 for identifying

and documenting sites associated with Mahatma Gandhi, with a view to strengthening their upkeep and conservation for posterity.

The sites include public places, parks and committee halls where the Mahatma visited and stayed.

[PTI]

## University of Alberta to honour India's Eminent agriculture scientist

Eminent agriculture scientist M.S. Swaminathan will be bestowed with an honorary doctorate by University of Alberta, recognising the “power of one person to uplift an entire society,” and his contribution over the last 50 years to global food security.

The Edmonton-based University of Alberta will confer Dr. Swaminathan (85) with an honorary doctor of science degree on October 7.

He will also deliver the Bentley Lecture in Sustainable Agriculture/Lester Pearson Memorial Lecture on the occasion.

Report from University of Alberta Website:

‘Father of economic ecology’ to receive U of A honorary degree

Inspired by India's independence in 1947 and driven by a desire to see his country hunger-free, Monkombu Sambasivan Swaminathan, PhD, has led a global movement in sustainable food security.

In recognition of his efforts over the last half-century, Swaminathan will receive a University of Alberta honorary doctor of science degree on Oct. 7, and deliver the Bentley Lecture in Sustainable Agriculture/Lester Pearson Memorial Lecture that same day.

Swaminathan is a pioneer of the green revolution and a leader in his country when it comes to science and technology, said Nat Kav, associate dean of the U of A Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences.

“His contributions have been in the areas of science, in plant breeding and genetics, followed by taking that science to the level of the farmer



Agriculture scientist M.S. Swaminathan

“**HE HAS ALWAYS ADVOCATED FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND WHAT HE CALLS AN ‘EVERGREEN REVOLUTION,’ WHICH IS NOT JUST SUSTAINABLE TODAY BUT GENERATIONS BEYOND**”

and being concerned about gender equity and being concerned about the poorest of the poor and that's what I think makes him stand out,” said Kav. “In this day and age, with climate change and everything else looming and threatening our food security, he has always advocated for sustainable agriculture and what he calls an ‘evergreen revolution,’ which is not just sustainable today but generations beyond.”

Swaminathan created an agricultural revolution in India in the 1960s, when he pioneered techniques to crossbreed a dwarf Mexican seed with Japanese seeds

and local Indian varieties of wheat. As head of the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines for seven years, Swaminathan and his colleagues then used the same techniques to modify rice seeds with similar results.

In 1972, Swaminathan was one of the founding members of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, an organization set up to help developing countries in semi-arid tropical regions around the world to apply science to increase crop yields and improve farming systems for small farmers. The U of A's own Fred Bentley, for whom the Bentley Lecture in Sustainable Agriculture is named, was the first chair of the organization's board of governors, a position he held for 10 years. Convinced that true social change must focus on helping the poorest in society, Swaminathan founded

the Centre for Research on Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development, now the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, where scientists work directly with farmers and their families as true partners and collaborators.

A fellow of the leading scientific academies of India and the world, including the Royal Society of London and the National Academy of Sciences in the United States, Swaminathan co-chaired the United Nations Millennium Task Force on Hunger from 2002 to 2005. He also served as president of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs from 2002 to 2007. He has been called by the United Nations Environment Programme “the father of economic ecology.”

University Chancellor Linda Hughes is delighted to have the opportunity of Swaminathan's visit to bestow the honorary doctorate, noting that, “his legacy reminds all of us of the power of one person to uplift an entire society.”

Swaminathan will be speaking on “Food Safety and Security in an Era of Climate Change.” The ceremony and lecture will begin at 3:30 p.m. in the Myer Horowitz Theatre of the Students' Union Building.



WORDS OF PEACE

# What Are You Hungry For?

In our quest to be fulfilled, says Maharaji, an internationally renowned voice for peace, we don't recognize the nature of the quest itself. "We recognize solutions that people have offered," he says, "but we neglect to understand the quest. What are we hungry for?"

At the root of all the things people do to try to find fulfillment, Maharaji says, is a universal human need to feel peace.

Indian by birth, Maharaji now travels the world offering to reunite people with a part of themselves most have lost track of. He speaks to audiences in vast arenas in both major cities and remote villages. He has frequently addressed international peace conferences and government assemblies. His words are also available in a variety of media in nearly a hundred languages.

Because people are focused on what they think will bring them fulfillment, not the need that drives them towards it, he says, they often end up getting even more lost. He tells a story about three men "who were not very intelligent, but did as much as they could to make themselves appear as if they were, in fact, very smart.

"So they dressed up, combed their hair, put some pens in their pockets, and tried to emulate intelligent, very important people.

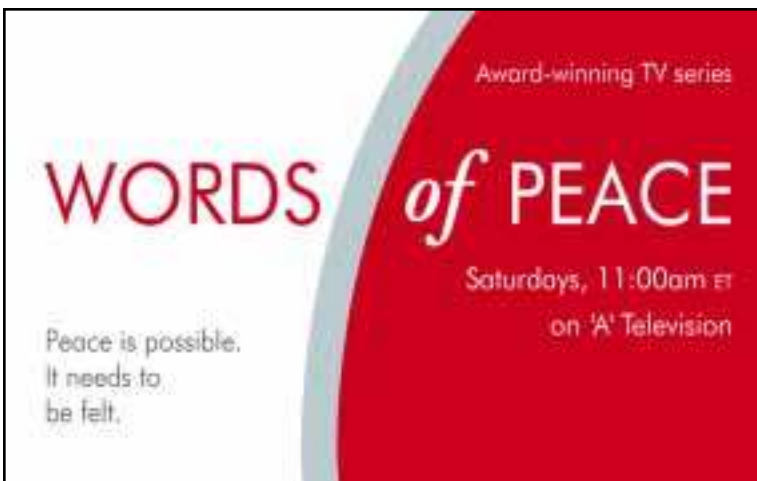
"One day as they were walking through town, they got very hungry, but they realized they didn't have any money. They went to see if the shopkeeper, seeing that they looked important, would give them some food on credit. He didn't. So they decided to steal the food. Not being so intelligent, they were caught and taken in front of a judge.

"The judge, looking at them, thought that there was something strange about them. 'I tell you what,' he said. 'I'm going to ask each of you a very simple ques-



"We have our explanations about why we are here," he says. "We fabricate our objectives, our points, our ideas. There are people who want to be intelligent, who want to be righteous, who want to be religious, but they are not, so they pretend. They use their logic-which is equivalent to dividing Tuesday by five thousand-and then think they have the right answer.

"Peace is a natural consequence of knowing. When ignorance is taken away, what is left is knowing. What is left is light. A lamp needs only to shine. A lamp only needs to be lit for the dark-



tion. If you can answer correctly, I'll let you go. If you can't, I'm going to send you to jail.'

"So the judge said to the first man, 'What is two plus two?' He scratched his head and said, 'Five thousand.' The judge said, 'No. You will be imprisoned.' He turned to the second one and said, 'How much is two plus two?' The second man scratched his head and said, 'Tuesday.'

"The judge said, 'No. You, too, will be imprisoned.'

"The third man was feeling very nervous, but when the judge asked the same question, he said, 'Four.' The judge said, 'Very good! Tell me, how did you come to that conclusion?' He said, 'Oh, it was very easy. I just divided Tuesday by five thousand.'"

This world is a lot like that, Maharaji says.

ness to go, and there will be light.

"Why is it so important for us to have light? Because when there is light, we can see. When we can see, then there is no more doubt. Then there is clarity."

While religions talk about heaven after death, Maharaji says, "I talk about having heaven now. The oldest scriptures that are at the root of many religions talk about the heaven that is here now, not one after death, and in these scriptures, there is a clear distinction between scientific knowledge and knowing the self. Knowing the self-this is why we are here."

To learn more about Maharaji, visit:

- www.wopg.org
- www.tprf.org
- Call 1 877 707 3221



that you know. You know you have a body. Now you take the body to its peak. Now I talk about the mind. That is also something that you know. Take it to its peak and then the next step. You can only grow by taking the next step, the next step, and the next step from where you are.

So yoga starts like this - with the body, then the breath and then the mind. Now we have

# Yoga - Taking the Next Step



**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)**

sleep." Doesn't it do it? It has its own way. So we start with the body. Hatha yoga is a way of working with the body, disciplining the body, purifying the body, preparing the body for higher levels of energy. All of us are alive; all of us are human beings, sitting here. But all of us do not experience life to the same intensity because our energy levels are not the same. Different people experience life in different levels of intensity.

For example, somebody sees a tree. A tree is just a tree. Most people don't even see it. Somebody sees the tree in more detail. An artist sees every shade of it. Somebody else not only sees the tree but also sees the Divine in it. Everybody sees. But seeing is not the same because the level of intensity with which you experience life is not the same. So we start with the body because that is something that you know.

The whole process of yoga is to take you from something that you know and take the next step into the unknown. So now I talk about the body. This is something

made this yogic science almost like a physical science. Suppose you mix two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen; you get water. Even when a great scientist puts it together it is water. Even if an idiot puts it together, it is only water. Similarly, in yoga too, if you do this, this, and this, only this will happen. Whether a great yogi does it or an ignorant person does it, it doesn't matter. If he does the practices and sadhana properly, the result is there to be seen.

In yoga, these systems have been identified. To start with, you work with the body, then you move to the breath, then to the mind, then to the inner self. Like this many steps have been created. They are only different aspects. They are not really branches of yoga. In fact we address all of them at once. It is important that in a very balanced way all of them are addressed at once, as one unit. Otherwise, if you work just with the body, it is only preparatory in nature. So, there is really no division as such. Yoga is a union of all these.

## Inspiration Driving Institute



**S.S. MATHAVAN**

**Inspiration Driving Institute**

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Scarborough.

**Cell: 416-939-4913**

**Bus: 416-847-9773**





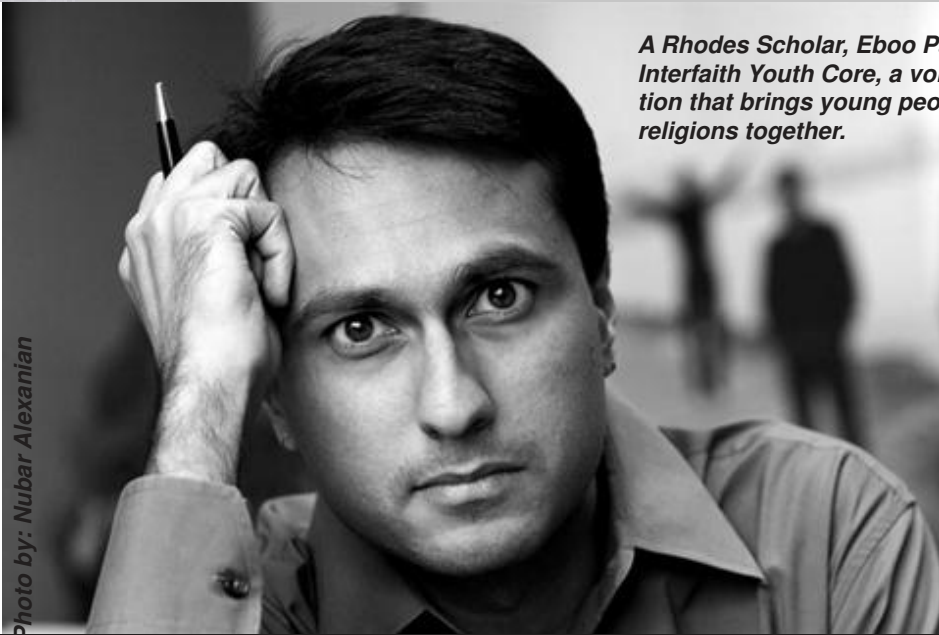


Photo by: Nubar Alexanian

A Rhodes Scholar, Eboo Patel established Interfaith Youth Core, a volunteer organization that brings young people from different religions together.

# American Muslim Builds Bridges Among Faiths

Eboo Patel brings together young people of different religions

By Susan Logue Koster

Eboo Patel says he has always been interested in the diversity of religious experience.

He was born in 1975 to Muslim Indian parents, and emigrated with them from Bombay to Chicago when he was an infant. Patel grew up with friends of different religious backgrounds.

By the time he was 13 he was asking himself, "What does it mean to be a Muslim, when your friends are a Hindu, a Jew, a Nigerian evangelical, a Mormon, a Lutheran, a Catholic?"

As he became more serious about his religion, Islam, and as his friends became more serious about their religions, Patel says they started to have a conversation about faith "in a higher-level way."

## Conversation about faith

Patel recounts that experience in his 2007 memoir, "Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation."

His idea for an Interfaith Youth Core, inspired by other service organizations like the Peace Corps, began to develop at Oxford University in England, where, as a Rhodes Scholar, Patel received a doctorate in the sociology of religion.

