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Monsoon Journal


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Scarborough Toyota donates Camry to hospital fundraiser

The Scarborough Hospital Foundation launches "Scarborough Win a Car Charity Raffle"

In response to overwhelming demand from the community, The Scarborough Hospital Foundation is proud to launch its "Scarborough Win a Car Charity Raffle", giving hospital patients, staff, volunteers and the general public the opportunity to win a 2011 Toyota Camry.

Community partner and local business Scarborough Toyota has graciously donated the prize, worth \$30,758.83, to help fundraise for the purchase of two CT Scanners for The Scarborough Hospital.

Contd. in page 4



Cake cutting at "Scarborough Win a Car Charity Raffle" Launch - (L-R) Guy Bonnell, Vice President, Community Development, TSH Foundation; Peter Verbeek, Treasurer, TSH Volunteer Gift Shops; Gerry MacDonald, General Manager, Scarborough Toyota and Toyota on the Park; and Eddie Ng, Toyota Canada

Toronto's New Mayor Rob Ford takes office and announces plans for the term

"Property taxes will be frozen in 2011," Mayor Rob Ford unexpectedly announced on his first day as the Mayor of Toronto and mentioned four priorities during his term in office at a press conference, on December 1, 2010:



They are:

1. "Customer service will be job one," Ford said. "Every e-mail, every phone call will be responded to." The Mayor announced he is setting up a task force to enforce customer service standards across all city departments and arms-length agencies.
2. For "Every taxpayer in the city", city government will be transparent and accountable Mayor Ford said. This will be in accordance with his Taxpayer Protection Plan he campaigned on.
3. "Toronto taxpayers do not want a larger budget and more spending,"

and "They want city managers to find ways to deliver city services more efficiently and effectively," which will result in reducing the size and cost of government, the new mayor said.

4. "For too long, the city has focused on transit only," and Mayor Rob Ford wants to expand that to motorists, commercial vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. He also pledged to end the personal vehicle registration tax. He will also work towards having all new transit underground.


The Royal Engagement



Prince William and Kate Middleton

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the gift of life - twice."*

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SCARBOROUGH

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Charity Raffle

The Scarborough
Hospital
FOUNDATION

Scarborough
TOYOTA

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for both the General campus and Birchmount
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Foundation
General campus office
3030 Lawrence Avenue East
Medical Mall, Suite 310A

Volunteer Gift Shop
The Scarborough Hospital
General campus
3050 Lawrence Avenue East
Ground Level, Lawrence Entrance

Volunteer Gift Shop
The Scarborough Hospital
Birchmount campus
3030 Birchmount Road
Main floor, across from the cafeteria

Scarborough Toyota
1897 Eglinton Avenue East
(located between Warden Avenue
and Pharmacy Avenue)

Scarborough Town Centre
Lower Level
TSH Volunteer Booth
At this location, only from
January 9 - 23, 2011

Tickets may be purchased from December 1, 2010 until Monday, January 31, 2011 at 4 p.m. Only 7,500 tickets will be sold.

Draw Date: Wednesday, February 2, 2011 at 7 pm at the Scarboro Golf and Country Club

PRIZE	VALUE	DETAILS
Car	\$ 30,758.83	2011 Toyota Camry LE 4 cylinder

OPS NAMED ONE OF GREATER TORONTO'S TOP EMPLOYERS FOR 2011

For the third year in a row, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) has the honour of being named one of Greater Toronto's Top Employers by Mediacorp Canada Inc.

Mediacorp Canada Inc. evaluated organizations based on the same key areas used in the national competition: physical workplace, work atmosphere and social, health, financial and family benefits, vacation and time off, employee communications, performance management, training and skills development and community involvement.

This award is a special designation recognizing the Greater Toronto employers that lead their industries in offering exceptional places to work. Employers are compared to other organizations in their field to determine which offers the most progressive and forward-thinking programs. Now entering its fifth year, this award is organized by Mediacorp Canada Inc who also manages the Canada's Top 100 Employers award.

Greater Toronto is defined by the editors as including the City of Toronto and the Regional Municipalities of York, Halton, Peel and Durham.

Some of the reasons why the Ontario Public Service was selected as one of Greater Toronto's Top Employers for 2011 include:

- helps employees prepare for retirement with phased-in retirement options, a defined benefit pension plan as well as a health plan that extend into retirement, with no age limit

- offers employees excellent opportunities for career advancement and specialization through an incredible range of career fields

- provides maternity leave top-up benefits for new mothers (to 93% for 32 weeks) and for new fathers (to 93% for 17 weeks), including adoptive parents

- offers a number of new internship and training programs to recruit new graduates and young professionals into the civil service

- provides three weeks of paid vacation for new employees, working up to six weeks of paid vacation for long-serving employees

In addition to being recognized for the third consecutive year as one of Greater Toronto's Top Employers, the OPS has also

been recognized for 2011 as one of Canada's Top 100 Employers for the third year in a row, as well as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers for the third year in a row in 2010, one of the Top Employers for Canadians Over 40 for the second consecutive year, and for the first time, the OPS has been named one of Canada's Greenest Employers for 2010.

The OPS has jobs for diverse, talented people with the right qualifications and the right fit, at every stage in their careers.

QUICK FACTS

The Ontario Public Service (OPS) is one of the largest employers in the province, employing more than 60,000 people.

Working from over 1,800 locations across the province, OPS employees come from a wide variety of professions and backgrounds, including, biologists and lawyers, policy analysts and advisors, social workers and nurses, mechanics and systems analysts, editors, conservation officers and translators, auditors and economists, urban planners and forest firefighters...and more.

The Canadian Tamil Youth Development Centre (CanTYD) will host its 11th Annual

Awards of Excellence on December 5, 2010. The night will recognize exceptional Tamil Canadian high school students who have achieved excellence in academics, athletics, the arts, and community service.

The event will be hosted at the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto at 5183 Sheppard Avenue East. The reception will begin at 5:30 pm and will be followed by an Awards Gala at 6:30



into a thriving organization of 6 staff, 150 volunteers, 500 young participants, 4 projects, outreach in 6 high schools, and has touched the lives many youth across Toronto.

Award categories include: Academics, Athletics, Arts, Overall Achievement, Community

Awards of Excellence Ceremony Recognizes Exceptional Tamil Canadian Youth Achievement

pm. "We hope the stellar achievements of our award winners will inspire, empower, and motivate our youth to be on stage receiving an award one day," said Senthuran Vettivelupillai, CanTYD's Director of Communications.

CanTYD is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth empowerment in the Tamil-Canadian community. In February 1998, 17 Tamil students and graduates came together to form CanTYD in the wake of escalating violence that claimed the life of a promising Tamil-Canadian student. CanTYD has since grown

Contribution, Most Improved, and Uniquely Distinguished Effort. As of 2010, CanTYD has awarded over \$100,000 in scholarships.

As we reflect on our past, celebrate the present, and look to the future, CanTYD's Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers would like to invite all to the gala and support the organization in recognizing the achievements of these exceptional youth.

For media inquires, please contact Senthuran Vettivelupillai, Director of Communications

Courtesy: CanTYD, Tel: 416 431 4100, Web: www.cantyd.org, E-mail: info@cantyd.org

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blooms, the bees come
uninvited"**
- Ramakrishna Paramahansa

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Logan Velumailum

Editorial & Marketing Consultant
Siva Sivapragasam

Promotion Co-ordinator
Senthil Senthivel

Layout Design
Santosh Kumar K.A

Graphics Consultant
Gnane B. Gnanendran

Contributing Columnists

Anand. J
Abizar Badani
Arun Senathirajah
Ayktah Grover
Devadas Chelvam
Dr. Fonseka
Prof. Ghai, Saran
Harish . G
K.T. Kumaran
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From the Publisher's Desk ... The Holiday Season is Here!

Krishni Loganathan, B.A. (Hons)
Can you believe that the holiday season is here and another year has flown by? Whether you celebrate Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanza, or just enjoy the holiday season, we are closing in on 2010 and look forward to a bright New Year. As people prepare for the holidays don't forget to stop and take a break, before you know it the holidays will have come and gone. It's important to enjoy every moment that this holiday season brings us. Whether it's the shopping, the Christmas parties, decorating the house, lighting the candles, remember to take in these moments, soon it will become only a memory. It's these

memories that keep us going for the rest of the year.

Holiday gatherings are an eventful time as children are off from school, families are flying in from abroad and the house is full of activity. Holiday parties can occasionally get out of hand, and it is up to the host and others overseeing the party to avoid this from happening and to ensure measures are taken before any incidents occur. Prevention is the key to avoiding accidents.

It is all about enjoying this season and trying to take part in many of the activities. Skating at Nathan Phillips Square is always an exciting time for the whole family; the heart of downtown

with hundreds of other enthused families all having an enjoyable time.

Shopping can be a chore at times but try to be prepared instead of window shopping for the perfect gift. Make a list of every person you have to buy a gift for and stick to the list for a more efficient method of getting into and out of those chaotic shopping centres.

Trying to decide on a gift is always one of the most stressful tasks of the season, how about donating to a charity like a local hospital. The gift can be small or large and can make great stocking stuffers. 'Tis the season of giving,' and not everyone can afford the

luxuries that many of us have. Working at a soup kitchen or donating toys and books can make a great difference in your community and instil a great feeling in yourself when doing charitable acts.

The month of December allows us all to reflect on the past year, and look forward to the New Year ahead of us. It is now an opportunity to begin with a new plan or alter the previous one in an effort to live a productive, successful, happy and healthy lifestyle.

Monsoon Journal wishes you all a very Happy Holiday Season, and Health and Wealth in the New Year!

Scarborough Toyota donates ...

Contd. from page 1

"Scarborough Toyota has been part of the fabric of the Scarborough community for over 30 years," says Bryan Rowntree, President, Scarborough Toyota and Toyota on the Park. "We are honoured to do our part to support The Scarborough Hospital."

There are only 7,500 tickets being sold, available for purchase in person at Scarborough Toyota,

www.tsh.to.

"The Foundation is grateful to Scarborough Toyota and the hospital's Volunteer Services for partnering with us in this community-wide endeavour," says Michael Mazza, TSH Foundation President & CEO.

"Each \$20 ticket sold brings us one step closer to replacing our outdated CT Scanners, but it also

Peter Verbeek, Treasurer, TSH Volunteer Services; and Guy Bonnell, Vice President, Community Development, TSH Foundation attended the Scarborough Win a Car Charity Raffle launch event held on Tuesday, November 23, 2010 at 2:00 pm at Scarborough Toyota located at 1897 Eglinton Avenue (Pharmacy & Eglinton). Regrets at the launch event were Bryan Rowntree, President, Scarborough Toyota and Toyota on the Park and Michael Mazza, TSH Foundation President & CEO.

Situated in the most diverse community in Canada, The

Scarborough Hospital (TSH) delivers high-quality patient care at two hospital campuses and six satellite sites. The Scarborough Hospital is a regional centre for dialysis and is renowned for its sexual assault care centre and mental health programs. Affiliated with the University of Toronto, TSH is also a referral centre for vascular surgery, pacemakers and corneal implants.