"The basic idea of the Interfaith Youth Core is young people from different religions should be volunteering together, cleaning rivers, tutoring children, building houses. And they should use that as an entre into having a conversation about how their different religions inspire them to serve others," Patel says.

The Core's first projects were conducted outside of the United States. Patel learned the methodology and theory of interfaith work by practicing it in South Africa and Kenya and

Sri Lanka and India. He studied the Sarvodaya Shramadana movement in Sri Lanka, learned about Ubuntu from African traditionalists in South Africa, and helped run an interfaith service learning project with Habitat for Humanity in Hyderabad, India.

President Barack Obama appointed Eboo Patel to the White House Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

## Interfaith Youth Core

President Barack Obama appointed Eboo Patel to the White House Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

## A permanent home

In 2002, he returned to Chicago, and with a grant from the Ford Foundation, established a permanent home base for the Interfaith Youth Core.

He reminds people that core is spelled as it is, "because we in Chicago see ourselves as simply the core of a growing global movement."

In 2006, the Interfaith Youth Core, which has worked with refugees and the homeless in Chicago, did go global, participating in an exchange with young interfaith leaders in Jordan. Since then, IFYC members and alumni have traveled to Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, the Philippines, and elsewhere to share their experiences. They have also conducted training workshops in the United Kingdom, Qatar, throughout Europe, and in India.

"People are realizing that this issue of interfaith coopera-

tion, it matters in a huge way," Patel says.

Among those realize that is President Barack Obama, who appointed Patel to the White House Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. And the president is not alone. Patel was named one of America's Best Leaders of 2009 by the weekly news magazine "U.S. News and World Report." That year he was also chosen as one of five "future policy leaders to watch" by Harvard's Kennedy School review, and was honored with the Roosevelt Institute's Freedom of Worship Medal.

## Religious totalitarians vs. pluralists

Patel believes that the most divisive issue of the 21st century will be religion, or as he puts it, "the faith line."

"But the faith line doesn't divide Christians and Muslims, Jews and Buddhists. The faith line divides religious totalitarians and religious pluralists."

Patel defines religious totalitarians as those who condemn every religion other than their own. At their most extreme, religious totalitarians, like the suicide bombers of today, will kill anyone who doesn't share their beliefs.

On the other side, Patel says, are the religious pluralists. "The religious pluralist says, 'I deeply believe in my religious tradition, but I understand that your way of believing and belonging is right for you,'" he explains. "I want to cultivate a sense of understanding and cooperation. I want to figure out how you and I, Christian and Muslim, Jew and Buddhist, Baha'i and Hindu, how we can collectively serve the common good."

[VOA News]

## Flood Emergency in Pakistan Not Over

By Lisa Schlein

(Sep 4) The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is urging the international community not to turn its attention away from the crisis in flood-stricken Pakistan. The UNHCR says the emergency is far from over and the survivors of these catastrophic floods will be in need of aid for a long time.

The UN refugee agency says the floodwaters in some parts of Pakistan are receding and more people are returning home. Despite this, the agency says the overall humanitarian situation throughout the country remains serious.

Aid workers report conditions are worsening in the thousands of spontaneous settlements and camps that have sprung up over the last few weeks.

UNHCR spokesman Adrian Edwards says the growing crisis in Balochistan province is of particular concern. He says this area has received little attention compared to those

closer to the Indus River. He says floods still affect almost two million people there, including 600,000 who fled from neighboring Sindh. "We are seeing a persistent threat of water borne diseases, shortages of shelter, and very limited quantities of food for children," said Edwards. "In southern Sindh, where floodwaters hit Thatta and surrounding districts last week, thousands of families are now living on streets without water and sanitation. According to the authorities about 20 percent of people displaced by floods in this area are returning to villages to salvage and protect what property they still have there."

The UNHCR warns people returning home by boat will remain cut off until the waters recede further. On the other hand, it notes the tens of thousands of people unable to return are expected to remain displaced for several months. In either case, UNHCR spokesman



File Photo: www.flickr.com

Edwards says there is an urgent need to improve conditions for the displaced and support people returning home.

"We are deploying additional staff to identify needs of the most vulnerable groups," added Edwards. "Given the scale of the crisis and aid shortages we want to see better targeting of aid and more orderly mechanisms of distribution. If you can understand the situation of all people, women are not best placed to run after trucks handing out aid. We want to see improvements there."

As elsewhere in Pakistan, the UNHCR says

it is stepping up its activities in Sindh. It says it has opened new offices to manage operations in the south and north of the province.

The agency says it has deployed a number of experts to advise local Pakistani officials on the management and coordination of camps. It says it is continuing the distribution of shelter supplies. Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority estimates 1.25 million houses have been destroyed or damaged by the floods. Aid agencies report more than five million people still are in desperate need of shelter.

[VOA News]

## Global Uncertainty Drives Demand For Gold



Aug 30, Washington: Demand for gold is expected to rise as a weak US dollar and persistent fears of a double dip recession weigh on investors. Despite falling slightly from historic highs earlier this year, the precious metal remains a safe and attractive invest-

ment. Analysts expect the price to stay strong for the rest of the year, thanks in part to accelerating demand from India and China.

After four weeks of consecutive gains, higher prices for gold don't appear to be denting demand.

With the price remaining steady above 12-hundred and 36 dollars an ounce, the amount investors are willing to pay is rising.

"We believe the price floor, if you will has moved upwards," said Marcus Grubb, a managing director at the World Gold Council.

One reason is that demand for the precious metal typically rises as the Indian Festival season gets underway. India is among the world's largest consumers of gold. But demand is rising in other parts of the world.

Grubb notes buying is especially brisk when the price of gold fluctuates.

"What we're now seeing is if you see the gold price come back below 1200, 50 to 100 dollars below that, you see strong physical buying on a daily basis," Grubb said.

The World Gold Council expects demand to remain strong for the rest of the year, due in part to growing demand from China.

Beijing has recently moved to liberalize rules so citizens can buy gold. It is also allowing domestic banks to buy and sell gold to encourage more liquid trade. Some investors believe China's entry into the gold market could drive prices above 13-hundred dollars an ounce. But not everyone is tempted.

For investment manager Justin Stewart,

gold is just another commodity. "Be rather wary of gold. Whilst of course it has certain attractions, I regard it really as no more than a financial teddy bear; you can cuddle it, you can stroke it, you can put it on your pillow next to you, but it doesn't do anything, it doesn't give you any yield. And so therefore, you are at the vagaries of demand," he said.

Despite the naysayers, gold remains an attractive commodity for people worried about inflation and the impact of increasing debt carried by the world's largest economies.

Central banks and monetary authorities are the biggest holders of the world's gold because of its ability to maintain its value.

[VOA News]



It is fifteen long months since "the internal War" against the LTTE was successfully brought to close. Some sections of the global media make the erroneous distinction the war was against the Tamils in the North. In the days, weeks and months following the ending of the conflict President Rajapakse and his brothers - Gothabaya, the Defence Secretary and Basil, now a senior Minister - made many high profile announcements the North - and the East, no less - will see "unprecedented development" from then on. It is no secret similar assurances were given by the VVIP trio to the

and sooner. There are more tele-phones, more electrical supply than before, Television sets, Radio, Internet facilities - more the result of private sector endeavour than the planned and coordinated action of State sources. Newer cars, buses, lorries are a welcome change to the drab pre-1960 vehicles that dotted the Peninsular landscape. But what is most needed is new investment by the State to create new jobs and opportunities to meet the existing and displaced population that is streaming in.. Houses with in-built facilities, clean drinking water, efficient drainage

tion - that can continue to undermine the credibility of the Rajapakse family itself. Provision of a functioning Swimming Pool in Jaffna Town will be a tremendous plus in the regime's name is what should be recognized by those carrying the writ of the regime there - more specifically GA Chandrasiri.

The centuries-old developed fishing industry in the Peninsula - and, indeed the NEP - needs much more State consideration than it is receiving now. Freedom for the fishermen to go out to the sea at times of their choice is still restricted. New boats, nets, equipment are still

diplomat and Government advisor - in his appearance before the LL&RC - recalled the 480 World Bank and donot-sponsored Projects that the government placed during the negotiations with the LTTE during the P-Toms talks. The latter were to reject this for reasons of their own while it is clear if these projects had taken off the Tamil people of the region would have harvested much benefit. There is no reason why most of these projects cannot be revisited again. Mr Gothabaya Rajapakse, in the same sitting confirmed 500 Tamils from the North are being currently trained at the Kalutara Police Training School for deployment in the Jaffna District. His announcement it is the intention of the government to reduce the military role to be replaced by the local Police is something the Tamil people will welcome and which will go a long way in "winning the hearts and minds of the Tamil people" - a priority of the regime

Rebecca Cohn of USAID announced last July they are ready to provide training for 10,000 jobs in the Jaffna District as follows :- Construction industry/5,000 Garment Industry/1,800 BPO/IT industry/3,200. Ms Cohen said a sum of Rs.4 billion has been earmarked for this purpose.

The KKS Cement Works, the Paranthan Chemical factory, the Valaichenai Paper factory,

Precious earth and Mineral sands in the Pulumuddai area were all State-sponsored high-value Investments that suffered varying degrees of decline in the past 3 decades. In recent times many well known names in global trade and commerce have expressed interest to re-establish these vital units under expert private guidance, modernisation and new investment. Taken together, these ventures can provide that number of jobs that can virtually take care of the entire employment requirements of the Tamil-Muslims and also provide space for other communities as well.

While the good intentions of the government are not contested the people of the North-East Province are still not totally free of fear, insecurity and weaknesses in the law and order system. Since this is a forum in which the views of the Tamil people may be conveyed to the attention of the rulers for action, I cite some of the more urgent problems and concerns hereunder.

Globally, land is often the cause of bitter conflict in plural societies as we now see in the Gaza between the Israelis and the Palestianians. In the smaller countries with large and growing populations, this grave problem assumes dangerous proportions. In his testimony before the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapakse recently confirmed HSZ properties in the Wannai and Gurunagar area have been "entirely restored" which is pleasing to hear as HSZ properties in the North comprise of 80% of agricultural land. The confiscation of this can be translated to meaning the people concerned being condemned to eventual starvation. The release of the land the Defence Secretary mentioned is yet



to be confirmed by the people of the area. In Santhapuram and Indupuram areas in Kilinochchi 1,200 families have been virtually chased out of their land. 300 acres in Thirumurugandy and Mullikulam in Mannar and similar number of displacements in Keppapaluwa in Mullaitivu private land in large extents have been expropriated supposedly to set up large army cantonments. Priority attention should be paid as to where these displaced people - infants, children, women, the old and sick - are to live when their homes are so brutally plundered. Whether the State requires an army of 100,000-200,000 in peace times is yet another valid question. Nowhere in the world does one find civilian/army ratio to be in the region of 3:1. The sum allocated for defence, reported to be in the region of Rs.2.5 billion, economists suggest, can be used to house the displaced and the IDPs and re-make their broken livelihoods. 400 acres of valuable beach-front land in Trinco North Kachaveli, Irrakandy and Kumburupitti - areas which are 95% Tamil - have been allocated to new Sinhala settlers is something that speaks for itself. It will also help the government's image - both within and more without - if the other properties seized, except those with uncontested security considerations, are restored soon. If these steps are taken the Tamils of the region will have little to doubt about their future in an undivided country. To avoid much public skepticism it will help if the Government issues formal Communiques giving details of the properties expropriated, the reason and alternative arrangement made to the owners.

Yet another matter of concern on the part of the people particularly in the Jaffna District is the employment-trading opportunities and income that should come their way is finding the hands of outsiders who appear to enjoy much State sponsorship and encouragement. There is also the fear the intention of some powerful sections in the ruling circles is to ensure that the commanding heights of Trade and Commerce in the Tamil areas to be reserved for them while the lower opportunities are to find the hands of the locals. Former senior Civil Servant and now President of the Northern NGOs Mr. C.V.K. Sivagnanam estimates WB/ADB and other donors will come out with over Rs.50,000 million in the next 3 years. He proposes most of the Contractual work be given to those in the area so that the estimated 10% that usually goes as Contracts fee is retained in the District for investment within. The Jaffna Chamber of Commerce, the Yalpalanam Chamber are all willing to provide the required technical and managerial know-how in that policy of the Government to help the Jaffna District find its earlier feet in the commanding heights of business.

Contd. in Page 49...

# WHY IS DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT IN THE NORTH LUKE-WARM

higher echelons of the Government of India as well. The interim period is a fair space in time to subject the administration to a form of audit between Promises and Performances, which probably is the same question, inter alia, India's Foreign Secretary Smt. Nirupama Rao raises with the regime as I write this piece.