For more info: Kerry McLeish, Communications Officer, The Scarborough Hospital Foundation, 416.438.2911 ext. 8090 or 647.968.4012, kmcleish@tsh.to, www.tsh.to



Guy Bonnell, Vice President, Community Development, TSH Foundation & Rob Gardiner, Senior Sales Manager, Scarborough Toyota



McLeish, Communications Officer, The Scarborough Hospital Foundation with some of press reporters Ming Pao & Snap

in the Gift Shops run by Volunteer Services at both the General campus and the Birchmount campus, and at the Foundation office in the General campus Medical Mall. Tickets will be available from December 1, 2010, until 4 p.m. on January 31, 2011. The draw will take place at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, February 2, 2011, where one lucky winner will win a brand new, free car. Rules and regulations are available online at

allows both our internal and external family of supporters to come together and show how much they care about their Scarborough hospital."

Gerry MacDonald, General Manager, Scarborough Toyota and Toyota on the Park; Rob Gardiner, Senior Sales Manager, Scarborough Toyota; Jeff Boomer, General Sales Manager, Toyota on the Park; Steve Pedretti, Central Zone Manager, Toyota Canada;

WikiLeaks: US Suspects Sri Lankan President of 2009 Killings

By Voice of America News

Leaked U.S. documents say American diplomats accused top Sri Lankan officials, including President Mahinda Rajapaksa, of playing a role in last year's alleged massacre of Tamil Tiger rebels.

The classified diplomatic cable sent last January by the U.S. Embassy in Colombo is one of thousands the website WikiLeaks made public recently.

In the cable, U.S. officials wrote that the Sri Lankan government showed no signs of investigating alleged human rights violations committed by its side in the closing months of a 25-year-old civil war between the rebels and government.

The officials say any effort to investigate is further complicated because President Rajapaksa, his brothers and opposition candidate, former army commander Sarath Fonseka, are responsible for many of the alleged crimes.

Sri Lankan forces defeated the Tamil Tigers in May of last year, ending their decades-long cam-

paign for an independent state. The United Nations says at least 7,000 ethnic Tamil civilians were killed in the last months of fighting.

Human rights groups have accused both the Tigers and government forces of human rights violations during the conflict. Sri Lanka denied its troops committed war crimes and has rejected a U.N. probe into the fighting.

On Dec 1st, a British group canceled a planned speech by President Rajapaksa after his visit raised security concerns. The Oxford Union was scheduled to host the speech by Mr. Rajapaksa, who arrived in Britain for a visit on Nov 30th. Sri Lanka's minority Tamil group had planned to protest the address.

Mr. Rajapaksa said he is sorry the speech had to be canceled, but that he will continue to seek places to talk about his "future vision for Sri Lanka." The Oxford Union released a statement saying its decision was not related to Mr. Rajapaksa's political positions.

Boat People

Last August with the coming of refugees from Sri Lanka by a ship there was much talk about boat people. Now there are attempts being made to make legislations to discourage of people coming into the country in a cluster of large numbers and claiming refugee status. I do not pretend to know what the outcome will be and how it will affect our country. Here I wish to analyse the history of such mass exodus of people on boats.

The term 'Boat People' was coined when there was mass exodus of people from war ravaged Vietnam in the early seventies. This kind fleeing of the home land happened not only from Vietnam but from other parts of the world too. We are all familiar with the boat people who fled Cuba to U. S. A. Another classic case it that of the Jews from Germany before the war.

On June 10, 1977 Israel saved 66 Vietnamese who were in a leaky boat floating on the Japanese coast when many developed nation's ships went passing by without stopping. They were brought to Israel and allowed to live there. They continued to be magnanimous towards the fleeing boat people. When President Jimmy Carter asked the Prime Minister of Israel the reason for his action he replied, "It was natural act to us, Mr. President. We remembered, we have never forgotten, the boat with 900 Jews having left Germany in the last

weeks before the Second World War... Traveling from harbour to harbour, from country to country, crying out for refuge. They were refused... Therefore it was natural that my first act as prime minister was to give those people a heaven in the land of Israel".

It is worthy to note that post second world war there were people from south India crossed the park straight to Ceylon (the name of Sri Lanka then) in search of better future. This was a shallow water way. They were called 'kalla thoni' meaning rouge boat in Tamil. To day there had been many Tamils who have crossed the same water divide seeking asylum in India.

One cannot help but wonder why people take such risk, not only to themselves but also their families. I was reminded of a 2007 October issue of 'The Economist' magazine. The title of the article is 'Patience, fairness and human condition'. In this article it is shown how humans differ from chimpanzees in their approach to fairness. Scientists tested this by means of the ultimatum game, in which there are two players, a proposer and a responder. They have to divide a quantity of some good (which could be anything from cash to chocolates). The proposer chooses how much will go to him and how much to the responder. The responder has no choice but to take or leave the offer (hence the name of the game).



One might expect that the responder would accept any offer, no matter how small: after all, even a tiny portion of the good is better than nothing. And that is what the chimps do. But humans don't. Human responders have been repeatedly shown to reject any offer smaller than 20 percent – even though it is to their disadvantage to do so. The refusal is presumably to punish the proposer for his greed. This sense of fairness is ingrained in human being. Probably this attitude of fairness may explain why suicide happens only in humans among the animal kingdom!

The famous quotation by Patrick Hendry on March 23, 1775 in the Virginia Convention where two famous future Presidents of U S A Thomas Jefferson and George Washington were present ending his plea for freedom 'Give me Liberty, or give me Death'. These men who flee their home land do so knowing well the perils of undertaking such a journey. But once they have come to their limits of fairness and injustice they rather prefer death to slavery. Fleeing the home land is only a

symptom. The cause is the suffocation they undergo under slavery. There will be boat people fleeing from their home land till there is excessive oppression.

I do not condone any violence and the purpose of forming an United Nations is to resolve conflicts. There was virtually a war went on unhindered by the world community. The war in Sri Lanka was not carried by weapons with a name tag 'made in Sri Lanka'. The world body gave a logical explanation that it does not interfere in internal politics, which is a fair stand. However they never prevented nations supplying arms to both sides and amassed wealth from both sides.

What ever that happened has happened, but what is left for us to do to correct the situation so that people wont take undue risks and jump on to boat fleeing the country.

People fleeing from there mother land is not going for a cruse, but crying loud 'Give me Liberty or give me Death'. Are they to be blamed is the question we must find a honest answer. Certainly in a civilized world one is



guaranteed freedom of speech and a right to pursue their goal free without persecution like in Canada.

Another important fact of note is that they left their home land not because they hated it but because their freedom was lost. They have left their country of birth, but one should remember we can take a man fro his village but can never the village from them. After all man is a territorial animal. The urge to see their home land will be there till they die. Especially in the dusk of their life they want to see their land of birth. One should understand, with a faint hope these boat people want to see their land of birth. But the second generation's desires are different. For them the land of birth is the foster home land of their parents. As time goes bye the generations to come the chosen home of their forefathers will be their mother land. May we all endeavour to see that we don't have boat people in any part of the world. But let us achieve not by the people seeking refuge but by persuading the people who persecute these people to such an extent they risk their life. Let there be no more Patrick Hendry crying 'Give me freedom or give me death'.

By: KUMAR PUNI THAVEL
kumarpunithavel@yahoo.com

NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN FOR TOP 25 CANADIAN IMMIGRANTS OF 2011

National award celebrates achievements of Canadian newcomers

Canadian Immigrant magazine and RBC announced recently, the open call nominations for the "Top 25 Canadian Immigrants of 2011." The third annual awards program seeks to celebrate the stories and achievements of outstanding Canadian immigrants from coast to coast.

"It's exciting to embark on our third annual Top 25 Canadian Immigrants awards program," said Margaret Jetelina, editor of Canadian Immigrant. "The winners from last year's awards were nothing short of inspirational, and we know there are so many more immigrants in Canada who deserve recognition for giving back to their adopted country."

This national people's choice award is unique in that it allows Canadians to vote directly for individuals from all walks of life who have made a difference since their arrival in Canada. More than 20,000 votes from across Canada were cast in the 2010 awards pro-

gram.

"Voting for the top Canadian immigrants presents an opportunity to recognize role models who have encouraged and motivated others and applaud those who have made significant contributions to this country," said Camon Mak, director of RBC Multicultural Markets. "We hope the winners' stories inspire other immigrants to make their dreams a reality."

A nominee can be someone who has moved to Canada and, since immigrating, has contributed to the diversity and success of this country. Achievements can be either professional or personal. Nominees must hold landed immigrant (Permanent Resident) or citizen status in Canada. This program is also proudly supported by the Toronto Star.

Nominations can be made by visiting canadianimmigrant.ca/top25 until January 28, 2011. A distinguished panel of judges will



review all nominees and present a list of finalists that will be profiled online in February, when all Canadians can vote for their favourite nominees.

The winners will be announced in May 2011 and will be recognized in Canadian Immigrant magazine. They will also receive a commemorative plaque and a \$500 donation from RBC toward a registered Canadian charity of their choice.

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Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada on Diwali

Prime Minister Stephen Harper made the following remarks at a celebration in Ottawa marking Diwali held on November 16th:

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

"Namaskar. Sat sri akal.

"Thank you, Deepak, for your kind introduction.

"Thank you as well for once again hosting tonight's Diwali celebration, the tenth annual Festival of Lights gathering here in Ottawa. It is just one of so many things you have done over the course of your eventful and productive life to bring people, communities, and even countries, together. As the founding president of the Canada-India Parliamentary Friendship Group, for example, you have made tremendous contributions to strengthening relations between Canada and India. Since coming to Canada more than 30 years ago, you have succeeded at everything you put your hand to in business and in politics. You and your wife Neena have also raised a lovely family, which now includes third-generation-Canadian Ohbrais. And through all this you have blazed a trail into the mainstream of Canadian life that has become a well-worn path for hundreds of thousands of Indo-Canadians. I know there are many other community leaders here tonight who have also followed that path. You should all be very proud of what you've done to make the Indo-Canadian community such an integral part of our peaceful and pluralistic society.

"And I suspect you are as excited as I am about the future of Canada and your place in it,

especially as our country builds deeper and stronger political, trade and cultural relations with India, South Asia's fast-rising economic star. I believe I had a glimpse of the future during my visit to India last year. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Singh, India has embraced the principles of democracy and free markets with a zeal unmatched in the developing world. It has paid off with robust economic growth, rising living standards – even during the global recession – and thus growing influence in the great councils of the world. What I also saw, though, in visits to the Swaminarayan Akshardham in New Delhi, the great Sikh Golden Temple in Amritsar, the Chabad House in Mumbai, and even on the set of the Dance Premier League, was a nation of extraordinary ethno-cultural diversity. A nation with a stable parliamentary government committed to the principles of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. And a nation with a billion people yearning for peace and prosperity. In the long term, their will cannot be denied by small groups of extremists who live in the past and lust for vengeance. Instead, I am confident the spirit of Diwali will prevail. The Festival of Lights illuminates the universal hope of all peoples for the renewal of life and the triumph of good over evil. The light of the diya will overpower the darkness of intolerance and extremism, and guide India to its destiny as one of the great powers of the world.