Relatively free travel to and fro the Peninsula for people and goods is something everyone welcomes - more the Tamil people. This is hardly disputed. Both have gone out to benefit the both sides - in bringing down the Cost of Living.. Greater movement of Fish, vegetables, Chillies, Onions, Pulses, Dried Fish from the North to the South in the hastily improved A9 motorway has been greeted with pleasant smiles from housewives. The large and regular movement of people to the North from the South and vice versa has increased trade and the inflow of goods to an area that was denied this for nearly 3 decades. This self-inflicted fate of the Tamils is no fault of the government or the Sinhala people goes without saying. But this rapid traffic also has resulted in some complaints in the form of cultural and behavioral differences. The Police in the North also have been burdened by heightened incidents of thefts, robbery, intimidation etc., particularly in and around the area of the much venerated Nallur Kandasamy Temple - widely believed to be committed by outsiders. While the more scholarly and piety inclined Sinhalese do come to visit, pray and learn there are others who do not sufficiently hide their misconceived role of coming as "victors over the vanquished" - which is, quite rightly, objected to in the North. But this, one concedes, has to be expected as part of the bubble and not part of an engineered programme. Mischievous elements from both sides out to keep tensions high and the people divided could well be at work was seen when 3 petty traders of furniture from Moratuwa were physically attacked. Hopefully, these convulsions will settle down soon - in the interests of all concerned.

The occasional repair of roads, bridges, hospitals, schools in Jaffna is seen but much needs to be done



systems, irrigation facilities need to come up rapidly. Many houses were destroyed by the war and new ones have not come in place. NHDA and the State has been somewhat slower here although some houses have been repaired and some newly built - again more through private and individual enterprise. Better health facilities, schools, repair and building of places of worship of more immediate need to the people here - are somewhat slow in coming. Emphasis on restoring the rail service to the South through the intervention of the Indian government, laying down new tracks and new routes are not only welcome by the Tamil North but also will stimulate economic growth contributing to the national GDP.

Why the Government slowed down in that high-profile project to provide a Swimming Pool to the people of Jaffna located at Jaffna Central School is a low mark in better relations between the two communities. After all, this was opened by no less a person than young MP Namal Rajapakse, the son of the President - with much fan-fare in the presence of the influential Government Agent Maj. Gen (Rtd) G. A. Chandrasiri- the point man of Temple Trees. Namal's personal support unit "Nil Balakaya (Blue Brigade)" was entrusted with the task but was later found abandoning the project - with cement, steel and all missing - leaving a huge, gaping and potentially dengue-producing hole in the ground threatening the health of multiple thousands of people there. Despite severe public censure here little seems to have been done to avert the situa-

in short supply. The bigger and high-finance Ice factories and modern freezer facilities promised are still to come. Much concern has been expressed by fishermen in the East and the North new arrivals from elsewhere in the country have encroached upon their traditional catches - something that must be looked into and settled before this becomes another serious problem. Though there is more than one ministry supposed to help the fishing industry coordination between the various agencies are seriously flawed.

While the people of the District and the N-EP appreciate the role played by Mr Kumar Devapura of Tri Star Apparels to train and find employment for ex-LTTE cadres paying them a reasonable remuneration during training period, the number of garment factories - the largest foreign-exchange earning sector - established in the District is well below expectation. MAS, Brandix, Aitken Spence, Hirdramanis, Favourites, Star Garments and other majors need to get more involved in the District to raise the living standards of the people to reflect those of their Southern brethren.

Nestle has given a lead in helping establish a Milk-chilling Plant and collection centres. The development of the Dairy industry, goat-farming, large Poultry farms should be encouraged and set up in these areas. Most of the economic activity should benefit the IDPs out of long incarceration to usher in that necessary aura of peace and stability that is sine quo non.

Mr Bernard Gunatilaka, senior





# Wedding customs among Jaffna Tamils



In the past, before the advent of European rule in Jaffna, weddings were fully based on local customs. However, later with western influence, the legal registration of marriage has become an important part of weddings. Generally, this registration ceremony is fixed before the traditional wedding. This event usually takes place in the Bride's house. The bride wears a traditional costume. This includes silk sari and different types of gold jewellery. They also change their rings in front of the registrar in western style and put their signature on the marriage

document. Relatives and close friends are invited for this ceremony and a lunch or dinner is arranged there in a traditional way to those who attend the function.

#### Preparation of the Venue for Wedding

In Jaffna the wedding ceremony takes place either at the bride's house or at a Temple. In the recent past wedding halls have been constructed within many temple complexes. A few decades ago, arranging weddings at the home was regarded as more respectable. Large temporary sheds are built in front of the

house to accommodate the people who attend the wedding ceremony. This interior of the sheds are clad with white cloth and decorated with flowers, garlands, tender coconut palm leaves, colored papers and other materials. A decorative wedding seat is made within this structure. This seat is generally made by assembling readymade components made out of wood, velvet cloth, other brightly colored fabrics, glass beads with glittery coatings etc.

At the entrance to the house compound plantain trees are erected on both sides with the bunch of fruits. Here, on a table Niraikudam, which literally means "full pot", is placed with traditional lamps and other auspicious items. This "full pot" is regarded as a symbol of prosperity as well as an invitation.

"Thaali" the Nuptial Cord and the Gold Melting Ceremony "Ponnurukku"

The most important item in a Hindu marriage in Jaffna as well as in South India is a nuptial cord called Thaali. During the wedding the bridegroom tie this cord with three knots on the bride's neck. This is the climax of the wedding ceremony and in the past ladies never remove the "Thaali" from their neck when their husband is alive and they give great respect to this thaali. In fact Thaali prop-

er is a small pendant attached to the cord.

A few days before the wedding day, a small ceremony with a small gathering of very close relatives is held at the groom's house. This is arranged for melting the gold for making the thaali. The Gold smith, who was commissioned to make the thaali, performs the ceremonial melting. The groom would sit in front of the gold smith during this melting process. If the gold melts and hardens to a uniform round shape piece, it is regarded as a good sign. The Gold smith will use this gold for making thaali.

Climax of the Jaffna Hindu wedding, tying the "Thaali", the nuptial cord on the bride's neck.

#### Ceremony

This wedding ceremony is held in traditional style. The Bride, Bridegroom and the visitors wear traditional dresses. During the wedding ceremony one of the bride's brother usually a younger one would act as groom's companion. He would also wear a costume similar to the groom's one. He goes to the bridegrooms house with his relatives and accompanies the groom to the venue of the wedding. A Hindu priest officiates the wedding ceremony. Various elements and activities of this ceremony are highly symbolic and it is not appropriate to explain everything

here.

The priest would sit in front of the ceremonial wedding seat and he creates a small fire there. The ceremony takes place in front of it. When people refer to weddings they say that the the symbol of the Fire witnessed these. First the groom comes and sits on the seat. The priest performs certain rituals. After this the bride is brought to the seat by her companion usually one of the groom's sisters. She sits on the right side of the groom. A new silk sari known as the "Koorai" is presented to the bride and she goes back and changes her dress and comes back again dressed in the "Koorai" saree. The rituals would continue and as a climax the groom ties the nuptial cord on the neck of the bride. At this point she becomes the wife of the man and switches their places so that the bride sits on the left side of the groom. As per Hindu tradition the one's wife sit on her husband's left side. During the wedding ceremony the traditional "Nadhaswaram" music is played.

At the end, those who attended the wedding greet the couple by spraying rice mixed with some other auspicious things on their heads. After the ceremony is over lunch or dinner is served for the guests on plantain leaves on the floor.

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# Tamils deserve a fair hearing

## KW Record - Editorial

Canada may not owe a new home to the 492 Tamil migrants who arrived in a ship off the British Columbia coast last week. But it does owe them a fair hearing to determine if they are legitimate refugees deserving of generous sanctuary. That is what our laws say we must do. That is the kind of country we are and should be.

It is not, of course, the kind of country we always were. No one should forget that on the eve of the Second World War in 1939, the Canadian government, infected by bigotry and paranoia, turned back the MS St. Louis with its human cargo of more than 900 Jews trying to escape the murderous clutches of Germany's Nazi regime. After the ship returned to Europe, and to Canada's shame, more than 250 of the passengers died in the Holocaust.

Do any of these Tamils now being held in custody in B.C. face

mortal danger if they return to their Sri Lankan homeland? None of the alarmists deriding them as queue jumpers or criminals can say because these critics simply don't know.

But we do know that Sri Lanka remains traumatized by the 26-year-long civil war that consumed thousands of lives and displaced hundreds of thousands of others before it ended in 2009. We do know the Tamils lost that bloody, protracted conflict.

And we also know that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees last month declared that while Tamils are no longer at risk of indiscriminate harm in Sri Lanka, some members of this ethnic minority, including human rights activists, journalists, child soldiers, women and children, could truly need protection.

There is, therefore, sufficient evidence to convince fair-minded people that at least some Tamils, and yes possibly some who

arrived aboard the MV Sun Sea last week, are fleeing persecution and the threat of physical harm, that they are, in fact, refugees.

Yes, it is easier to manage prospective refugees who apply to be admitted to Canada from outside of this country. It's true that the sudden arrival of so many people on Canada's doorstep creates huge and expensive problems for this country. But this is the situation that confronts us and we should deal with it wisely, compassionately as well as cautiously.

This vigilance is necessary. There is a possibility that some of last week's arrivals are economic migrants or even members of the Tamil Tigers which is considered a terrorist group by the federal government. All of this will not easily be sorted out.

Yet Canadians who try to put all of this in perspective will remember that individual boatloads of Sikhs, Tamils and Chinese

landed on our shores in the 1980s, 1990s and last year. Whenever that has happened, fears have been raised that more and more boatloads are on the horizon, just as people said in 1939 when the Jews aboard the MS St. Louis tried to land. But the arrivals of such ships have been rare and isolated incidents.

No alien armada has appeared to disgorge swarms of invaders. Instead, our recent history has been characterized more by waves of legitimate refugees - Hungarians, Czechs, Central Americans, Vietnamese - finding a safe haven in Canada then building a Canadian home.

Remember, too, that the 492 Tamils on Vancouver Island are but a fraction of the 30,000 people who apply to be accepted into Canada as refugees each year. Far, far more people who apply for refugee status do so individually or in small groups at Canadian airports. But their arrival is hardly as sensational as that of a large, ocean-going vessel that has been at sea for months.



This is not a time for idle speculation, fanciful fears or red-hot rhetoric about terrorists or opportunists trying to barge into Canada. Politicians of all stripes should take care.

It is a time to suspend hard judgments, gratuitous assumptions and sweeping conclusions, a time to wait for the facts and a time to let Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board do its job. Let this board work and answer the question that matters most: Are these 492 people, or even some of them, refugees? When that is determined, their future in or out of Canada can be settled according to our laws as well as our shared and cherished values.

# Tamil community salutes scholar Umayal Muthu

## Remembering Barathiyar

Waterloo: Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region held its annual Tamil literature evening at the University of Waterloo on August 22. This year's theme was Barathiyar - Tamil Poet. The guest speaker was Umayal Muthu, Tamil scholar from Detroit, USA.

Barathiyar was born in a remote village in South India and constantly lived in penury, his

vision was grand and rich. He wrote not only poems but several articles in various journals about such diverse subjects like the prison reforms in America, the Russian revolution, the proceedings of the French Parliament, the barbarian practice of binding the feet of the young female children in China.

Bharati's vision engulfed not only all living beings but also the entire world of the inanimate. He

revels in ecstasy thus: "Crows and sparrows are my creed...The Oceans and mountains my kins..." He is truly a world poet with a Cosmic Vision.

A large number of guests from the Waterloo region, Guelph and Toronto attended the event. Prof. Pala Kannappan honored the guest speaker.

TCAWR has made available video clippings of the lecture on its face book.







**Samy Appadurai**

It was a pleasant morning, with the bright sun and the colour of the skirt of the sky flowing from royal blue to snow white. I entered into the Scarborough Town Centre and made an inaugural speech at the Guinness World Record Breaking event of bicycling for five days by Mr. Suresh Joachim who is the second highest number world record breaker. After completing my speech, I mingled with the audience and the topic turned from the weather to politics. The most interesting and timely discussion that we had was on the current state of Ontario politics ranging from the broken promises made by Dalton

has itself become sick. How can we expect patients to have access to fair treatment in a sickly system? As was mentioned during the election campaign, the waiting periods have never improved. The long-term waiting period for surgeries has not improved either. Due to these problems some of the doctors in Ontario have pulled up stakes and have migrated elsewhere. During these two terms, the health care system has not improved; rather it is getting more deteriorated.

I would like to pinpoint certain areas where the provincial government could have taken an alternative step. For example, at the initial stage itself, presently, the Eco tax was quietly levied under the cover of charging the companies that over pollute the air by using inefficient or lower quality sources of energy. It wasn't somehow passed to the customers from the concerned producers, and the

going to see?

Just before levying the HST on the first of July, 2010, the government decided to pay almost a thousand dollars in three instalments as of June 2010, December 2010, and June 2011 to middle and low income Ontarians. The first instalment cheque is to soften the blow just before the hit of the tax. With the second instalment, we are given a break from the HST during the holiday season, and the third instalment is paid just before the election, aiming to get more votes as support from Ontarians. I think McGuinty's government has underestimated the intelligence of Ontarians and their patriotic commitments to their province. His political cousin the respectful Paul Martin did the same thing by providing hundred dollar cheques to lower income Canadians just before the federal elections. People did not hesitate in receiving the cheques for

plary measures taken by the Federal government. A sincere government with a long-term commitment with creating a better future for our children should have taken the short-term pain for the long-term gain.

The province of Ontario, the former Upper Canada, the backbone of the Canadian economy, is losing its economic influence and is on the verge of becoming a have-not province. Our forefathers shed their blood, put in their hard work and made this province the heart of the Canadian economy. Their marvellous contributions along with a diversified economy brought a substantial achievement that should be maintained by the provincial government. It is mandatory for them to do so. The oil sand in Alberta and the recent discovery of oil in Newfoundland along with the discovery of valuable minerals in the so-called Northern desert serves to

accordance with a specific need of the province. There are some provinces, like Manitoba, in Canada working extensively hard in choosing apples from oranges. The Ontario government has not gone far enough in having a better selection process of new immigrants who can be directly absorbed into the current labour market or current economy. Ontario received over 50% of the new immigrants to Canada, mainly processed under the federal skilled workers category, and once they came here, most of them could not find jobs in their field of expertise due to various preventing factors such as acceptance of credentials, lack of Canadian experience and lack of sufficient guidance in exploring the right jobs. I have seen doctors, engineers, accountants, and lawyers who have been working as limousine and taxi drivers and delivering pizza.

Let's look into the educational

# Ontario - Where Are We Heading?

McGuinty's government to the ineffective and inefficient managing of government tasks at the expense of the taxpayers' money. Premier Dalton McGuinty started off his first term by blaming the previous Conservative government for keeping the treasury virtually empty leaving nothing for him to carry out his assignments. It was an exaggeration from the reality and provided an inappropriate and lame excuse for his execution of his policies. All of his budgets have high levels of deficit and the last budget's deficit has climbed up to \$24.7 billion. Along with that he broke many promises, such as the one stating that no new taxes would be introduced, but then the Health Premium was put into effect, and collected billions of dollars from Ontarians. The workers who had contributed to the Health Premium realized with a shock that not all of the money from this premium had gone entirely to the support of health care services. Almost two billion out of the three billion dollars collected had gone into the general treasury. The accountability, the trustworthiness, and the reliability have not been well kept. Many have lost confidence in these kinds of broken promises and the inappropriate execution of power. In the absence of maintaining the same level of social services that had been previously provided, the increasing of taxes cannot be justified, and the lack of efficient management has made many Ontarians disappointed. Mr. Dalton McGuinty should take the blame for the inappropriate spending of the taxpayers' money, in some cases billions of dollars. Ontarians had a very high hope in the investing of billions of dollars on the E-Health project, but the government auditor's report indicates that it has not been properly carried over. At the time of the recession, this hurt many Ontarians. Furthermore, over a million Ontarians still do not have a family doctor. The Canadian Doctors' Association met recently and drew up a list of recommendations to contribute to the betterment of a more extended health care system. But, the existing health care system



prices of certain household items skyrocketed. The Toronto Star, though it is more inclined in elevating the Liberal government, brought the cat out of the bag. The consumers had to carry the tax burden and pocket out more money. I don't know why this was so poorly planned and secretly implemented. The concern over the danger of air pollution (which is certainly legitimate) had given the green light to the government by the Ontarians under the notion that it would bring a greener and brighter future. But the way it was planned and executed appears to be aimed at generating more revenue at any cost to be lavishly spent as it was spent on the E-Health record project. When a little opposition cropped up, the concerned minister immediately took a step back and then brought forward a modification; implementation would remain suspended for ninety days and then the Eco tax would come back in a different form. It appears that the confused government is creating more confusion among the people. In fact, more than the private sector, some of the government sectors are polluting the air very badly by using poor sources of power such as coal. Why isn't the government levying a tax against itself? The McGuinty government had made a promise in their first term to replace plants that had been powered by coal to a more efficient source of power, but this has yet to be seen. Until then, how many more "eco-fees" are we

they had come from their own taxpayers' treasury and cast their votes to the efficient and appropriate politicians thus disappointing Paul Martin by not giving enough support for him to form a government.

Let us move onto the future of the younger generation and what types of concerns this government has for them. Much more than planning ahead for their future, and allocating more investments, it is highly required that we should not mortgage their lives and pass our tax burdens onto them and make our lives much more comfortable than what we deserve. The provincial government debt is climbing up and the deficit has been growing upwards ever since Bob Rae of the Liberals, who had been the Premier of Ontario under the NDP, left the government treasury almost empty and passed it on to the Progressive Conservative party under the leadership of Mike Harris. The Progressive Conservative government balanced the budget and had a surplus in the treasury and paid quite a sum of money to cancel the debt. Today Harper's Conservative government, when the economy was in good shape, paid almost 40 billion dollars, and brought down the national debt. We, the taxpayers, pay millions as interest for the government debt and that again takes proportionately a certain amount of money from other services. The McGuinty government should have considered the exem-

shift the focus from Ontario to the North, the West and the East. We have to come to a more balanced state and create better economic plans, implement more efficient management, and develop strong interprovincial initiatives which in turn will build better relationships between all of the provinces. Better relationships build a stronger economy.

At the recent Premier's Summit in Winnipeg, Manitoba, some of the Western premiers did not want more dependency on the federal government and started taking initiatives in their economies by having international development in their trade agreements. Whereas Ontario's government has not been adequate enough in focusing and progressing on these types of projects. The premier made a visit to Israel and made some progress in promoting Ontario's trade, but he has a long way to go and has to explore better markets from the European Union to China.

It is very unfortunate that the weakened American economy somewhat affected the Canadians, particularly the state of Canadian exports. Furthermore the protectionist policy implemented in President Obama's economy reduced, shifted and permanently closed some industries, mainly the automobile production facilities in Canada. The Ontario government should have made some alternative arrangements and brought forth some more initiatives in terms of building up better relationships in maintaining the economy. It is very unfortunate that the unemployment rate of Ontario is higher than the national average. Right now, the national unemployment rate is 7.9% and Ontario's has not come down from 9%.

Ontario is blessed with many natural resources but is finding it difficult to have educated human resources. The natural increase of population is slowing down and the numbers of seniors are both very high and Ontario needs more skilled workers. Though it is the responsibility of the federal government, the provincial governments have some access in choosing immigrants in

fabric of Ontario. There are a number of people making complaints about the closing of certain schools. My concern is that we need to channel more money into the classroom. The money that we spend for our education is more of an investment than expenditure. I have not seen much structural change and the current provincial government has not made any attempt to resolve long overdue problems. When Janet Eiker was the Minister of Education, a couple of drastic measures were taken and some of them were controversial, but the ones that have been accepted and implemented are very fruitful. The example of common examinations for grade 3, grade 6, grade 9, and the grade 10 literacy test, has been slightly deviated and moving on in a different direction. It was clearly proclaimed that such common examinations were a good evaluation tool, but right now, it has been said by some, that the examinations are made easier and marks are inflated. If so, it defeated the purpose and misled the educators and children. The dropout rate is another problem in Ontario. Almost 30% of high school students and 40% of first-year students in certain universities cannot cope with their studies and end up dropping out. The reasons are diverse but it is mainly because of the lack of proper learning and teaching processes and there is no point in blaming the parents or the kids and allowing the government to wash their collective hands. We expect a qualitative education in line with today's fast-changing world so our young people are equipped to face this brave new world.

It is high time for Ontarians to have a change of government. It is not for the sake of change, but rather for the betterment of the province by having a leader who can face all the challenges, solve all the accumulated problems, wipe out deficiency with qualitative leadership, and build a better Ontario for us and the future generations. Change is one of the few guarantees in life and I have faith in change.



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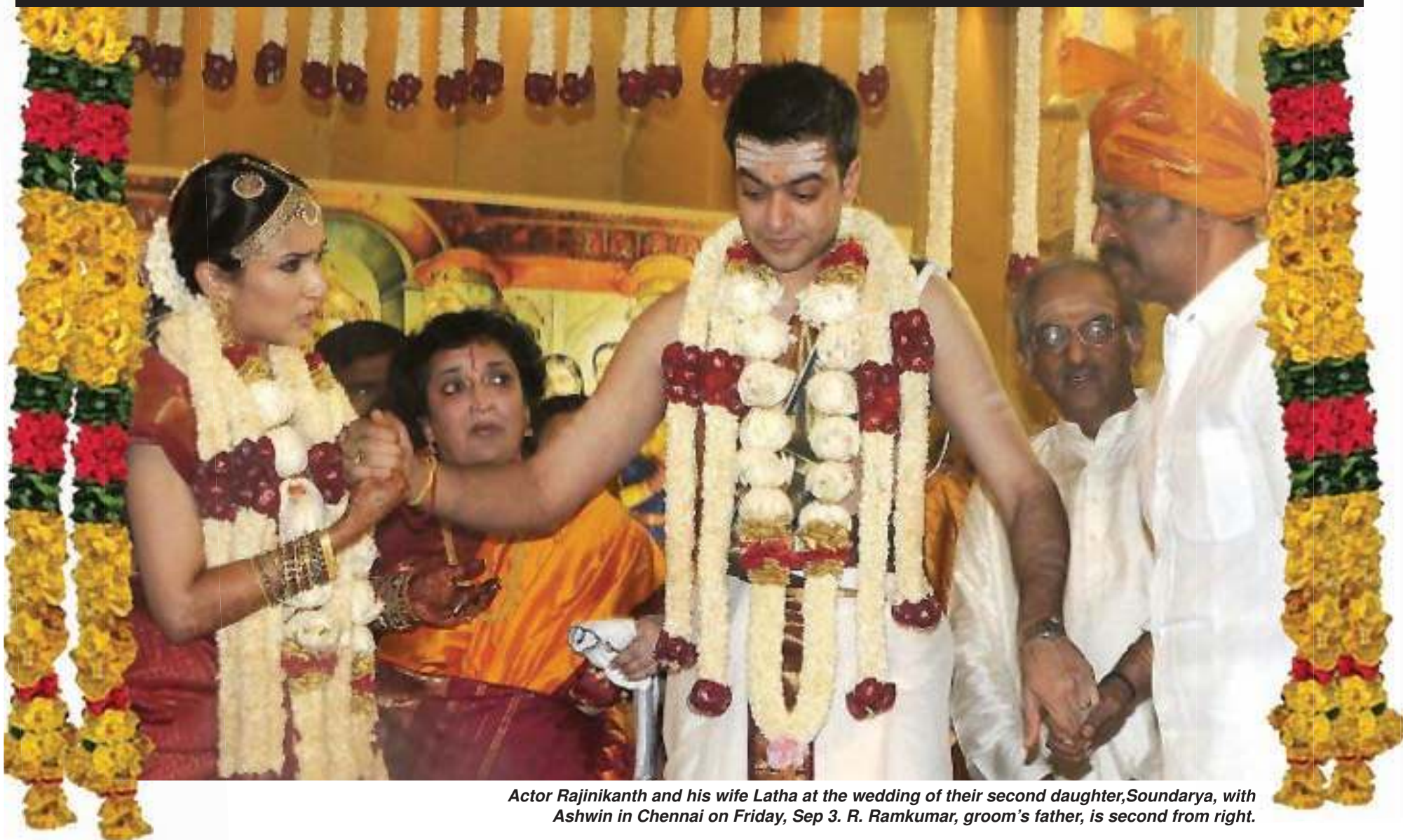
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# FUSION OF CULTURE AT CELEBRITY WEDDING



Actor Rajinikanth and his wife Latha at the wedding of their second daughter, Soundarya, with Ashwin in Chennai on Friday, Sep 3. R. Ramkumar, groom's father, is second from right.

Top politicians, leading actors, and rows of camerapersons moved in and out. But one celebrity was at the centre of it all. Superstar Rajinikanth was all poise, warmly welcoming every single guest at his daughter's wedding, writes Meera Srinivasan in *The Hindu*, about the tying the nuptial bliss of Soundarya Rajinikanth and Ashwin Ramkumar in Chennai on Sep 3, 2010. Meera Srinivasan of *The Hindu* further says:

Soundarya Rajinikanth's marriage to Stanford-graduate Ashwin Ramkumar on Friday, Sep 3 was an interesting coming together of different cultures. Maharashtrian turbans that the actor and some of his relatives wore, the nine-yard saris that the bride and other women in her family were attired in — all of this marked a seamless confluence of various practices and rituals.