"This summer, a statue of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled at the site of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. A gift of the Indian government, the bronze Bapu perfectly symbolizes the sturdy bonds between our



Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Deepak Obrhai, Member of Parliament, light the traditional lamp in celebration of Diwali while Dr. Doobay, Pandit from the Vishnu Mandir, conducts the ceremony. PMO photo by Jason Ransom

countries. We are linked by our shared devotion to human rights, our common aspiration to build harmonious pluralistic societies, our determination to develop our immense, untapped potential as trade partners, and the ancient family ties of a million Canadians of Indian descent. Our Government has re-engaged with India like no other since at least the 1970s. We have made an unprecedented number of ministerial visits, including reciprocal prime ministerial trips. We have opened new trade missions and resolved the issues that hobbled Canada-India relations under our predecessors, enabling a historic nuclear cooperation agreement

that will benefit both our countries.


"And we have launched negotiations aimed at producing a Comprehensive Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement. In fact, the opening session of those negotiations was held this morning. Which makes this a proud day for our entire team. A day that we have been patiently working towards, ever since 2005, when the idea was first raised in the House of Commons, by Deepak Obhrai. All these

efforts reflect two countries, destined by their shared history, values and peoples to march into the future together, a future of unbounded opportunities for both of us. Thank you for everything you do to bring that future closer and thank you for the opportunity to share in your celebration of Diwali.

"Thank you.

"Namaste."

Sat sri akal."



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India wants "Structured Dialogue Mechanism" to achieve a political solution in Sri Lanka

(Remarks by India's External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna to the media after the Signing of Agreed Minutes of the 7th Meeting of the Joint Commission, Nov 26, 2010)

"I have just concluded very useful and productive discussions with Hon'ble Minister Peiris on the various items on the agenda of the seventh session of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission. Let me, at the very outset, express my sincere gratitude to Minister Peiris and his government for the warmth and gracious hospitality that has been extended to me and to my colleagues and the excellent arrangements made for my visit.

"The Joint Commission discussions covered all areas of bilateral relevance, including trade, services and investment, development cooperation, science and technology, culture and education. The sheer breadth of our engagement today, as is reflected in the Joint Commission discussions, is testimony to the fact that our relations have greatly diversified with the passage of time. The visits of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2008 and His Excellency President Rajapaksa in June and October this year have undoubtedly given our relations a fillip. Our relations are poised to develop further in an all round manner.

"Earlier this morning, I was honoured to meet His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa. We witnessed the signing of the credit agreement for \$416.39 million for the Northern Railway construction project. I am also happy to announce that work on the Northern Railway Line will commence soon with the inauguration scheduled for tomorrow

"Prof. Peiris and I have also just witnessed the exchange of Instruments of Ratification of the Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners and of the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. This brings into effect these two important agreements between our two countries.

"To build on the vibrant and



India's External Affairs Minister S. M. Krishna and his Sri Lankan counterpart Gamini Lakshman Peiris arrive on a special helicopter at a defence base in Colombo on Thursday. Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao is seen alighting from the chopper - Pic: PTI

multi-faceted partnership between our two countries, it is important that we leverage our common strategic interests, further enhance connectivity and economic engagement, and promote people-to-people contacts. "The opening of our Consulates in Hambantota and Jaffna, which will take place over today and tomorrow, is a significant milestone in this quest. In this connection, we also expect to resume ferry services between Colombo and Tuticorin and Talaimannar and Rameswaram soon, an agreement on which has been finalized.

"The project for the construction of 50,000 houses for IDPs in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and also for estate workers in the Central Provinces will be an enduring symbol of India-Sri Lanka partnership. This morning, we witnessed an Exchange of Letters on the pilot phase of this project, which also took place in the presence of His Excellency President Rajapaksa.

Tomorrow, through a groundbreaking ceremony in Jaffna, we will be signalling the commencement of this project.

"The cessation of hostilities in Sri Lanka in May last year provides a historic opportunity to address all outstanding issues related to rehabilitation as well as a political settlement in a spirit of understanding and mutual accommodation. It is our hope that a structured dialogue mechanism to work towards this end will be launched soon. We have been assured that it is the intention of the Sri Lankan Government to resettle the Internally Displaced Persons by the end of this year.

"I also took this opportunity to emphasise on the need to adhere to the October 2008 understanding on fishing arrangements arrived at between the two countries, which has had a salutary effect on the incidence of fishermen's arrests and on their safety. We agreed that the joint Working Group on Fishing should meet

soon.

With the tone that has been set in my discussions today, I have no doubt that India-Sri Lanka relations are poised the fully take advantage of the opportunities open before us. I have told Minister Peiris that I look forward to receiving him in New Delhi at his convenience to take forward our bilateral discussions."

The Government of Sri Lanka thanked the Government of India for the substantial development assistance being provided through a wide variety of projects. The range of assistance being received from the Government of India for Resettlement and Rehabilitation of the Northern and Eastern Provinces includes, inter alia, the following:

1. Housing - 50,000 houses for IDPs;
2. Supply of 7200 MT of Roofing Sheets for IDPs in the Northern Province;
3. Supply of 400,000 Cement Bags to IDPs;
4. Supply of 70,000 Agriculture Tool Kits to IDPs;
5. Provision of Seven de-min-



- ing teams;
6. Supply of 500 Four-Wheeled Tractors and agricultural equipment;
7. Supply of Seeds;
8. Assistance in the Fishing sector;
9. Limb Fitment Project;
10. Rehabilitation of Duraipappa Stadium;
11. Construction of Vocational Training Centres;
12. Construction of Jaffna Cultural Centre;
13. Railway infrastructure;
14. Rehabilitation of Palaly Airport;
15. Rehabilitation of Kankesanthurai Harbour;
16. Supply of equipment to Jaffna Teaching Hospital;
17. Supply of books to Jaffna Library and Jaffna University;
18. Project for war widows by SEWA;
19. Assistance to rehabilitation of Micro and SMEs;
20. Assistance for Schools and Universities; and
21. Assistance for rehabilitation of hospitals.

Dr. Seyon Sathiaseelan: New Family Physician in Markham



Dr. Sathiaseelan BSc, MD, CCFP

Dr. Seyon Sathiaseelan – raised in Markham, studied at University of Toronto and University of Ottawa for his undergraduate and medical studies/residency is back to serve in Markham community. He has now joined the clinic "Health for All" and it includes a team Family Health professionals.

The Health for All Family Health Team and the Markham Family Medicine Teaching Unit are now open beside Markham Stouffville Hospital. Its vision is to provide excellent primary care for their patients and community in a dynamic clinical and educational environment that affirms their belief in Health for All.

The Family Health Team is served by a range of health professionals including family physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, a social worker and a dietitian working together to provide health care for this community.

If you do not currently have a primary care provider, consider making Health for All your Family Health Team.

It is a teaching unit affiliated with the University of Toronto.

Dr. Sathiaseelan possesses an added advantage for those who speak only Tamil as he understands Tamil and he is of Sri Lankan origin.

The clinic is located at 379 Church Street, Suite 202, Markham. Tel: 905 472 2200

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MONSOON FEATURE

Raymond Rajabalan

Santa Claus, also known as Saint Nicholas, Sinterklaas, Father Christmas, Kris Kringle, or simply "Santa", is a historical, legendary and mythological figure who, in many Western cultures, is said to bring gifts to the homes of the good children during the late evening and overnight hours of Christmas Eve, December 24 or on his Feast Day, December 6 (Saint Nicholas Day).

While Saint Nicholas was originally portrayed wearing bishop's robes, today Santa Claus is generally depicted as a plump, jolly, white-bearded man wearing a red coat with white collar and cuffs, white-cuffed red trousers, and black leather belt and boots. This image became popular in the United States and Canada in the 19th century due to the significant influence of an American caricaturist and political cartoonist Thomas Nast.

Early Christian origins

Saint Nicholas of Myra is the primary inspiration for the Christian figure of Santa Claus. He was a 4th century Greek Christian bishop of Myra (now Demre) in Lycia, a province of the Byzantine Anatolia, now in Turkey. He was very religious from an early age and devoted his life entirely to Christianity.

One story tells of a poor man and his three daughters. With no money to get his daughters married, he was worried what would happen to them after his death. Saint Nicholas knowing the anguish of the father stopped by the man's house after the family had gone to bed. He had three bags of gold coins with him, one for each girl. Seeing the daughters stockings hung over the fire-place for drying, he put one gold bag in each stocking and left. The girls waking up the next morning found a bag of gold coins in each of their stockings. This led to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas.

His feast on December 6 came to be celebrated in many countries with the giving of gifts. At the Reformation in 16th-17th century Europe, many Protestants changed the gift bringer to the Christ Child, and the date of giving gifts changed from December the 6th to Christmas Eve.

Modern origins

Pre-modern representations of the gift-giver from church history and folklore, notably St Nicholas and Sinterklaas, merged with the British character Father Christmas to create the character

Santa Claus



The image of Santa Claus as a benevolent character has become reinforced with its association with charity and philanthropy, particularly by organizations such as the Salvation Army. Volunteers dressed as Santa Claus typically became part of fundraising drives to aid needy families at Christmas time.

known to Britons and Americans as Santa Claus. He typified the spirit of good cheer at Christmas, and was reflected in Charles Dickens's festive classic *A Christmas Carol*, as a character named the "Ghost of Christmas Present" portraying him as a great genial man in a green coat lined with fur who takes Scrooge through the bustling streets of London on the current Christmas morning, sprinkling the essence of Christmas onto the happy populace.

In other countries, the figure

of Saint Nicholas was also blended with local folklore. As an example of the still surviving pagan imagery, in Nordic countries the original bringer of gifts at Christmas time was the Yule Goat, a somewhat startling figure with horns.

American variations

In the British colonies of North America and later the United States, British and Dutch versions of the gift-giver merged further. For example, in Washington Irving's *History of New York*, (1809), Interclass was

Americanized into "Santa Claus" but lost his bishop's apparel, and was at first pictured as a thick-bellied Dutch sailor with a pipe in a green winter coat.

In 1821, the book *The Children's Friend: A New-year's present, to the little ones from five to twelve* was published in New York. It contains *Old Santeclaus*, an anonymous poem describing an old man on a reindeer sleigh, bringing presents to children. Some modern ideas of Santa Claus seemingly became canon after the publication of the

poem "A Visit From St. Nicholas" (better known today as "The Night Before Christmas") in the *Troy, New York, Sentinel* on December 23, 1823 by Clement Clarke Moore. Many of his modern attributes are established in this poem, such as riding in a sleigh that lands on the roof, entering through the chimney, and having a bag full of toys.