The wedding was a two-day celebration which began on Thursday at the Rani Meyammai Hall in Egmore. The hall was packed as early as 7.30 a.m. on the wedding day.



Rajinikanth and his wife Latha during the function (courtesy: *The Hindu*).

The stage décor, by D.C. Sekar, went with the theme of the wedding — in the colours pink, green and gold.

While the stage had a mandapam in muted gold in the morning, with rows of white flowers, the evening's was a combination of a contemporary and antique look.

There was a lot of buzz in the dining area. Veteran caterer Arusvai Natarajan, who was supervising, said: "Rajinikanth's family was particular that we stick to the traditional meal on the leaf and avoid the buffet. There are about 26 items on the reception menu, with traditional Karnataka dishes such as bisi bele bhath and Mysore rasam since he [Rajinikanth] is from there."

Among other guests were some of the old friends of Rajinikanth. The actor's face lit up as soon as he saw an old man, who slowly walked up to the stage. It was N.S. Varadhachari, the actor's lawyer for over three decades.

"I have known Rajinikanth for a long time now. It is amazing how he manages to remain his same, simple self. He is one of those people who can always respect others," he said.



Rajinikanth holds the hand of the bridegroom during the wedding ceremony at Rani Meyammai Hall in Chennai on Friday. Photo: R. Ragu

The priest anchoring the rituals in Tamil Brahmin tradition announced that the newly-weds were being blessed with verses in all four Vedas.

Producer and managing director of Ocher Studios, Soundarya, who was first dressed in a green sari later changed into a red nine-yard sari. Her temple jewellery seemed to blend well with the "ethnic" ambience at the hall.

For the evening, she wore a specially-designed sari in golden beige.

In the morning, the guests included the actor's mentor director K. Balachander, director Mani Ratnam, actors Suhasini, Kamal Haasan, poet Vairamuthu, R.M. Veerappan, former Minister, MDMK general-secretary Vaiko and Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, with his wife Dayalu Ammal, Union Minister A. Raja and State Minister Durai Murugan and T.R. Baalu, former Minister, came around 7.30 p.m. in the evening. The Chief Minister spent a few minutes on the dais, sharing his joy with the family.

Soon after, the entry of the former Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, made heads turn.

Actors Aishwarya Rai-Bachchan, Abhishek Bachchan, Sridevi and Union Minister M.K. Alagiri attended a reception held on the previous day.



Actor Sridevi and her husband, producer Boney Kapoor, attend the function



# The Last Sermon of Prophet Muhammad

"Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that He will indeed reckon your deeds."

This sermon was delivered on the Ninth Day of Dhul Hijjah 10 A.H. in the 'Uranah valley of Mount Arafat' (in Mecca).

After praising, and thanking God he said:

"O People, lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.

O People, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no



one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that He will indeed reckon your deeds. God has forbidden you to take usury (interest), therefore all interest obligation shall henceforth be waived. Your capital, however, is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity. God has judged that there shall be no interest and that all the interest due to Abbas ibn 'Abd'al Muttalib (Prophet's uncle) shall henceforth

be waived...  
 Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.  
 O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under God's trust and with His permission. If they abide

by your right then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with any one of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste.

O People, listen to me in earnest, worship God, say your five daily prayers (Salah), fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to.

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not, therefore, do injustice to yourselves.

Remember, one day you will



appear before God and answer your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.

O People, no prophet or apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore, O People, and understand words which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the Quran and my example, the Sunnah and if you follow these you will never go astray.

All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O God, that I have conveyed your message to your people".

**Courtesy:**

Sameem Mohamed, BSc, P.Eng, Broker of Record  
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## All attempts to investigate atrocities in the Tamil Tiger conflict have been stifled, despite promises made to Ban Ki-moon

**Sri Lanka is still denying civilian deaths**

by Peter Bouckaert  
 (Director of Emergencies Division, Human Rights Watch)

During the Vietnam conflict, the US military developed some creative ways to increase the numbers of Viet Cong insurgents it claimed to have killed. "If they're dead, they're Viet Cong," meant that any Vietnamese killed by American soldiers would automatically count as enemy fighters.

Sri Lanka's defence secretary, Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, has taken such creative accounting to new heights. The United Nations reported that at least 7,000 civilians were killed and tens of thousands wounded during the final months of the brutal conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which ended in May 2009. But Gotabhaya has repeatedly cast aspersions on the idea that there were any civilian casualties.

In his recent statement before a Sri Lankan commission looking at lessons learned from the war, Gotabhaya claimed that injured Tigers "changed their uniforms

into civilian clothes" and that the Tigers must have suffered at least 6,000 dead and 30,000 injured - suggesting those counted as civilian casualties were really just Tamil Tiger fighters who had shed their uniforms.

As for the widespread war crimes and human rights abuses by both sides reported both during and after the conflict by various UN agencies, the US state department and human rights organisations, the defence secretary seems to be suffering from severe amnesia. He told the Lessons Learned Commission: "No complaints about human rights violations or abuses by the army were brought to my notice. None at all."

Despite the promises made by President Mahinda Rajapaksa to UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon in June 2009 to investigate wartime atrocities, as well as Sri Lanka's international legal obligations to investigate alleged laws of war violations, the president and his brothers in power have not lifted a finger to do so. The president often appears stunned when other governments both praise the government's victory yet insist on accountability for laws of war violations.

Gotabhaya also proclaimed



that the military operation was a really a "humanitarian intervention" in which "we took great care to avoid [endangering] civilians ... our military had to stop operations and give protection to people, food convoys." In practice, however, rather than protecting civilians, the government blocked access by humanitarian organisations. The International Committee of the Red Cross complained publicly that it was unable to reach those most in need.

There are genuine concerns that the Lessons Learned Commission will serve only to whitewash allegations of serious abuses, and that its conclusions will be used to brush off calls for an international investigation. The panel's mandate is deliberately limited: its main responsibility is to understand the reasons for the collapse of the 2002 ceasefire agreement, and there is no express mandate to investigate

laws of war violations.

The government clearly wants to avoid an honest attempt to find the truth. During a BBC interview in June, Gotabhaya threatened to have the commander behind the final military offensive, Gen Sarath Fonseka, executed after he promised to co-operate with investigations into wartime violations. The government took Fonseka - who earlier this year unsuccessfully ran against the president - to court martial, where he was convicted, essentially cutting him off from any capacity to challenge the Rajapaksa version of events.

The government announced in June that it will deny visas to the members of a UN expert panel established to advise Secretary General Ban on mechanisms for accountability. For those who didn't get the message, protests against the panel led by a government minister outside

the UN compound in Colombo should have: this government has no interest in investigating abuses and providing victims a measure of justice.

Add to this the continued suppression of government critics, civil society, and media, the restricted access for independent monitors to the northern and eastern parts of the country where the fighting occurred, the lack of information about an estimated 8,000 suspected Tamil Tiger fighters currently detained in "rehabilitation camps," and the conditions are ripe for a complete rewrite of history.

What the Lessons Learned Commission makes of the testimony it receives remains to be seen. One would hope that it would see the government's version of events for what it is: a cynical fabrication designed to avoid scrutiny. Unfortunately, there is every reason to fear that the panel will believe the story that is being spun by the Rajapaksa brothers, which basically runs to the formula from Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland: "Nothing would be what it is because everything would be what it isn't."

(This article first appeared in The Guardian.UK)



### LETTERS & OPINIONS





Raymond Rajabalan

From the Komagata Maru carrying 376 Punjabi passengers in 1914 and the SS St. Louis traveling with 900 Jewish asylum seekers in 1939, to the boats with 600 people from China's Fujian province reaching the shores of Canada a few years ago and the Ocean Lady that docked in B.C. last year with Tamil refugees from war torn Sri Lanka there is something about boatloads of migrants that triggers a national hysteria.

Perhaps it is the realization that the expanse of ocean is not enough to enforce the divide between the West and the so-called Third World.

Last month has been no different with the arrival of the MV



Sun Sea and 490 Tamil migrants. With little substantiation, some officials and media immediately began to use the terms "terrorists," "illegals" and "queue jumpers." resulting in widespread opposition from the misinformed general public. However when the facts became established those who initiated fear mongering had to hastily withdraw their adverse comments.

Yet refugee advocates have repeatedly reminded us that **there is no queue for refugees.** It is inherent to the refugee experience that one does not wait in a line, fearing serious harm or death, to make the difficult decision to flee. Nor are they so-called illegals but they are in fact **asylum seekers.** Canadian and international refugee law recognizes that many asylum seekers will be compelled to travel by any means, including by boat, to seek safety. As such until absolute peace prevails throughout the world, there is no guarantee that M V Sun Sea is the last of the ships to arrive here - whether from Sri Lanka or elsewhere.

Instead of relying on sensationalism, let us honestly ask ourselves: On what basis were the Tamil migrants initially declared

terrorists? Is it even logical that well-financed terrorists or traffickers would suffer in a three-month long, arduous journey risking death? Even if we believe that women and children were forced onto this boat, how do we justify jailing them as a humane response?

What we do know is that United Nations Secretary-General Ban Kimoon has appointed a panel to investigate war crimes committed by the Sri Lankan government against Tamils. Human

were questioned, as well as his credibility, given his close relationship with the Sri Lankan government. Following a recent investigation by the newspaper the Sunday Age in Australia, Gunaratna has retracted some of his alleged credentials.

So Canadian officials are either continuing to make uninformed statements despite the lack of evidence, or they are deliberately relying on the racist stereotyping of all Tamils as likely being associated with terrorism in

## Canada's role in ensuring justice for Tamils in Sri Lanka



rights organizations have documented government and military atrocities including indiscriminate killings, arbitrary detentions and imprisonment, and mass displacement of Tamils. Canada has itself accepted more than 90 per cent of refugee claimants from Sri Lanka in the past two years.

Last year the public succumbed to unfounded panic when the ship Ocean Lady landed with 76 Tamils aboard. All the men were eventually released when the **Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) was forced to admit they had no evidence of terrorist connections.** Ottawa even tried to use Section 86 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, a draconian section that allows for secret evidence in closed hearings, to make their case. Still, based on a lack of evidence, in January the CBSA announced that it would not contest the release of the last group of detainees.

Rohan Gunaratna, Singapore based anti-terrorism expert who is the primary source for Canadian Government, was discredited by immigration lawyers as well as adjudicator Otto Nuppanen during the Ocean Lady proceedings. As detailed in news articles, his unverified sources

order to fuel public fears. Their attitude is facilitating a climate where anti-immigration advocates are gaining more traction in their demands for Canada to stop welcoming refugees.

Canada is aware that of the nearly 300,000 Tamils living in this country a very vast majority of them are honest hard working individuals who are ever so grateful to this benevolent country which has helped them in times of distress. They still remember with deep gratitude how the country opened its doors during the dark days of horror during 1983 July.

Meanwhile, Canada has reasons to be alarmed that once the refugees arriving here are accepted very easily it will open up a flood gates to hordes of refugees descending on the shores of this country. However, before labeling them as terrorists and queue jumpers those in power must ask themselves why these people take so much risk in traveling thousands of kilo metres in shark infested ocean with hardly any assurance of safely arriving at the intended destination. These people have apparently chosen to travel amidst such hazardous conditions because of their fear for their lives. However, if any one among these refugee claimants



poses a threat to Canada or if any of them are proved to be bogus refugees, let the law enforcement official's deal with them according to the laws of the land.

During the attempt to wipe out Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), thousands of innocent civilians - said to be as high as 30,000 were massacred by the Sri Lankan Forces ably aided by troops from various nations. When the war was over the surviving Tamils breathed a sigh of relief hoping that at last there will be lasting peace in the country.

However, the island nation of Sri Lanka, once called pearl of the Indian Ocean is still generally referred to as Blood Island due to the continued alleged incidents of human rights violations in the country. Under these circumstances those who can afford will continue to choose every possible means to flee from that blood drenched nation. **So Canada should take efforts to address the root of the problem so that there will be no more boat load of refugees arriving from Sri Lanka.**

One must also accept the fact that **no Tamil ever wanted violence or to engage in acts of war in the first place. However only after all possible peaceful methods failed for many decades, only after a series of pacts with Sinhalese politicians were abandoned, thousands of Tamil youths unable to bear up any more oppression and the many years of discrimination were forced to take up to arms to find a solution for their grievances.**

For decades Tamils attempted to live peacefully with all the communities in the island nation but at one point - especially after the introduction of the system of standardization that deprived thousands of youths from gaining admission to universities - they had no options but to resort to violence. It was a point of no return.