As years pass, Santa Claus evolved in popular culture into a large, heavysset person. One of the first artists to define Santa Claus's modern image was Thomas Nast, an American cartoonist of the 19th century. Thomas Nast immortalized Santa Claus with an illustration for the January 3, 1863 issue of *Harper's Weekly*. A color collection of Nast's pictures, published in 1869, had a poem also titled "Santa Claus and His Works" by George P. Webster, who wrote that Santa Claus's home was "near the North Pole, in the ice and snow".

Images of Santa Claus were further popularized through an American artist Haddon Sundblom's depiction of him for The Coca-Cola Company's Christmas advertising in the 1930s. The popularity of the image spawned urban legends that Santa Claus was invented by The Coca-Cola Company or that Santa wears red and white because they are the colors used to promote the Coca-Cola brand. Further, the Coca-Cola advertising campaign had the effect of popularizing the depiction of Santa as wearing red and white, in contrast to the variety of colours he wore prior to that campaign; red and white was originally given by Nast.

The image of Santa Claus as a benevolent character became reinforced with its association with charity and philanthropy, particularly by organizations such as the Salvation Army. Volunteers dressed as Santa Claus typically became part of fundraising drives to aid needy families at Christmas time.

Some Christians prefer the holiday focus on the actual birth of Jesus, recognizing that Christmas stemmed from pagan festivals such as the Roman Saturnalia and Germanic Yule that were subsumed within ancient Christianity. An even smaller subset of nominally Reformed Christians actually prefer the secularized version of the holiday for the same reasons, believing that to relegate Christ's birth to Christmas is wrong.

How to make exercise part of your life



6:00 am – Prepare breakfast, pack lunch
 7:00 am – Get ready for work
 8:00 am – Leave for work
 9:00 am to 5pm –
 Work all day
 6:00 pm – Pick up kids, run errands
 7:00 pm – Prepare dinner
 8:00 pm – Get kids ready for bed
 9:00 pm – Send out last minute e-mails for work; prepare for next day.

Does this sound like a typical day in your life? Well, welcome to what we call LIFE! Work, lunches, dinners, soccer games, swim meets, meetings, errands, grocery shopping, social and family engagements; the list never ends! Most of us have schedules that not even the Prime Minister could keep up with, so fitting in exercise to your day seems like an impossible mission. Well, there is a silver lining to your dark cloud. You don't have to be an athlete who trains for 8 hours a day or spend endless hours in a gym to be in the best shape of your life. Below are a few simple things you can do to keep fit and stay active!

Take the stairs

Nix the elevator, escalator, and motor – anything that helps you move! Use those wonderful two legs and walk yourself up or down the stairs. It doesn't seem like much but every little step counts! You can actually burn an amazing, 526 calories per hour (based on a 145lb person)!

You can also wear a pedometer to help gauge how many steps you take in a day. Aim for 10,000 steps per day and you'll see how it easy it is! Here's the best part: you don't have to pay for a gym membership, or use heavy equipment. It's just you and your feet!

Find a buddy

Take your best friend, your neighbour, your hairstylist, your sister, your babysitter or whoever you like to spend time with and make it a social event! Go for an evening walk together, plan a run, sign up for a 5k race, or even the hit the gym together. Having an exercise buddy helps you stay

motivated and have fun at the same time!

Make it a family event

We all value family time especially when our time is so limited because of our hectic and chaotic lives. Make exercise family time where you and your kids enjoy time together. Go for a hike, even toss the ball around in the park, or go swimming together on the weekend. Family + exercise = a happy, healthy home!

Home workout

Again, exercise doesn't have

own dogs lead more healthy and active lifestyles. There is definitely truth to that! For an average 150lbs person, walking the dog for an hour a day can burn more than 200 calories!

Exercise in the AM

Snooze snooze snooze! How many times do you hit that button on your alarm clock in the morning? It's cold and dark outside and you'll do anything for those extra five minutes of sleep, but it is a known fact that exercising in the morning has numerous bene-

fits of your day to do some simple desk exercises. Yes, you may look a little funny doing them and your co-workers may chuckle but at least you were able to burn off that piece of chocolate you had on your break or the cookie that your boss bought for you. Do some leg lifts as you sit on your chair, or walk on the spot for a few minutes to get that heart rate up! It's as simple and easy as that!

Be active during lunch!

No time in the AM or PM?

be expensive but could be the best investment in terms of your health. If you are one of the many people that simply are not motivated to exercise, then a personal trainer is a great idea. An experienced trainer will customize a program specific to your goals, needs and fitness ability, while keeping you motivated and committed.

Do group classes



to mean putting a hole in your wallet or spending countless hours at the gym. You can do a quick and simple workout in your living room. Try your favourite workout DVD or simply do basic strength exercises such as push ups, lunges, squats, or plank holds to get a full body workout. It's quick and easy and in the convenience of your home – what's better than that?

Walk the dog

Studies show that those who

fits. It makes you feel energized and alert, and it sets your metabolism for the day. It is often difficult to incorporate exercise into your schedule in the evening mainly because of social commitments, work, or simply having a long day and being tired. In the morning, you have no excuses!

Do it at your desk!

Most of us spend over eight hours a day sitting at our desk, glued to our chair and computer screen. Take a few minutes out

Then there is always your lunch break. Most offices have gyms in their building or one nearby. Take it outdoors! Go for a quick run around the park or a brisk walk around the area. If the weather doesn't co-operate then make use of those stairs and do a stair workout! Use your one hour to break a sweat and pump up your energy levels for the rest of day!

Make it a Blockbuster night

It's Friday night, you've had a long week and you want to stay in and watch your favourite movie – go ahead and do it! Slip your favourite DVD into your player and pull out your Pilates mat and do some crunches, lunges, squats, and push ups while you watch your favourite Hollywood flick! Who said exercise had to be boring?

Hire a Personal Trainer

Accountability, motivation, knowledge and commitment – these are the key qualities that a personal trainer offers. They may

This is by far the best way to stay motivated! Choose from a variety of different classes offered at your gym or community centre such as spinning, zumba, yoga, pilates, cardio kickboxing, salsa, running/walking groups, aqua fit, swim clubs, aerobics, or even boot camp classes! They're fun, challenging and a great way to socialize, meet new people and stay active!

Exercise is about having fun. It doesn't have to be a gruelling activity that you dread and it sure doesn't have to take hours out of your day. If you choose an activity you enjoy, add variety to your exercise regime, and stay committed then you will surely reap the benefits of exercise and make it part of your healthy lifestyle.

Make exercise a WAY of life not an obstacle in life because it's your body – fuel it, use it, love it!

By Ayktah Grover

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Children born in southern Sri Lanka "but people call them refugees"

by Charles Haviland

Nails are being hammered and beams secured in Silavatturai. SJM Shajahan, a good-natured man in his 40s, watches and helps the men at work.

Fishing is big business nearby and Mr Shajahan, a boat mechanic, is having his engine repair shop rebuilt on the very spot where it used to be 20 years ago.

He has returned home after years in exile, and still has traumatic memories of being expelled by the LTTE.

"Two men with guns arrived by motorbike and ordered me and everyone else to leave," he recalls.

"Notices went up ordering us Muslims to get out within 24 hours. They said: If you don't leave, we will shoot all of you tomorrow. We were scared. We all had to flee in boats, through the sea. It was horrible."

Mr Shajahan says the flight of Muslims in 1990 was like the flight from the tsunami in 2004.

It does not take much for him to break down, almost weeping. That happens when I ask him about his life in exile.

There was no work for him in southern Sri Lanka and he was forced to find employment in Saudi Arabia, where he stayed for 20 years.

Now he is back but the site of his old house is completely swallowed up by a Sri Lankan naval base.

He and others say this junction used to be a bustling town. Today, with so many old dwellings

gone, that is difficult to believe.

About 100,000 Muslims were ordered out of northern Sri Lanka by the LTTE in 1990. They accused the Muslims as a group of collaborating with the Sri Lankan army.

The vast majority of the Muslims have remained in internal exile for two decades. Some, yearning for home, have come back to places like Jaffna in the far north and here, to the Mannar district.

A couple of miles from Silavatturai, a mosque has been rebuilt. We are there on a Friday, and men and boys at midday prayers tell us about 20 mosques were destroyed in the area.

Schools, too, were ruined, as were houses - like that of Mahroof Mashfee Shareef.

Mr Shareef was 14 when he fled with his family.

"This was our main hall - that was the office room - and there were two bedrooms," he says as we pick our way among what is now just a pile of rubble in which trees have grown.

He says he cannot explain in words the shock he felt on returning after 20 years and finding it destroyed.

This was the first part of northern Sri Lanka retaken by the government from the LTTE in 2007 after an ill-fated ceasefire, but Mr Shareef's house was clearly destroyed earlier. He does not know how.

He and his brother have rented a small shop to run as a hardware business. Mr Shareef has been leading a comfortable

enough life in the south for years but he strongly wants to resettle in the north.

"I think now people are coming and it's going to develop," he says. "I decided that I can do a business here, specially hardware, because there is a lot of construction taking place.

"Even if I don't have any business I would have come here because this is my motherland."

But Mr Shareef has yet to persuade his wife, who teaches in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo and comes from the south, to move here.

For these people, displaced for so long, return is still a voluntary and not really an organised process.

Mirak Raheem of the think



The returnees can only reclaim land on a case-by-case basis

quite a number of obstacles," he says.

These include the attempt to regain their old livelihoods, something which also involves local government and community leaders and, according to Mr Raheem, continues to be a challenge.



Yaseen's children were born in southern Sri Lanka "but people call them refugees"

tank Centre for Policy Alternatives says they have had to struggle to get government permission to return and to get access to food rations in the north, rations to which displaced people and returnees are entitled.

"It's been a gradual process and so the returnees have faced

He says returnees can only reclaim their land on a case-by-case basis; some may find it occupied by Tamils who never left the area - others, by the military.

And even though many people are getting government grants to help them build shelters or homes, basic questions of ameni-

ties and infrastructure have not yet been addressed.

In Silavatturai we meet an elderly mother, 69-year-old Siththi Fathima, and her son, Yaseen, and his children - a family in limbo.

So far they have only built a temporary shelter which, she says, is inadequate.

"If someone just puts his hand on our house it will fall," she says. "There are scorpions and snakes, elephants all around."

But her son could not bear living as a displaced person any longer.

"Our children were born in the south but still people call them refugees," he says. "That really hurts us.

"But we stayed there because we didn't have any other option. Now the problems are over so we've come back to settle in our own land."

The problems are not all over. But in this region there does seem to be hope for inter-ethnic relations.

The Sri Lankan Tamil writer DBS Jeyaraj has remarked on the expelled Muslims' "lack of visible bitterness with Tamils... They do not blame the ordinary Tamil for [their predicament]".

There is no bitterness discernible among the Muslims in Silavatturai.