Even after the mass killings in May 2009, the surviving Tamil

civilians and the surrendered LTTE cadres expected that the government in power will grant them relief and also provide assistance to rehabilitate them. However the horror stories describing continued abductions, forceful confinement and indiscriminate killings appearing in the news media in Sri Lanka paint a different picture. Admittedly rehabilitating the thousands of war affected civilians is of course a Herculean task for the Government of Sri Lanka, given the enormous number of people involved but the affected people having their patience worn out thin due to long period of being kept in detention camps, have begun to resort to every possible means to leave the country as evidenced by the number of people fleeing the island nation towards far away unfamiliar destinations such as Australia, Thailand, Indonesia as well as Canada using every possible mode of transport. **Obviously these helpless people did not embark on a fun filled picnic or boat cruise but were in fact fleeing to save their dear lives at any cost.**

*Canada is well respected world wide for its democracy and its love for peace. As such, the Tamil community here fervently hopes that instead of branding these asylum seekers as terrorists or queue jumpers or whatever other unflattering term, Canada will address the root of the problem and use its influence in bringing lasting peace in Sri Lanka so that the island nation will again become a paradise where all communities will live in harmony.*

The following excerpt from the Editorial of Toronto Star explains it all

**Rather than amplify Sri Lanka's self-serving rhetoric about "terrorists" probing Canada's defenses, the Harper government should use the political capital it has built up to press for justice for Tamils. That, more than anything, would put the people smugglers out of business - Toronto star Editorial.**



# Factors Reshaping Higher Education in Ontario, Canada



## A. Trend towards Research as the University's Main Function:

Education has to change according to the social, economic and political demands of the people at any place. In Ontario the higher education as it was in the set up in 1960 was guided by two policies. Colleges have no role in the provision of baccalaureate credit activity and publicly funded universities have complete autonomy in deciding on their purpose, mission and objectives. Since then the main idea shaping the thinking behind Ontario universities is that the main function of a university is not just teaching alone but research or discovery of new knowledge essential for the progress of its people. Undergraduates should be taught by professors who are active researchers. Universities should produce knowledge that will propel Canada's economic well-being and international economic competitiveness. The new ideal has encouraged significant growth in university research, changed traditional research methods and created new human and financial needs.

## B. The Rising Demand for University Degrees.

There has been greater demand for degree programs. Universities have been pressed to provide more resources and attention to their students. They have also been persuaded to grant more career-based courses than the liberal arts and the sciences. There has been an



increase in the demand for admission to universities from students from diverse backgrounds. Canada being a country that encourages immigration from all parts of the world, has to evolve a higher education system that will cater to their needs. Many students come here after finishing their secondary education in their home country. The Canadian government has also encouraged students to come here on scholarship and also for higher education with the financial advantages in view. However they have to rely on a publicly funded research based universities which besides being expensive have limited number of courses to offer to the diverse needs of the new type of students. They come from diverse backgrounds, situations, aspirations and learning styles. It makes educationalists to think for an

alternative like a more diverse post-secondary system and leaving the universities for the most competent and well-equipped students. If more students are admitted to the universities there may be resource allocation tensions for professors and institutions.

## C. The Need for Changes to the System

The Post Secondary Choice and Excellence Act of 2000, made it possible for both colleges and private post secondary institutions to offer baccalaureate programs. Only 2 percent of undergraduate enrolment made use of these programs. The universities continued to rely on part-time or temporary staff to do the teaching in their undergraduate faculties.

Two new social factors started to influence the nature of higher education in Ontario. One is the

increasing demand for higher education especially the baccalaureate programs. Second is the need to accelerate the production that has commercial value and enhances Ontario's economic competitiveness. The government also believed that a more educated population is needed for the economic well being of the country. In a globally competitive, knowledge-based economy, research has become the major function of universities and it should deliver the goals in a financially efficient and equitable manner. Both internal and external forces have pushed Ontario universities toward the research university model. Federal and provincial programs introduced since the 1990's have encouraged and supported this goal.

The global economic recession that began in 2008 adds urgency to the needs for change. The permanent shrinkage in many Ontario's traditional industrial sectors makes it all the more important for the province to build on its strength of a relatively well educated population in order to respond to the economic opportunities of tomorrow.

The new social and economic forces at work in the province and the world at large has made it imperative that the demand for baccalaureate education has increased and there is also a need for the universities to concentrate on research in order to produce knowledge that is currently relevant and economically competitive. In this context that

colleges should make their contribution to baccalaureate education. They have to revamp their curriculum to cater to the new demands especially the various types and levels of education that they have to provide so that the universities can give more attention to research. Ontario is the largest province of Canada, with 39% of the population and 41% of the full-time post-secondary students in Canada. With about three-dozen post-secondary institutions and over six hundred thousand full-time post-secondary students, Ontario has post-secondary education system that is as large as that of many nations. Though Canada is a Federal country, one cannot talk of a national system of higher education. Higher education policy making is made at the provincial level.

In short, what Ontario needs in higher education is more diversity; more mission clarity; more accessibility; more nurturing; more focus on teaching; more professional variety; more economical teaching; more direct support for high-quality research; more sustained capital investment and more innovation.

In gist, the forces of globalization and democracy makes Ontario's higher education system one of the most competent in the world at large. Besides, Ontario is likely to become a region with the largest educated populace in the world.

By: J.J. Atputharajah

## WHY IS DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT IN THE NORTH LUKE-WARM

Contd. from Page 39...

There has been months of discussion on the role and future of KP - the former LTTE leader who lived overseas for many years - and is now under State custody. Most Tamils welcome his close rapport with the regime in general and with Deference Secretary - the influential Gothabaya Rajapakse, in particular. They hoped the new body NERDO will bring them good - economically and politically. But what is worrisome is the thought that KP is being used only for the purpose of changing super-value overseas LTTE assets to find the hands of VVIPs in the government. This may or not be true but the speculation is real. The other is that KP is being used to cause the inflow of diaspora funds for the re-building of the NEP. The thinking here is the State must give the lead and start the rebuilding and rehabilitation process. A period of normalcy and peace should follow after this. It is thereafter the diaspora will gain the necessary confidence to invest in the NEP -

both from patriotic and economic considerations.

The law and order situation is still unsatisfactory in most areas of the Jaffna District is a major worry of the people. Gun-toting goons under the influence of Jaffna ministerial sources often run beserk with absolutely no regard to the Police or the Courts. Chavakachcheri Magistrate A.M. Mohamed Reyal openly complained from the Bench that the Police are uncooperative in the matter of arresting offenders and accused even in abduction and murder cases. The situation in the Batticoloa District is no better with Pillaiyan and Karunas goons not only abducting and killing each other but also endangering the ordinary public. The government cannot expect private investment or the arrival of the diaspora to come in with a grotesque and collapsed security apparatus. The news Mullaitivu Courts will be manned by a Sinhala Magistrate certainly does not inspire confidence in a District

that is almost 100% Tamil. The government should show more respect to minority susceptibilities in the matter of important State appointments hardly needs to be emphasised.

Still, judged by the havoc in the past few decades, we are on the path to recovery. The recent visit of the Mahanayaka of Malwatta to the North was an unprecedented good sign. Tamil-Sinhala relations at all levels seem to be on the mend. The President inviting the TNA delegation - and they, who demurred such invitations so far - accepting hospitality of the President at Temple Trees are positive signs. Better still was the news that our High Commissioner in Delhi entertained the TNA MPs delegation when they visited India recently to Dinner. These are all welcome signs that pleases those of us keen to see the country regain its racial tranquility as soon as possible.

Arvind Luxman

## China wants India in state of low-level equilibrium: PM

NEW DELHI: Despite his unflagging efforts to improve relations with India's neighbours -- especially, India and Pakistan - Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Monday sounded somewhat frustrated by the continuing "pinpricks" from Beijing and Islamabad.

Asked during an interaction with editors on Monday about China's recent needling of India by referring to Jammu & Kashmir as "India-controlled Kashmir", Singh agreed that Beijing could be tempted to use India's "soft underbelly", Kashmir, and Pakistan "to keep India in low-level equilibrium".

He said this actually underscored his repeated emphasis for India and Pakistan to resolve their differences and reach a good equation. Not only would



continued differences give countries like China the opportunity to exploit, but also impede progress in South Asia.

"China would like to have a foothold in South Asia and we have to reflect on this reality. We have to be aware of this," he said. He, however, also said that it was his firm belief that the world was large enough for India and China to "cooperate and compete" at the same time.





# Lord Krishna - Celebrating Janamaashtami

Krishna Janamaashtami is celebrated around the world by the more than one billion Hindus with pomp, colour and pageantry sometime during the months August or September. This year the event is being celebrated on 1 September 2010. The occasion is one of great religious significance to Hindus as it represents the coming of God to rescue humanity from the grips of injustice.

Devotees from all walks of life go to their place of worship or celebrate the occasions in their home or in make shift tents for large gatherings. Celebrations may commence days before the event date and continue afterward. The celebrative activities may take many forms, which will include pooja to the divine lord Krishna, singing of bhajans, dancing and recitation of scriptures such as the Bhagwat Puran and Bhagwat Geeta. Special programs at times called Katha, Yagya, are arranged for one to seven days. These functions are usually sponsored by an individual family or many families who would participate in daily pooja and then listening to the recitation from the scriptures presented by a learned individual (Pandits, Swami). These days are spent in a state of total dedication to learning about the teachings of God as written in the holy scriptures and reflection upon one own life with the view of repentance for past impieties and redemption.

The Bhagwat Pooraan tells us that Bramhan (God) took human form to rid the earth of injustice and to reinstall dharma (justice). He came in the form of Krishna in the home of Vasudeo and Deokee. He came at a time when unrighteousness was rampant and the righteous were oppressed by the ungodly beings who held power and used their position and prowess to subjugate the masses to all forms of misery and pain. It is said in the scriptures that the lord was born at mid night in a prison where his parents were imprisoned by the terrible Kansa. The scriptures revealed how the power of God overcame all the guards and opened the gates of the prison so that the new born baby Krishna could be removed to safety.

Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita 4:7 "Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion-at that time I descend Myself." In past ages Lord Krishna has appeared in various forms.

Over 5000 years ago He appeared as Himself in His original form as Bhagavan, Sri Krishna.

In this present age of Kali Yuga, He appears in His most merciful form as Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. While other forms of the Lord descended with various paraphernalia to deal with the demoniac and irreligious influences of the time, Lord Sri Caitanya was equipped with the most powerful weapon against irreligion, the Maha Mantra..(Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Hare Hare - Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare ). The chanting of the holy name of Lord Sri Krishna is the sublime and recommended process in this age for the deliverance of all souls from the clutches of maya (illusion) and irreligion.

There is no difference between God and Krishna. It's the same idea. Krishna is very merciful. If you pray to Him and glorify Him by any song, or by any word, He will hear and He will be pleased. You can pray, "Oh God, You are so merciful."

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare].

This means, "O Supreme Personality of Godhead, You are so merciful. You have given me this human body, intelligence, a heart so soft and full of love and affection. I want to serve you eternally, so please be merciful to me."

When we are dying, when we are on our death-bed, there is no one to help us. We are not even able to take a breath. We are full of mucus and we want to take a breath, but we cannot. We want to move our hands from here to there, but we cannot do so. We cannot do anything. At that time we pray, "Oh God, You are so merciful. Be pleased with me; sprinkle Your mercy upon me. Take me to your eternal abode, where I will serve you."

We want to be free from becoming old and again taking birth in this miserable world. There is so much pain at the time of birth, and there is so much pain at the time of death; so we must pray to God. He is everywhere. He is in everyone and in all atoms of the world. He hears whatever you utter. When you weep and sing and glorify Him, He will at once hear you and come to you and liberate you forever.

We never pray to Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead:

"God, give me bread and butter." Rather, we want to serve Him with bread and butter. We want that this chain of birth and death and suffering will be stopped forever.

This body is not my self. It is something like a garment. The body is covered with a garment, and it is also like a garment. One day, when we become old, we will have to give up this garment. Surely, we will have to do so.

What is God? What is the soul? You can realize this only in this human body; otherwise it is not possible. If you are an animal, a tree, a creeper, or an insect, you cannot realize this; you cannot understand all these truths. You can understand something only in this human body. You have some intelligence given by the Lord, so try to use it.

Also, don't kill animals and eat their flesh and eggs. If you do, your mind and heart will become like them. If you eat the flesh of hogs and pigs, your mentality and heart will become like them. Your nature will be changed to be like them. What is the meaning of meat? ME-EAT. If you eat meat, that animal will come as a human and eat you. So don't take meat, eggs, and other bad things. God has given fruits, milk, butter, curd, and so many other nice food-stuffs. If you want to be pure to serve God, then you must follow this.