Conversely, Mr Shajahan says that when he and others returned, their old Tamil friends remaining in the area hugged and embraced them like brothers.

[BBC News.com]

India, Lanka to resume Talaimannar-Rameswaram ferry service

Jaffna, Nov 27 (PTI) India today said it will help Sri Lanka to resume ferry services between Talaimannar and Rameswaram at an early date to facilitate people-to-people contacts.

The resumption of this ferry service will re-establish old ties and the linkages that have existed historically between our two countries, External Affairs Minister S M Krishna said.

The ferry services were suspended in the 80's.

In order to enable resumption of ferry services, between Talaimannar and Rameswaram at an early date, IRCON will also build a temporary jetty at Talaimannar, Krishna said.

Krishna also launched the Pilot Housing Project of 1,000

houses at Ariyalai. The pilot project is part of Government of India's commitment to build 50,000 houses.

This is for the Internally Displaced Persons in the Northern, Eastern and Central Provinces of Sri Lanka.

Hindustan Prefab Limited, an state owned Indian company, will execute this pilot project.

At Medawachchiya in North Central Sri Lanka, Krishna while inaugurating the laying of the railway line, said the partnership between the two countries had developed significantly.

"As part of our effort to provide for the reconstruction of Northern Sri Lanka, the Government of India has pledged a line of credit of USD 800 million



at significantly concessional rates.

This he said was for various aspects of the Northern Railway project, including reconstruction

of railway lines, installation of signalling and telecom systems and the procurement of rolling stock.

"Today's ceremony marks the

launch of works on the Medawachchiya-Madhu line by IRCON International Ltd., which is a leading Indian company in railway infrastructure and is already working on the rehabilitation of the Southern Railway, which is also being financed through an Indian line of credit," the minister said.

"I understand that the work on Phase 1 of the project in the Galle-Matara Section is progressing well and is likely to be completed by December 2010," he said.

Work will also begin simultaneously on the Madhu-Talaimannar and Olanthai-Pallai railway lines.

Krishna appreciated the work of the demining teams from India to clear the project area of mines.

As a part of these works, a new pier at Talaimannar will also be built.

Season's Greetings



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FLEMINGDON HEALTH CENTRE LAUNCHES NEW SOUTH ASIAN DIABETES PREVENTION CARE KIT

First culturally and language relevant diabetes prevention kit for South Asians in Canada

On Dec 1st, Flemingdon Health Centre launched Canada's first diabetes prevention kit aimed at reducing the risk and impact of diabetes in South Asian communities.

The new South Asian Diabetes Prevention Care Kit is a new resource that complements Flemingdon Health Centre's successful South Asian Diabetes Prevention Program (SADPP), which offers culturally relevant services in the community around early detection and prevention of diabetes.

The South Asian Diabetes Prevention Care Kit provides South Asian seniors at risk of diabetes with a practical set of tools to take control over their personal health and the health of their communities.

Diabetes disproportionately affects South Asian communities as a result of socio-economic, genetic and lifestyle factors. This program reduces inequities faced by different populations in Toronto by offering an accessible program tailored to meet the needs seniors in South Asian communities.

The kit was created with support from the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network and funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Aging at Home Strategy, which assists seniors to live independently at home and in the community

The kit includes: Booklet in



English, Tamil and Urdu, DVD in English, Tamil and Urdu, Measuring spoons, Pedometers, Stress ball & Measuring tape.

Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

Congratulations to Flemingdon Community Health Centre for taking the initiative to develop this important care kit and thanks to the Toronto Central LHIN for recognizing the value of this program.

With culturally-relevant educational videos, great tip sheets and guides on everything from managing stress to portion control, the care kits are going to help South Asian seniors live healthier lives and prevent diabetes.

Heba Sadek, Program Manager, Flemingdon Health Centre

The South Asian communities have the right to understand what puts them at greater risk of devel-

Camille Orridge, CEO, Toronto Central LHIN

The South Asian Diabetes Prevention Program is a great example of the innovative ways organizations are supporting Toronto's diverse communities by delivering targeted, culturally meaningful programs.

The South Asian Diabetes Prevention Care Kit shows the power of communities to develop solutions to health issues.

oping diabetes after they migrate to Canada. This care kit is part of the South Asian Diabetes Prevention Program's efforts to enable families to be in control of making the necessary lifestyle changes to prevent diabetes and live happier, fuller lives.

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Indians Mark 150 Years



MONSOON NEWSLINES

Written by Rudo Mungoshi

The arrival 150 years ago of the first Indians in South Africa was celebrated during mid November 2010 by Johannesburg and the rest of the country.

The first Indians to come to South Africa came as indentured labourers; they were followed by free immigrants. Today their descendents make up a significant and strong section of the South African tapestry.

Marking the occasion in Joburg, Executive Mayor Amos Masondo praised the Indian community for its profound contribution to the country and the city.

"I know that they see themselves as committed and patriotic South Africans who are proud of their 150-year contribution, and are confident of their future in this country," he said.

The first group of indentured labourers arrived in Durban on board the SS Truro on 16 November 1860 to work in the sugar cane plantations of KwaZulu-Natal. A few years later they were joined by thousands of

"passenger Indians" who were not bound to indenture, including Mohandas Gandhi, who later became known around the world as Mahatma Gandhi and whose descendents still live in the city.

These immigrants paid their own fares and consisted mostly of traders. Masondo added that the religious and cultural diversity within the Indian community had deepened the multi-cultural tapestry of South Africa as a whole.

"Through the decades, the Indian community has provided leadership and innovation in the areas of politics and governance, commerce and industry, and education," he said. "Their contribution has enriched the cultural diversity of our inclusive city."

Oppression

Together with the majority of South Africans, Indians were oppressed by successive colonial and apartheid governments. Many leaders who participated in the struggle for freedom and democracy and subjected to the harsh repression of the apartheid state were also of Indian origin.



Yusuf Dadoo went into exile



Colourful traditional Indian costumes



The Indian community celebrated 150 years in South Africa, along with its contribution to the struggle and the subsequent growth of the country.

These include Yusuf Dadoo, Massacre in 1960, and Ahmed Kathrada, Billy Nair and Laloo Isu Oliver Tambo after the Sharpeville Chiba, who were sentenced to

lengthy terms in prison for their involvement in the armed struggle.

"In spite of the restrictions placed on the community by the apartheid state, they made a formidable economic contribution to South Africa ... They have consistently emphasised the importance of education as a means for individual and community progress."

Masondo also saluted the Indian sportsmen and women who had faced substantial discrimination in the past.

"Quite fittingly, in the same month in which we celebrate the contribution of the Indian community, Protea cricket player Hashim Amla rose to the first position on the world's batting rank."

Read more: http://www.joburg.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5918&catid=88&Itemid=266#ixzz16ZtnTG53

SRI LANKA TOURISM REVENUE AT RECORD; OCT VISITS UP 39 PCT

Sri Lanka's tourism revenue hit a record high in the first ten months of 2010, with October arrivals jumping 39 percent as the country continues to enjoy a post-war surge, tourism board data showed on Wednesday, Nov 24.

Earnings from tourism have jumped 61.8 percent in the first 10 months of this year to a record \$437.9 million, the central bank's latest data shows. The previous record of \$416.8 million was set in 2004 when a peace accord between the government and separatist Tamil Tigers was in place. Arrivals have risen every month since the government defeated the Tigers in May 2009.

The hotel and travel index .CSEHT on the Colombo Stock Exchange has almost tripled since then, outpacing the overall stock index's. CSE near-doubling. Tourism is one of the main foreign exchange earners of Sri Lanka's \$42 billion economy along with



remittances, garments, and tea. Tourism revenue was \$326 million in 2009, according to the revised numbers given by the tourism board.

* The government expects arrivals to hit a record high of 600,000 this year, exceeding a previous peak of 566,202 in 2004.

* In the first 10 months, arrivals from North America surged 66.5 percent year-on-year.

* Visitors from Western Europe, the island nation's largest market, have risen 49.3 percent

year-on-year.

* Arrivals from the Middle East rose 58.0 percent. * Tourist arrivals from East Asia, South Asia, and

Australasia have risen over 33 percent. * Sri Lanka has imposed a tax of \$20 per room night on five-star hotels if they fail to charge a minimum rate of \$125. * Sri Lanka is targeting 2.5 million arrivals and \$2 billion in earnings by 2016. [Reuters]

(US\$1= 111.325 Sri Lankan rupee)

Sri Lankan journalist wins Transparency International Integrity Award Honouring the unsung heroes of the fight against corruption

Attotage Prema Jayantha is better known to Sri Lankans as Poddala Jayantha, his pen name during two decades of courageous investigative journalism.

Refusing to turn a blind eye to corruption, Jayantha dedicated his career to fearlessly exposing injustice in Sri Lanka's health, education and transport sectors. One of his reports uncovered what some officials have called Sri Lanka's biggest ever tax scam, involving the alleged misappropriation of RS 3.6 billion (US \$37 million) in Value Added Tax.

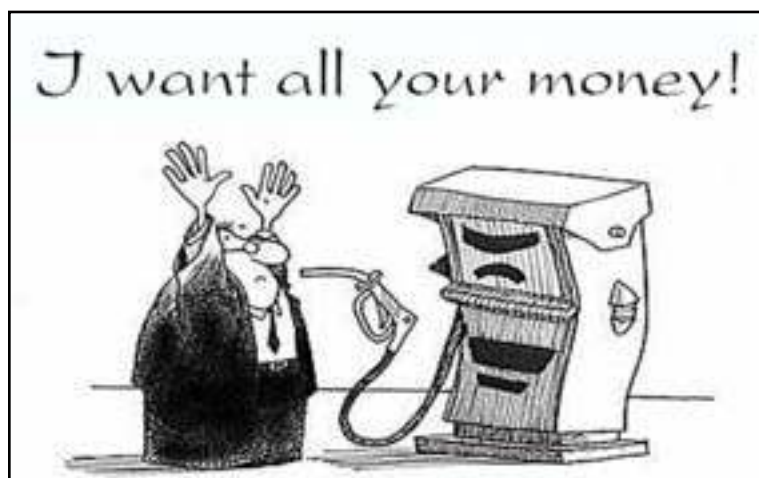
Following numerous threats on his life, Jayantha was abducted by unidentified assailants in June 2009 and brutally beaten. He was left permanently disabled and now lives in exile. No arrests have



Attotage Prema Jayantha: Investigative Journalist - Sri Lanka

been made and the case has since been dropped. Jayantha's pursuit of the truth resonates with journalists in many parts of the world who encounter such challenges to their work.

[Transparency International Press release]



JOURNALIST S. SIVANAYAGAM PASSES AWAY

By D.B.S. Jeyaraj

Subramaniam Sivanayagam (S.Siva) Founder Editor of Jaffna based English weekly "Saturday Review" passed away in Colombo after prolonged illness.

Siva who began his journalistic career on "Ceylon Daily News" later moved to the "Daily Mirror".