## Love-The Natural Religion

There is only one religion that religion is natural, and that natural religion is love and affection to God and everyone. Even a dog, a lion, a bear, and a tiger have love for their wife and children. Although they may eat the flesh of others, they have love for their families. To love is natural for all. Trees also love; they want to love each other. How? Little creepers love trees and embrace them.

If you touch a tree's leaf as though caressing it, the tree will be very happy. If you take a knife to cut the branches, the tree will be scared. It will tremble. If you tell a dog, "Come on, come on," he will come. And if you are mean, then the dog will attack you. So, our nature - the nature of the soul - is love.

We should practice this at home. We should love our mother and father, for they have done so many things for us. We should love our wife and children; not divorcing each other twenty or thirty times.

If you have love, it may be gradually transferred to God. If you have no love and you are always quarrelling, you cannot



have the mercy of God. We should try to discover this love in our heart, and try to practice chanting the holy names: "Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare."

All the names of Krishna are the embodiment of love. "Hare" is the embodiment of love. "Krishna" is very charming and beautiful, and He is the embodiment of love. "Rama" is the embodiment of love. If you are in touch with this love, your life will be happy; otherwise it is not possible. If a man is always cruel to others, he cannot be happy.

## Reincarnation

We see that two children take birth at exactly the same time, but one has no backbone, no intelligence, and eyes that cannot see. The other child is born as the son of a President of a Country or a very rich person. Why are there such differences? In India, and also in Western countries, some people remember their past life. There are many examples of this.

So, we believe in reincarnation. If you don't believe in this, all your ideas will be illogical. Why is one person very intelligent, and why is one so unintelligent that he is like a donkey? Why is one person very beautiful and one is not beautiful at all? The philosophy of reincarnation answers these questions. There are so many reasons to believe this.

Some people may think that if the father and mother are beautiful, the child would be beautiful. However, we see many fathers and mothers who are very beautiful, but their sons or daughters

have crooked teeth, or ugly faces, or no bones; or eyes that cannot see. The soul is immortal, but he has adopted this material position by forgetting God and by the subsequent touch of maya, illusion.

Why is a person in jail? He has done something wrong. Similarly, we are now in jail - the jail of the deluding energy called maya. We are being crushed by maya.

If you realize this fact, you will at once pray to God, "Save me. Save me." Have you heard of the Vedas? They are very old scriptures. These facts are written in the Vedic scriptures, and we realize this.

We are trying to help everyone, and that is why we perform kirtana, congregational chanting of the holy name and fame of Krishna. We chant "Hare Krishna" so that even trees, animals, dogs, and even any person who doesn't want to hear, can receive spiritual benefit. We chant, "Hare Krishna" very loudly, so that the transcendental sound vibration will go everywhere. And we give some prasadam, remnants of food offered to God. This will help them.

## Kanyalal Raina



Kanyalal Raina



## Dr.Seerkali Sivasithambaram in Sri Lanka to sing at "Virakesari" 80th Anniversary Celebrations



Dr.Seerkali Sivasithambaram, the son of the famous carnatic music maestro Dr.Seerkali Govindarajan, arrived in Colombo recently to perform recitals in connection with the 80th Anniversary Celebrations of Sri Lanka's premier Tamil newspaper "Virakesari". Dr.Sivasithambaram will give recitals in Colombo, Jaffna and the upcountry. It maybe mentioned here that his father Dr.Seerkali Govindarajan also visited the "Virakesari" office somewhere in the 1970s when "Virakesari" celebrated it's 40th anniversary and entertained the staff with few songs of Lord Murugan at the request of the employees.



**Lata Pada, Founder of Sampradaya Dance Creations thanking the audience at the end of the show**



**Dancers striking a pose at the performance**



**Ms.Sylvia Francis who was the MC for "Sorupam"**

# Sampradaya Dance Creations present "Sorupam"

## A superbly choreographed Dance Performance to fund "Gods Own Children Foundation"

**By Siva Sivapragasam**

"Bharatha Natyam", a universal art form depicting the richness of South Asian culture and the performing arts was seen at it's best recently when the Missisauga based Sampradaya Dance Creations run by Lata Pada performed "Sorupam" at the Markham Theatre to help the funding efforts of "Gods Own Children Foundation". Sampradaya Dance Creations was referred to by the prestigious "New York Times" as a Company of rare Dance vitality".

"Gods Own Children is a charitable, non-profit organization established to assist Disadvantaged Children and youth .The organization primarily provides support services to children and youths affected by war and natural calamities.

The evening's "Sorupam" program was characterized by a variety of themes including Mallari, Padam, Ganesha sthuthi, Thillana and Varnam with selectively chosen devotional songs rendered by Vidiya and Guru Harikrishna

Kalyanasunderam.The movements of the Dance team which included Lata Pada herself synchronized well to the melodious music and took the audience to an evening's enjoyment spree. Perhaps the most enjoyable item for the night was the scene from "Paanchaali Sabatham", the famous prosaic verses of Subramania Bhaarathiyar. Draupadi, the wife of the Paandavars is lost to the Kauravars in a game of Dice and is dragged into the King's Court by Dhuriothana's brother Thuchchaathanan with the intention of disrobing her in public. She appeals to Lord Krishna for help and Krishna comes to her rescue by making the saree endless. The body language of the Dancers, gestures, gesticulations and eloquent facial expressions conveyed the meanings of the stanzas effectively.

In conclusion, it could be said that the colorful costumes worn by the dancers, the music rendered and the dialogue all synchronized together to make the



**A facial expression of one of the Dancers who participated**



**Lata Pada in one of the Dance sequences**



concert a tremendous success.

The President of Gods Own Children Foundation Mr.Senthi Senthivel who spoke at the show gave the audience a glimpse into the activities of the Foundation and thanked the guests for their support.. He thanked Sampradaya Dance Creations and it's founder Lata Pada for having assisted the Foundation with this Dance Concert which helped to generate funds for the activities of the Foundation. A slide show was presented to depict what the Foundation was doing now in the Northern Sri Lanka where it was maintaining centers for the displaced children. Lata Pada, the founder of Sampradaya Creations thanked the audience for their patient viewing and remarked that it was a pleasure to do this performance for a worthy cause.

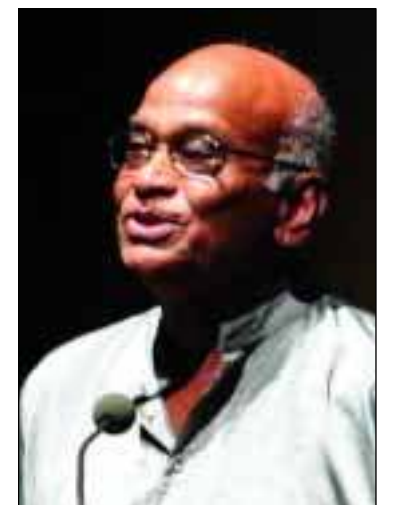
Canadians can join the journey with Gods Own Children Foundation with Child Sponsorships, Meals Sponsorships, Donations and special projects/materials sponsorships. The foundation can be reached at [gocf\\_canada@gocfoundation.org](mailto:gocf_canada@gocfoundation.org)

Seen here are some pictures taken at the event. (Picture Courtesy - Mahesh Abeyawardena.)

**(Picture Courtesy: Mahesh Abeyawardena)**



**Mr.Nani Pradeepan from "Gods Own Children" addressing the audience**



**Mr. Senti Senthivel - President, "Gods Own Children" speaks to the audience about the activities of the organization**





By: Prof. Saran Ghai

Usually at the time of marriages a funny discussion starts on the topic Love Marriages v/s Arranged Marriages. People have their own opinions in favour or against on both the systems. Those who were married under arranged marriage system would prefer arranged marriages whereas the others would favour love marriages. Sometimes things go the other way round. Those who were married as per love marriage system go against go against it and it happens in the same way with the arranged marriage system.

Choice could be any, but this discussion is always funny. This debate which is mostly the essential part of marriages, always ends in no result. As the marriage ceremony becomes over, the bride and the groom say bye-bye and sneak away for their honeymoon and the debaters leave the discussion unresolved and postpone it till the next marriage.

In schools and colleges too, if the topic of debate is love marriages v/s arranged marriages, how funny that discussion becomes. The opinions of debaters become hot topic of the day. But, for sure, the older generation always favours arranged marriages whereas the younger generation favours love marriages. You will also notice one thing in the older generation; whenever there comes the topic of love, they would touch their heart and say in a dramatic style, "Had we have born in the current times, must have enjoyed the feeling of love." On the other hand the new generation people favour love marriages but, their preference is for sure to marry as per the customs and traditions followed in the arranged marriages.

The big difference what I noticed between the two is that those who were married as per the love marriage system, enjoy eating ice cream before marriage whereas others who were married in the arranged married system enjoy eating ice cream after marriage.

Here you can ask a question - what marriage actually means?

Marriage is a system approved by the society under which the newlyweds get a license to live together and make family. But please do not ask me what about when two males or two females get a license of marriage. What kind of family they will make? What I can submit, they may enjoy their life the way they want to enjoy but as far as making babies and family is concerned, till date, it is a man and a woman business to make babies, their system has yet not been developed by science. They can live together, have fun of their choice but cannot make family. The situation could be different if the scientists find out a way and help

# Relation of Marriage

them make babies, till then have fun.

Let us discuss the topic of marriage further. As I said before, marriage is the license to form a family. Now, if the marriage is a license, it can only be obtained through a system. As and when we discuss system, we discuss an arrangement. In that light in direct words marriage is an arrangement. May it be a so called love marriage or an arranged marriage, marriage is an arrangement.

Many a time people confuse that if it is court marriage, it is a love marriage. No, court marriage is also an arrangement. Context could be any, love or family marriage. May it be a marriage solemnized under the Hindu Vaidic system in front of a priest, a Sikh marriage in Gurudwara, a muslim marriage in front of a maulvi or Christian marriage in church, marriage is a marriage completed under a system. Only then it gets approval of the community. No system has yet taken place in which if two people are in love, are automatically married. So, in my opinion marriage is an arrangement and there is nothing like love marriage in the world.

Anyway, please do not be much serious about the topic but be serious about your marriage, if unmarried yet. If you need, I can help you. So, why to wait? Pick up your phone and call me straight.

- Prof. Saran Ghai

## RELATIONS - 2

If you or anyone you know is in the marriageable age and needs help in finding a suitable life partner, contact me.

Similarly, if you or anyone known to you is a person of an older age, I mean within approx. 45-65 age group, is alone, looking for a suitable life partner, contact me. I would like to say to the older age people who are living alone, "Why should you live alone when there is someone who is still waiting for you and is ready to say - "I love you, I care about you. Will you marry me?" Call (905)



By Prof. Saran Ghai

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# Dr. Abdul Kalam's Letter to Every Indian



## LETTERS & OPINIONS

Why is the media here so negative?

Why are we in India so embarrassed to recognize our own strengths, our achievements?

We are such a great nation. We have so many amazing success stories but we refuse to acknowledge them. Why?

We are the first in milk production.

We are number one in Remote sensing satellites.

We are the second largest producer of wheat.

We are the second largest producer of rice.

Look at Dr. Sudarshan, he has transferred the tribal village into a self-sustaining, self-driving unit.. There are millions of such achievements but our media is only obsessed in the bad news and failures and disasters.

I was in Tel Aviv once and I was reading the Israeli newspaper. It was the day after a lot of attacks and bombardments and deaths had taken place. The Hamas had struck. But the front page of the newspaper had the picture of a Jewish gentleman who in five years had transformed his desert into an orchid and a granary. It was this inspiring picture that everyone woke up to. The gory details of killings, bombardments, deaths, were inside in the newspaper, buried among other news.

In India we only read about death, sickness, terrorism, crime.. Why are we so NEGATIVE? Another question: Why are we, as a nation so obsessed with foreign things? We want foreign T.Vs, we want foreign shirts. We want foreign technology.

Why this obsession with everything imported. Do we not realize that self-respect comes with self-reliance? I was in Hyderabad giving this lecture,

when a 14 year old girl asked me for my autograph. I asked her what her goal in life is.. She replied: I want to live in a developed India . For her, you and I will have to build this developed India . You must proclaim. India is not an under-developed nation; it is a highly developed nation.

YOU say that our government is inefficient.

YOU say that our laws are too old.

YOU say that the municipality does not pick up the garbage.

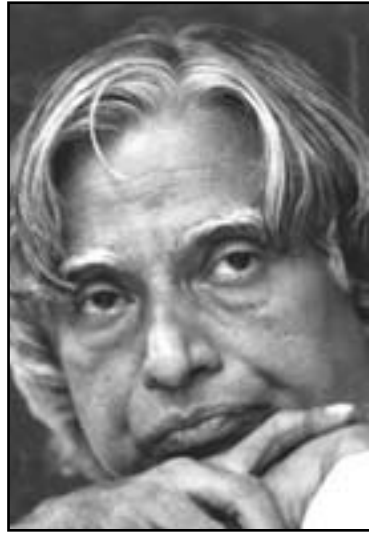
YOU say that the phones don't work, the railways are a joke. The airline is the worst in the world, mails never reach their destination.

YOU say that our country has been fed to the dogs and is the absolute pits.

YOU say, say and say.. What do YOU do about it?

Take a person on his way to Singapore. Give him a name - 'YOURS'. Give him a face - 'YOURS'. YOU walk out of the airport and you are at your International best. In Singapore you don't throw cigarette butts on the roads or eat in the stores. YOU are as proud of their Underground links as they are.. You pay \$5 (approx. Rs.. 60) to drive through Orchard Road (equivalent of Mahim Causeway or Pedder Road) between 5 PM and 8 PM. YOU come back to the parking lot to punch your parking ticket if you have over stayed in a restaurant or a shopping mall irrespective of your status identity... In Singapore you don't say anything, DO YOU? YOU wouldn't dare to eat in public during Ramadan, in Dubai ... YOU would not dare to go out without your head covered in Jeddah.

YOU would not dare to buy an employee of the telephone exchange in London at 10 pounds (Rs..650) a month to, 'see to it



that my STD and ISD calls are billed to someone else.'YOU would not dare to speed beyond 55 mph (88 km/h) in Washington and then tell the traffic cop, 'Jaanta hai main kaun hoon (Do you know who I am?). I am so and so's son. Take your two bucks and get lost.' YOU wouldn't chuck an empty coconut shell anywhere other than the garbage pail on the beaches in Australia and New Zealand ..

Why don't YOU spit Paan on the streets of Tokyo? Why don't YOU use examination jockeys or buy fake certificates in Boston ??? We are still talking of the same YOU. YOU who can respect and conform to a foreign system in other countries but cannot in your own. You who will throw papers and cigarettes on the road the moment you touch Indian ground. If you can be an involved and appreciative citizen in an alien country, why cannot you be the same here in India?

In America every dog owner has to clean up after his pet has done the job. Same in Japan

Will the Indian citizen do that here? He's right. We go to the polls to choose a government and after that forfeit all responsibility.

We sit back wanting to be pampered and expect the government to do everything for us

whilst our contribution is totally negative. We expect the government to clean up but we are not going to stop chucking garbage all over the place nor are we going to stop to pick a up a stray piece of paper and throw it in the bin. We expect the railways to provide clean bathrooms but we are not going to learn the proper use of bathrooms.

We want Indian Airlines and Air India to provide the best of food and toiletries but we are not going to stop pilfering at the least opportunity.

This applies even to the staff who is known not to pass on the service to the public.

When it comes to burning social issues like those related to women, dowry, girl child! and others, we make loud drawing room protestations and continue to do the reverse at home. Our excuse? 'It's the whole system which has to change, how will it matter if I alone forego my sons' rights to a dowry.' So who's going to change the system?

What does a system consist of? Very conveniently for us it consists of our neighbours, other households, other cities, other communities and the government. But definitely not me and YOU. When it comes to us actually making a positive contribution to the system we lock ourselves along with our families into a safe cocoon and look into the distance at countries far away and wait for a Mr.Clean to come along & work miracles for us with a majestic sweep of his hand or we leave the

country and run away.

Like lazy cowards hounded by our fears we run to America to bask in their glory and praise their system. When New York becomes insecure we run to England. When England experiences unemployment, we take the next flight out to the Gulf. When the Gulf is war struck, we demand to be rescued and brought home by the Indian government. Everybody is out to abuse and rape the country. Nobody thinks of feeding the system. Our conscience is mortgaged to money.

Dear Indians, The article is highly thought inductive, calls for a great deal of introspection and pricks one's conscience too.... I am echoing J. F. Kennedy's words to his fellow Americans to relate to Indians....

'ASK WHAT WE CAN DO FOR INDIA AND DO WHAT HAS TO BE DONE TO MAKE INDIA WHAT AMERICA AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES ARE TODAY'

Lets do what India needs from us.

Forward this mail to each Indian for a change instead of sending Jokes or junk mails.

Thank you,  
**Dr. Abdul Kalam**  
*I humbly request you to forward this to every Indian.....(Sri Lankan)*

### WHY HE TURNS AWAY

The wind called out to me this morning,  
Hurry, hurry the Lord is at hand.  
I hesitated a moment and then rushed out.  
Too late. I caught no glimpse of Him.

The birds told me, The Lord was here.  
I looked skyward, I looked all around.  
It was in vain, I did not see Him.  
And yet I knew He had been there.

The flowers smiled ecstatically.  
They said, ?Did You see the Lord?  
He was here a moment ago.?  
I shook my head ? I had missed Him.

The wind, the birds and the flowers  
Looked at me in pity and whispered,  
She did not see the Lord again,  
We call to her in time, and yet she misses Him.

I turned away as despair engulfed me.  
Why do I always miss You Lord?  
Why do You turn away from me??  
I asked as tears flooded my eyes.

You are still involved with the world.  
Duty binds you there on earth.  
One glimpse of me will render you  
Unfit for the world, and so I turn away.

-By Betty Paul Thottam.

An excerpt from the book ?Living with God? ISBN 978-0-9866773-0-4  
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Aiya, Vanakkam.

#### Wedding According to Tamizh Traditions - News Coverage.

Our son Sasindran will wed Ms Linda Wei Ping Zhou on the 19th September 2010, between 9.30 am and 12.30 am. The wedding will take place at The New Jaasmine Banquet Hall, 90 Nolan Court, Markham (John St./Woodbine Ave).

We will be conducting the wedding ceremony according to our true Tamizh traditions, with recitation of Thirukkural.

On this occasion the wedding couple will also be presenting a cash donation to a well known charity in our community, which is performing a wonderful community service to the needy in Eelam.

We cordially invite your organisation representative to attend this ceremony and cover the story of this function in your publications. We believe this will encourage our community to emulate this tradition in their own weddings. This way, we the Tamizhs, can preserve our classical language, culture and traditions, in conducting all our social functions, without the destructing influence of alien language and culture.

Nantri,  
Anpudan,

**Kandiah Namasivayam**





# Dr. Anantham Harin

Dr Anantham Harin earned a rare mix of undiluted superlatives: an outstanding humanitarian, a brilliant award-winning physician, a dedicated husband and a resolutely-steadfast friend.

Affectionately called "Hari" by legions of friends, he spent nearly 30 years as Director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Richmond University Medical Centre in the New York City borough of Staten Island.

As a first-rate physician, Hari was anointed -- multiple times -- one of New York city's "best doctors": a prestigious accolade bestowed annually by New York magazine. But modesty prevented him from keeping a count of the number of times he adorned the pages of the widely-read magazine. When he passed away at the age of 65 last month, he had reached the Himalayan heights of his medical career.

Hari was a specialist in neonatal-perinatal medicine and was a onetime clinical Professor of Pediatrics at New York University's School of Medicine. He graduated from the Medical School at the University of Colombo back in 1970.

In his field of speciality, he was responsible for ensuring the survival of hundreds of infants. In



a moving tribute to Hari, Bonnie Gleicher said that 22 years ago, "Dr. Anantham Harin brought me into the world -- a three-month premature baby -- and now, he has left it. As I thank this man for the healthy, exuberant life he's helped me live, I celebrate his own. The world has few gems, and Dr. Harin was truly one of them," she wrote on a Staten

Island newspaper blog.

In a message to Hari's wife Nirupa, Linda Sarno, another former patient, wrote: "26 years ago, your beloved husband saved my daughter and my life due to my preeclampsia. We loved and respected him very much, as many others did. Too soon, but I am sure he is taking care of ALL in heaven."

## "He brought out a three month premature baby who is now 22 years old"

When his cash-strapped hospital was forced to make budgetary cuts, Hari volunteered to take a 50 percent reduction of his own salary primarily to save the jobs of two of his assistants who would otherwise have been laid off. It was a display of his innate humanitarian qualities.

The tributes at Hari's funeral came from near and far: nurses, doctors, patients, friends, old Royalists and parish priests.

As president of the Royal College Old Boys East Coast Association (RCOBECA), he offered a scintillating toast at the annual dance last year. Royal College, he said, has been the cradle for leadership for 175 years. "We rose to different heights, shared a rich history, followed great traditions and on its way produced a long list of distinguished men."

Hari possessed a vibrant sense of humor as he traded jokes and anecdotes with his friends. He was the creator of a group of free thinking, philosophically-bent friends of his genera-

tion whom he dubbed the "Sophists". Hari was the leader of the Sophists brotherhood which met at least once a month in a New York city restaurant to talk politics, sports, movies, theatre -- while, all the time, reminiscing the memorable days in school and university back home.

At the RCOBECA dinner last year, Hari fondly remembered a teacher at Royal College who was mischievously dubbed "the sheriff of fractured jaw": the memorable title of a Hollywood western. Hari quoted the teacher as having famously advised his class: "If you cannot dazzle them with your brilliance, baffle them with your bullshit." In real life, Hari opted for brilliance over bullshit.

In his eulogy, Dr Simon Rabinowitz, chair of the Department of Pediatrics at Hari's hospital, said: "While his friendship and his leadership will be missed, his legacy lives on in his many success stories."

TMD  
NEW YORK

## Coming of Age for good reasons

By: Vishali Ratnam

The population of the poor and needy people in our world is 1.02 billion out of 6.8 billion people. That is more than 15% of the world's population.

When I was 4, I went to Sri Lanka to visit my grandmother. While I was walking up and down the street of Colombo, I saw people with no money and no jobs. They were hungry and they also had a family to take care of. Think about how many people are on the street after the war in Northern Sri Lanka?

I raised \$9,000 dollars from my Coming of Age ceremonies. My uncles, aunts, cousins and friends helped to raise this money. Then I used a calculator and divided \$9,000 by \$250, the amount each needy family will get if I donate all of the money to IMHO Canada's micro credit program. The total number of families came to 36. I realized that if I could help 36 families and if the money is used again and again, the help becomes unlimited.

The reason that I am giving all the proceeds to charity is because, similar to the people



that I saw on the streets 7 years ago, needy families will get \$250 to make a business or start a

career. The good thing is after they achieve their goal, another family will get the \$250 and they can do the same and it goes on and on.

I am writing this is to encourage other kids like me to donate birthday monies and other gifts so they can make this world a better place for everyone.

For more information about IMHO Canada and its efforts, please visit [www.imhocanada.org](http://www.imhocanada.org) or contact the IMHO Canada Programs Coordinator at 416.321.9555 (office) or by email at [contact@imhocanad.org](mailto:contact@imhocanad.org).



## Ceylon National Chamber of Industries fetes achievers?



The Achiever Awards for Industrial Excellence organized by Ceylon National Chamber of Industries (CNCI) was held on Wednesday, 1 September 2010 at King's Court, Hotel Cinnamon Lakeside, Colombo.

Industrialists in different sectors were feted under national and provincial level for achievements in their endeavours. Awards categories were: National Award - Manufacturing Sector, National Award - Service Sector, Provincial Award - Manufacturing Sector, Provincial Award - Service Sector, Five Categories - Extra

Large, Large, Medium, Small and Micro and Special District Award - Northern Province.

Picture on the Left shows one of the recipients - Mrs. Ponmalar Rajeswaran, Managing Director of Sangamam Small Industries (Pvt) Limited, Moolai from Jaffna District receiving the Special District Award for Northern Province from Mrs. Wickramasuriya wife of Newton Wickramasuriya CNCI Chairman. Mrs. Rajeswaran is the daughter of the Late R.Thambyah and Mrs.Thambiyah of Moolai, Chulipuram.



**2 ஆவது ஆண்டு  
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# நீதி சேர் நடை

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புற்று நோயானது கி.பி. பால் மற்றும் அகவை வேறுபாடுகளுக்கு அப்பாற்பட்டது என்பதைப் பல தமிழ்க் குடும்பத்தார் அறிவர். 40 விழுக்காடு பெண்களும் 45 விழுக்காடு ஆண்களுமெனக் கனடிய மக்கள் தமது வாழ்நாளில் புற்று நோய்க்கு ஆளாவர் எனக் கனடியப் புற்றுநோய்ச் சங்கம் (கனடியன் கான்சர் சொசைறறி) கணித்துள்ளது. புற்று நோயை கில்லாதொழித்து வரலாறு காண உதவிடும் தமிழ்க் கனடியரின் நீதி சேர்நடையில் கிணையங்கள்.



**நீதி சேர் நடை  
Walk - A - Thon**

**Sunday, September 19, 2010  
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Registration: 8:30 AM  
Walk Starts: 9:30 AM**

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