He was also editor at the Tourist Board.

Siva also launched a magazine "Leisure". He also edited the "Sansoni Commission Evidence" an English weekly covering the Commission proceedings.

The "Saturday Review" weekly was launched in January 1982

with Siva as founder Editor. It provided alternative news and views from Jaffna.

S.Sivanayagam also worked as Editor of Journals such as "Tamil Information", "Tamil International", "Tamil Nation" & "Hot Spring" [twitter.com/dbsjeyaraj]

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Canada's acceptance of refugee claims from Sri Lanka plummets – Vancouver Sun



Canada's acceptance of refugee claims from Sri Lanka plummeted in September, the month following the arrival of a boatload of 492 Tamil migrants, new immigration data show.

A lawyer for the Canadian Tamil Congress, an advocacy group based in Toronto, said Tuesday that while he didn't want to jump to conclusions, the drop could be a response to the "hysteria" that accompanied the migrants' arrival.

"I would like to think it's an anomaly. I do think the arrival of the boats has caused a bit of a sense of unease for a lot of different individuals and groups," Gary Anandasangaree said.

"It's hard to explain why there's such a drop. Hopefully, it's a one-time figure . . . You want to give the system the benefit of the doubt."

For each month from January 2009 to July 2010, the percentage of accepted refugee claims from Sri Lanka was typically greater than 80 or 90 per cent, the data show.

But in August, the month the Tamils arrived aboard the MV Sun Sea — sparking a heated debate

about Canada's refugee system and vows by the Harper government to crack down on human smuggling — the percentage of accepted claims dropped to 75 per cent. It then plunged to 47 per cent in September.

Since it takes an average of 22 months for a refugee claim to be heard, none of the cases decided in September were connected to the migrants aboard the MV Sun Sea.

Paula Faber, a spokeswoman for the Immigration and Refugee Board, said Tuesday refugee-claim decision makers are government appointees. But she said they are not subject to outside influence and make decisions solely on the basis of evidence presented at refugee hearings.

"Each case is decided on its own merits," she said, adding that adjudicators review a range of information about a country's conditions from a variety of sources, including reports from government and non-governmental organizations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

Asked for comment on the drop in the acceptance rate,

Alykhan Velshi, communications director for Immigration Minister Jason Kenney, would only say that the Immigration and Refugee Board operates independently of the government.

"What I will say is that Canadians are sick and tired of queue jumpers and human smugglers abusing our immigration system. Our Conservative government introduced tough legislation to prevent human smugglers from abusing Canada's immigration system. Unfortunately, the Ignatieff Liberals, NDP, and Bloc Quebecois have criticized our legislation for being too tough on human smuggling operations."

Last month, the Tories introduced legislation in Parliament which includes stiff penalties for traffickers and shipping companies that smuggle asylum-seekers into Canada.

The proposed law also penalizes refugee claimants arriving in groups if they are deemed by the public safety minister to have paid smugglers to get them to Canada. Such asylum-seekers could be detained up to a year.

Immigration and refugee advocates have denounced the

measures, saying they deny legitimate refugee claimants basic rights.

Douglas Cannon, who has been serving as duty counsel for some of the Tamil migrants, said Tuesday the public safety and immigration ministers have been irresponsible in raising doubts about the legitimacy of some of the refugee claims.

"In a politically charged cli-

mate where ministers have said things that they ought not to, it's the kind of thing that could have an effect on a (Immigration and Refugee Board) member who chooses to take that to heart," he said.

But Cannon said that he has seen no evidence that immigration adjudicators have been influenced by the government.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper introduces Julian Fantino, newly-elected Member of Parliament for Vaughan, to the Conservative Caucus



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Culture of Human Rights:

I am here to make submissions on the Culture of Human Rights. In the background of erosion of values of all kinds and especially with the consequences of war, human rights have suffered worst casualties.

Therefore, a culture of Human Rights where every citizen respects the rights of the other must be cultivated and where the principle of 'Equality before the Law' is respected and applied should be followed. Equal protection guarantees protection from both legislative and executive acts by way of discrimination. It must replace the present scenario where rights are violated with impunity and with utter disregard to accepted norms. A nationwide Human Rights education program must, therefore be incorporated into the National Agenda. Respect for and protection of individual and group rights leads to social justice which in turn would lead to sustainable peace. This is one clear method to promote national unity and reconciliation among all communities. The concept of equality lies at the core of our democratic aspirations and traditions.

May I also point out at this moment, due to the past 3 decades of war, and consequent to the P.T.A., (Prevention of Terrorism Act), Emergency Regulations and other activities, lawlessness has set particularly in the areas of North and East. Not very much spoken about human rights, rather it is dangerous to speak about human rights. Therefore, it must be enforced at this moment if we are looking for a period of peace, so that every citizen may respect the rights of one another. Human rights have been violated with impunity by the Security Forces and unidentifiable groups and persons, especially in the North and East. This state was worsened by the State sponsorship of Para-Military Groups during the height of the war to out former militants. Therefore it is very much needed that National Educational programmes enforced throughout the island with concerted effort. It must become a national priority and requisite for Reconciliation.

Unemployment of youth after completing the University education, ex-combatants and ex-paramilitary groups need to be rehabilitated with immediate effect to prevent another uprising and to ensure meaningful reconciliation where law and order are implemented.

Submissions made by His Lordship Bishop of Batticaloa Kingsley Swampillai Before Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission of Sri Lanka

Missing and Disappeared Persons

There are a large number of reported cases of missing, I am sure you must have given to hearing to the people where you have visited, and disappeared persons whose fate is unknown for many years. This is true in the North and East. This has caused much agony to their families for whom the uncertainty of what had happened to them has added to the anguish. Some of these cases are documented while a majority remains undocumented. I wish include here in this list some religious personalities, among whom are the cases of Rev. Fr. Nihal Jim Brown who disappeared in Allaipiddy in Jaffna in August 2006 and Rev. Fr. Joseph Francis who was last seen in Vettuvikkal, Mullathivu in May 2009, at the tail end of the war. Actually he had been sighted little before the exit and while he was leaving the Omanthei camp and when he has been going out with others, he had been taken into custody by the Special Security Forces, and never heard of him since then.

A serious effort should be taken to investigate these cases in order to reveal the truth and ensure justice.

Release of Detainees

A large number of detainees arrested much earlier under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) continue to be kept in custody. Their future is uncertain. It is the best that those not directly involved in terror activities be released without delay. Also, many youth in the Plantation Sector too had been arrested on mere suspicion of having a connection with the LTTE. These youth should be given the chance of proving their innocence and when they are not accused of any acts crime, then it is proper that they may be released.

Problem of Families Who Visit Detainees

The sufferings of the family members of detainees cannot be explained by words. When the mother, father or relative comes to know that their loved ones are in detention, they want to see them and at least console them. The families should have the right and the facilities to see their loved ones and many cases come into our won ears, that there is a long list of cases who are still missing. I present this matter also for your serious consideration. Rehabilitation Centres and Detentions centres are all scattered. These families want to know where these people are



Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Kingsley Swampillai
pic: archdiocese of colombo.com

detained or whether they are detained, and their families and relatives could visit them some-

times or other.
Issuance of Death Certificates

The families of many who perished in the war have not received death certificates. This is an impediment for them in reordering their broken lives. The lack of documents show that their beloved ones are lost and issuance of death certificates need to be done, since they have to appeal for compensation or for any other facility that they are entitled to.

Compensation on Lost Life, Limb and Properties

During the past conflict period there were many bomb blasts and attacks in the North and the South which killed and maimed hundreds of civilians. Now we appeal that compensation should be paid to them as soon as possible. Provision to be made for speedy implementation. (Full text of submission to LLRC made by Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Kingsley Swampillai on Nov 3, 2010)

Hospital volunteers wrap gifts for charity

Would you like some help getting your holiday shopping wrapped and ready to put under the tree?

For a donation, volunteers from The Scarborough Hospital will wrap up to two gifts per person purchased at the Agincourt Mall this holiday season. Shoppers will be asked to show a receipt to the gift-wrappers to verify the items were bought at

the mall.

More than 50 volunteers, most of whom are high school students, will staff the gift-wrapping booth, located in the mall. All donations will go toward purchasing urgently needed medical equipment for The Scarborough Hospital.

The Agincourt Mall is located at 3850 Sheppard Ave. E., at Kennedy Road. Gift wrapping



services will be available Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sundays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; weekdays Dec. 6 to 17 from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.; and weekdays Dec. 20 to 23 from noon to 8 p.m.

Nine classic symptoms of diabetes

According to the Canadian Diabetes Association, nine million Canadians are living with diabetes or prediabetes.

"This chronic disease is no stranger to some neighbourhoods in the Scarborough community," explains Margaret Devor, Registered Dietitian and Certified Diabetes Educator at The Scarborough Hospital. "In fact, eight out of 100 people in Scarborough have diabetes. This is one of the highest rates in

Toronto and is the highest rate in the Central East LHIN."

Certain ethnic populations are shown to be at higher risk, including South Asian, East Asian, African, Caribbean, Latin American and Aboriginal.

Diabetes is fast-growing in our community. It is important that you ask your doctor to test you. It is really simple: just one blood test, Margaret adds.

Here are the classic symp-

toms of diabetes:

1. blurred vision
2. cuts and bruises that are slow to heal
3. feeling tired or having no energy
4. infections
5. having to urinate often
6. tingling or numbness in hands or feet
7. trouble getting and maintaining an erection
8. being thirsty often
9. gain or loss of weight

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KPMG's End-of-Season Cricket Celebration

KPMG extends its appreciation for those who have attended the cocktail evening held on Nov 17th at Bay Adelaide Centre to celebrate their End-of Season Cricket Celebration. All of the participants enjoyed the evening and KPMG assured that they are looking forward to collaborating with rest of the teams to make this celebration an annual tradition.

For more information, please contact Rakesh Desai or Mohammad Nadeem at KPMG. Seen here are some of the pictures taken at the event.



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In keeping with the long-standing Indian tradition, the first, all-night concert of Indian classical music held at St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, enthralled, energized and entertained an audience of connoisseurs and non-connoisseurs of the Indian classical music, on Nov 13.

As world-acclaimed artists performed to standing ovations and loud applause at the historic and awe-inspiring venue, audiences of different backgrounds – over fifty percent non-Indian – savoured classical India music that the artists have spent decades perfecting. It was a unique event that brought a piece of the rich, Indian cultural heritage to music enthusiasts of multicultural Toronto.

What was different about this event was the all-night aspect of it, making it a rare dusk-to-dawn affair that drew people of non-Indian origin out of love of classical music and curiosity to experience a nightlong concert. The meditative moods created by the inimitable orchestration of percussion, strings and wind instruments, the resounding and energizing drums – miridangam and tabla and melodious rendering of classical ragas by vocalists, made it a memorable event.

The concert took off at 8:00 pm sharp with a recital by the renowned Pt. Pandit Ramesh Misra, a phenomenon in the field of Indian classical music and a master of the most difficult and unique string instruments sarangi. Gauri Guha, the Canadian classical vocalist then followed with Luna Guha, her daughter on the harmonium. The first session ended with a captivating solo performance by Pt. Swapan Choudhary on the tabla and Pt. Ramesh Misra, once again on the sarangi.

As mid-night rolled around, Alam Khan's sarod enchanted the audience followed by an array of artists. The highlight of this session was Jasrangi, a duet or jugalbandhi vocal recital by Pta. Tripti Mukherjee & Shuman Ghosh singing Raag Jajaiwanti Todi and Raaga Charukeshi to an enthralled audience. With Samir Chatterjee and Dibyarka Chatterjee on the tabla, and Amit Arya and Nilesh Nadkarni on the harmonium, this was an outstanding performance that received a standing ovation from the audience.

At the early hours of the morning, Maestro Shashank on the bamboo flute, accompanied

An array of world-acclaimed artists of Indian classical music enthrall Canadians - Canada's first all-night concert a huge success



Prof. Trichy Sankaran with his miridangam performance



Pt. Swapan Chaudhuri, engrossed in the taals of his tabla



The masters at their best: Shashank on the flute and Samir Chatterjee on the tabla



Pt. Ramesh Misra, playing in a meditative mood, strumming the sarangi



Shashank enchanting the audience with a solo flute recital

by the mirdangam of Prof Trichy Sankaran, founding director of Indian music studies at the York University, and the tabla of Samir Chatterjee, collaborated for a scintillating performance that took the concert to its high-point, leaving the audience spellbound.

It was indeed a memory to cherish and a music performance to savour as the beats, rhythm and melody will continue to linger on the minds of the audience for a long time to come.

Next year's all-night concert is scheduled to take place on September 24 at St. Andrew's Church in Toronto.

For more pictures and videos, visit: <http://www.allnightconcerts.org>



Founder of Chhandayan, Samir Chatterjee in a sombre mood as he gets warmed up for his solo tabla performance



Gauri Guha, the Canadian classical vocalist



Luna Guha, daughter of Gauri Guha on the harmonium



WORDS OF PEACE

A Possibility of Peace



"What distinguishes a human being? What can we do that is something special?" asks Maharaji, an internationally renowned messenger of peace and fulfillment. "So many more people are educated now than ever before, and yet we have more wars now than ever before on the face of this earth, and yet there are more hungry people. The word peace is thrown around much more randomly now than it ever was, and there's less peace than ever. It seems like somehow we have forgotten our truest nature."

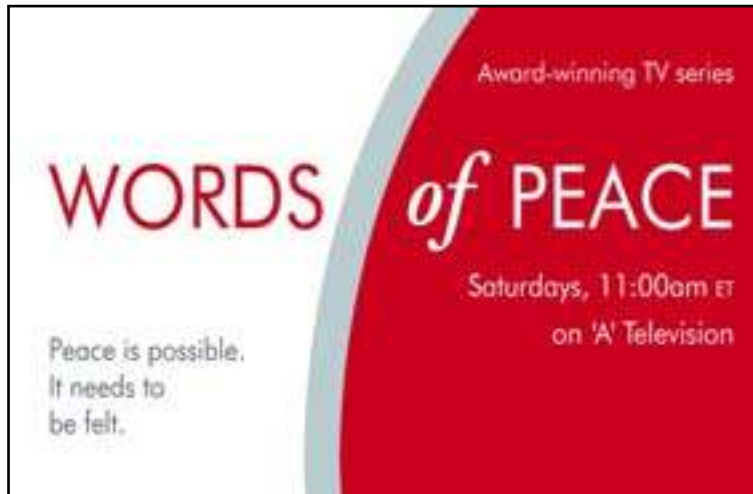


Born in India, Maharaji began speaking publicly when he was very young about the importance of finding fulfillment in life. In his teens, he began traveling around the world with a simple message that has profound implications. Peace, he says, is not something that can be achieved by governments or philosophers. It's a feeling that can be discovered within every living person. More, he says, it's the answer to the questions that human beings have been asking since time immemorial: Who am I? What is the pur-

pose of life?

"Those who have this human body can experience peace in their lives, can experience the ultimate joy," he says. "If you have found peace, you can be in a place where you enjoy every day, every moment. This is what can distinguish a human being."

Someone might ask why, if peace is within, everyone doesn't experience it automatically. "If peace is what you want, you have to accept in your life that it is what you want," Maharaji says. "The way I see it is that we have



become very strange problem-solvers."

Not long ago, he told the following story about a house infested with ants to illustrate this trait.

"Imagine that a tree touches this house," he says, "and the ants climb up this tree to get into the house. All of a sudden, there are ants everywhere in the house—and there's plenty of food scattered around for the ants to eat."

The logical solution, Maharaji says, would be to trim back the branches so that the ants don't have access to the house.

"That would be logical, but the way human beings would go

about it in reality is not that simple. They will go out and buy little boxes of poison. They will say, 'Let's have electronic ant detectors and get some ultrasonic ant repellents. Let's find out which spectrum of light ants don't like. Let's invent a flying killer-ant robot.'

"This is how the world would approach the problem. All of a sudden, you've got hundreds of thousands of people going in their own directions trying to figure out how to get rid of the ants."

If someone comes along and suggests, "Why don't you just trim back those branches?" Maharaji says, "that person will

be told, 'You're crazy! That's too simple. How can it be so simple?'"

In the same way, Maharaji says, people go off on tangents looking for peace in their lives, when there's a simple way to find it. "You are not only given the possibility," he says, "but the time to make it real, to make it happen, to be fulfilled."

Maharaji says he can help people realize that possibility of peace by directing them to a perfect place within themselves where peace resides.

"The one most important thing we need in our lives is peace," he says, "and that is one thing we have done nothing to achieve. Some euphoric idea of peace may not be possible, but the possibility exists that every single human being on the face of the earth can experience peace within. If you are looking for that peace, trim back the branches. It is a possibility."

To learn more about Maharaji, visit:

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Munchee® Biscuits wins GOLD again!

Ceylon Biscuits Limited (CBL) once again achieved recognition as an outstanding export company in Sri Lanka by bagging 2 prestigious Gold awards and a Silver Award for export excellence. The awards were presented by the National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka (NCE) at their annual Export Awards ceremony.

The company manufactures over 70,000 metric tonnes of biscuits annually; catering to local and overseas markets. The factory is proud of its 10 high capacity plants, the latest installed in 2007. CBL markets its prime product – biscuits, under the brand

name Munchee. Munchee is the market leader of the biscuit industry in Sri Lanka, with a market share in excess of 50%.

Quality and innovation are CBL's greatest strengths and is supported by a team of Food Technologists within the group. The quality process begins from the raw and packing material, and CBL has a well established supplier base that is constantly being evaluated and audited. The company sources only the best quality raw and packing material. The factories follow the group quality assurance procedures and some companies had accredited with SLS, ISO 9000:2008, ISO 14000



and ISO 22000.

Munchee boasts of a wide range of cookies from long time favourites such as Lemon Puff, Hawaiian Cookies, Marie, Ginger

Biscuits, Nice Biscuits and Milk Shortcake. As an innovative company, Munchee has also developed some new variants such as Chocolate Puff, The Milk Cream

Biscuit, Chocolate Cream Biscuit, The Karapincha Biscuit, Snack Cracker, Milk and Chocolate Shorties to name a few. In addition to these variants, Munchee also offers a range of Gift Cookies such as Gift Assortment, Teatime Assortment and Family Selection which are ideal gift ideas for the up-coming holiday season.

Munchee is exported to over 35 countries across the globe. The complete range of Munchee Biscuits is available in Canada at your favourite Ethnic / Sri Lankan Food store. M&M Twins Limited is the Sole importer and distributor of MUNCHEE products in Canada and is proud to have been associated with the Ceylon Biscuits Limited for over 20 years.

Source :

<http://www.muncheelk.com/home.php> viewed 28th November 2010.

Lanka Canneries Limited – A Household name for over 80 years

Lanka Canneries Limited is the successor to the Marketing Department of Sri Lanka, which was established in the 1930's. With the commencement of the 2nd World War, many troops were stationed in Sri Lanka (known as Ceylon back then). The food shortage due to the war led the Marketing Department to supply processed food; especially fresh fruit Jam to the troops.

After the 2nd World War, the company progressively improved

its fruit processing facility by importing machinery from Europe. From the inception all products have been manufactured under stringent quality controls and have been sold under the brand name 'MD'. The range of products grew in variety from jams to sauces, canned fruits, canned vegetables, cordials, pickles, chutneys and a range of ready to eat products.

Due to the growing demand for MD products, a second factory

was built in 1976 at Attanagalla with the latest machinery from Europe. Both these factories enabled Marketing Department to meet the growing demand for their natural foods.

The heritage of 80 years in creating exotic products from fresh fruit and vegetables has made Lanka Canneries, one of Sri Lanka's leading manufacturers, distributors and exporters of natural foods. MD products can be found in over 32 countries including USA, Canada, Japan, Australia and the Middle East making it a truly global brand of Sri Lankan



origin.

MD® has become one of the largest and leading Sri Lankan food brands and has been identified as a symbol of quality and as an 'authentic' Sri Lankan product the world over. The complete range of MD® products can be found in Canada at your favourite

ethnic food stores. M&M Twins is the Sole importer and distributor of MD products in Canada and is proud to have been associated with the Company for over 20 years.

Source : <http://www.lankacanneries.com/en/> viewed 30th November 2010

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FASHION SHOW 2010



Generously sponsored by Sears Scarborough Town Centre, Toronto Community News and the Momiji Centre, the Foundation's second annual FASHION Show rocked the runway on November 7, showcasing style trends and supporting Rouge Valley Centenary.

FASHION Show 2010 was held at the Momiji Centre in Scarborough and included wine, a complimentary gift bag filled with goodies, draws, a silent auction, and fashions by Sears modeled by RVHS staff and family. The Wardrobe Doctor Marilyn Wetston, was the event mistress of ceremonies. Special thanks to all the models and volunteers, and especially event chair Yvonne Snider.

Photos from the FASHION Show can be seen here.



Connect with your hospital via social media Part of hospital's focus on open, transparent communications

Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) has expanded its social media profiles to strengthen its commitment to open, transparent communications and to encourage a stronger community connection.

"We understand the value of building stronger connections with our community. In addition to presenting to many community organizations, local government, service clubs and health care partners, we are adding to the social media connections the hospital has for the public. Rouge Valley has been into social media since 2007 and we've decided to expand that for our communities," says Rik Ganderton, president and chief executive officer, RVHS.

Members of the public can connect with the hospital directly on its new Facebook and Twitter profiles, as well as through the RVHS Blog and the RVHS Foundation's Facebook profiles. Readers can keep up to date with the latest news in the hospital and in healthcare on these profiles, which provide information and links to the hospital website, the blog and to many timely government announcements and news articles.

RVHS invites the community

to follow it on Twitter @RougeValley, or to "like" us on Facebook by searching for Rouge Valley Health System (hospital: east Toronto and west Durham).

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

RVHS is an excellent acute care community hospital with many programs, including 24/7/365 emergency, cardiac care and mental health. Rouge Valley consists of several health sites, including two community hospital campuses: Rouge Valley Centenary in east Toronto; and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering in west Durham. Together, a team of physicians (224 general practitioners and 325 specialists), 1,000 nurses and many other professionals care for a broad spectrum of health conditions. Working in consultation and partnership with community members, other hospitals, health care organizations, the Central East Local Health Integration Network and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Rouge Valley continues to improve its programs and cater to the needs of the growing communities of east Toronto, Ajax, Pickering and Whitby.

Breaking bread and barriers

On October 29, 45 school principals, social workers and administrators from the Toronto Catholic District School Board attended a luncheon served by Centennial College's School of Hospitality students and hosted by Rouge Valley Health System Foundation.

Julie Kish, Manager of the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Program at the Shoniker Clinic discussed mental health

issues that are prevalent in our schools. Julie's presentation focused on identifying the resources available in the community and the importance of early detection of the signs and symptoms of students dealing with mental health issues.

Dan Koenig, of TCDSB Curriculum & Accountability Program and the Buy a Bed Committee along with Superintendent Geoff Grant both

spoke on their strong support of this collaborative partnership.

Rouge Valley Centenary's Buy a Bed campaign co-chairs Paul and Janet Ainslie spoke about the campaign and gave ideas on how teachers and students can become involved in fundraising for their local hospitals, using fun activities such as bed races and pajama parties.

Finding support for both schools and hospitals reinforces the Board's mandate of creating partnerships for safe, caring, and healthy schools.

Boot Drive 2010 breaks fundraising record

RVHS is so excited to announce that this year's Pickering Professional Firefighters Association Boot Drive made an astounding \$17,000, from their "Image is Everything" MRI campaign fundraising day on October

23. This was the largest amount RVHS have ever done on a single day and RVHS would like to thank the Pickering firefighters and all of their volunteers for helping them achieve this goal.

Of course RVHS also thank the local community for giving so generously and for bringing them one step closer to an MRI for Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering hospital.

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Remembrance Day, Nov 11th

November 11th marks a day of remembrance. It is a day of remembrance of the men and women who have served, and continue to serve Canada during times of war, conflict and peace.

It is important to honor those who fought for Canada in the First World War (1914-1918), the Second World War (1939-1945), and the Korean War (1950-1953). More than 100,000 men and women died serving the country. They devoted their lives and their futures so that we can live in peace and harmony.



To honor the fallen soldiers and for world peace Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham youth wore poppies. In addition, many of the youth participated in the Royal Canadian Legion Literacy contest educating about Remembrance Day.



LETTERS & OPINIONS

by Dushy Ranetunge
in London

There has been considerable publicity given by the Hindu and Hindustan Times, the BBC etc to an incident at the Jaffna Library recently perpetrated by Sinhala vandals against a sensitive icon of Tamil culture.

Unfortunately, the Sri Lankan state's response has been disappointing.

Its primary response, which emanated from the Presidents Secretariat was to play down the incident and to accuse a Sunday newspaper in Colombo of misreporting.

That newspaper had suggested a link between the attackers and the Presidential Secretariat. The Presidential Secretariat denied it.

But what cannot be denied is

Sri Lanka State Complicity in Jaffna Library incident?

the complicity of the Sri Lankan state in this latest attack on the Jaffna library.

To date there has been no arrest in relation to this incident.

There are armed Sri Lankan soldiers in almost every street corner in Jaffna. In addition, there are bunkers and check points. According to reports, the incident lasted for almost three hours.

North of Omanthai, there is a significant check point where all vehicles are registered on their way up to Jaffna and checked comprehensively for arms and explosives on their way out of Jaffna.

Considering the substantial military lock down of the city and the province, the failure to arrest the culprits involved in the Jaffna library incident last week could be attributed to incredible inefficiency on part of the security establishment or state complicity.

The administration cannot have it both ways.

In light of its claims to the



Jaffna Library ~ pic: president.gov.lk

general population of its military prowess it is unlikely to have been a failure of the security establishment.

Therefore the only conclusion that one could reach is, state complicity in the incident at the Jaffna library.

The library was attacked in 1981 and burnt to the ground by Sinhalese mobs, including allegedly members of the security services at the direction of a

Sinhalese minister in the then UNP cabinet.

President Premadasa speaking at a Muslim College in Puttalam in October 1991 in the aftermath of the impeachment resolution against him sponsored by UNP dissidents led by Mr. Lalith Athulathamudalai and Mr. Gamini Dissanayake made the following comment.

"During the District Development Council elections in

1981, some of our party members took many people from other parts of the country to the North, created havoc and disrupted the conduct of elections in the North. It is this same group of people who are causing trouble now also. If you wish to find out who burnt the priceless collection of books at the Jaffna Library, you have only to look at the faces of those opposing us."

It is alleged that the LTTE assassinated the UNP minister responsible for the burning down of the Jaffna library.

In light of the sensitivity in relation to this site, it is in the interest of the Sri Lankan state to investigate and bring to justice persons responsible for the latest incident.

Unfortunately, the behaviour of the Sri Lankan state so far indicates impunity and a lack of accountability leading to the conviction that the process of learning lessons and reconciliation is a sham.

HRW urges UK to take lead on pressing for authoritative Sri Lankan war crimes inquiry

The current Sri Lanka government-led inquiry lacks independence and accountability. A whitewash won't do
by Elaine Pearson

Since the decisive end of the decades-long conflict with the Tamil Tigers in May 2009, the Sri Lankan government has expended a great deal of energy and expense to prevent an international war crimes inquiry. Now the news has emerged that as part of this campaign, the government has hired the UK's premier public relations firm, Bell Pottinger, to spin its story and salvage its reputation, said to be for almost £3m a year.

An independent inquiry is anathema to the Sri Lankan government. In spite of President Mahinda Rajapaksa's promise to UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon 18 months ago to examine wartime atrocities, the government has done nothing serious in that regard. Instead, government officials deploy the easy rhetoric of nationalism, claiming over and over again that they alone own the process of accountability and reconciliation.

As part of this defiant stance, in May the government established a panel of inquiry, the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation

Commission (LLRC), charged above all else with understanding the reasons for the collapse of the 2002 ceasefire agreement, a far cry from ensuring a factual accounting of wartime atrocities. Having established the commission, Rajapaksa went on to denounce the advisory panel of experts set up by Ban Ki-moon, permitting a cabinet member to stage protests outside the UN headquarters in the capital, Colombo, and threatening to deny visas to the panel members.

At first the UK government applauded the establishment of the LLRC, even though the deficiencies in the scope of its mandate and in its processes were evident from the outset. A UK government spokesperson went so far as to say the LLRC fulfilled Rajapaksa's promise to Ban, a surprising statement given the commission's restricted mandate and highly questionable independence. Its members include people who were senior government officials during the final years of the war and who were outspoken in defence of the government's wartime conduct. Other members have worked for the Sri Lankan government.

The EU, unlike the UK, was quicker to see through this farce: it suspended Sri Lanka's preferential trade agreement in light of the country's ongoing inaction and obfuscation, specifically citing its failure to abide by its obligations

under three international human rights treaties.

As the LLRC has conducted its hearings, with government officials such as the defence secretary delivering incredulous statements, misrepresentations in the press of the testimony of several independent analysts, and dozens of refusals to allow witnesses to abuses to testify, it is clearer and clearer that this process is a deeply inadequate response to the need for accountability.

Fortunately the UK's position is now shifting. Last month foreign secretary William Hague, following a meeting with Sri Lanka's foreign minister, GL Peiris, emphasised the need for an independent and credible investiga-

tion of wartime abuses. Shortly afterwards David Cameron conceded at Prime Minister's Questions that an independent investigation of the conduct of the war was needed.

Hopefully these statements mark a permanent shift away from the previous diplomatically polite policy of quiet engagement. Perhaps the UK government has realised that the LLRC is not the easy answer it had hoped for. Perhaps the Sri Lankan authorities' own belligerent actions have made the UK government realise that the questions of wartime abuses will linger, in spite of Bell Pottinger's best efforts. Perhaps it is the refusal of the international community to engage in the "for-

give and forget" attitude proposed by the Rajapaksa government.

Regardless of the reasons, Cameron's words should translate into further action, beginning with immediate and full co-operation with the UN's advisory panel of experts, and leading to an independent international inquiry into abuses by all sides to the conflict. The UK has a special historical relationship with Sri Lanka, and has a sizeable Sri Lankan population who are deeply invested in these issues. As such, the UK is uniquely placed to take the lead on refusing to settle for the whitewash that the Sri Lankan government is putting forward, and to demand more.

(Elaine Pearson is deputy director of Human Rights Watch's (HRW) Asia division. This OPED first appeared on The Guardian, UK)



Prime Minister Stephen Harper and daughter Rachel enjoy an Edmonton Oilers game at Rexall Place - Photo by Jason Ransom

By Suresh Jaura

Immigration and innovation are closely linked, and because innovation is the sine qua non of competitiveness in the twenty-first century world, immigrants as innovators play a critical role in boosting Canada's global competitiveness.

This is the main thrust of a new research report by the Conference Board of Canada released in October 2010. The 60-page study by Michelle Downie is intended to help government and business recognize the potential value of immigration to innovation performance, which would make Canada a more innovative coun-

tion density at 34 million people.

More immigrants per capita than any other country in the world move to Canada every year. In 2006, Canada welcomed 251,511 immigrants, most of them highly skilled, through its doors. Yet there is a pressing need for more immigration, the Conference Board estimates that 375,000 new immigrants are required every year in order to stabilize the workforce and ensure economic growth.

At present, however, Canada is a consistent below-average performer in its capacity to innovate: ranks 14th out of 17 industrialized countries in the Board's report

"Job creation, the success of our entrepreneurial class and our economic vitality here in Canada depends on the creation of these liquid networks," said Gordon Nixon, president of the Royal Bank of Canada at a conference on innovation.

"Earlier this month (October 4, 2010) the Globe and Mail announced the findings of a C-Suite survey, which puts the blame for this country's poor track record on innovation squarely on C-Suite executives. According to my peers who were polled for this study, the two top factors important in explaining weak Canadian productivity is business leaders'

short-term success in the interests of future generations. The impact of this lost productivity on our collective prosperity cannot be overstated. As the country begins to climb out of the recession, the government needs to engage Canadians, both new and old, and begin a discussion on our future and our immigration program," writes Ratna Omidvar, president of the Toronto-based Maytree Foundation, an agency promoting workplace diversity and author of Canada's Immigration Score: Recommendations for a Win-Win, published in the July-August issue of Policy Options.



LETTERS & OPINIONS

According to an OECD study, diversity has also been associated with an increase in patents. More than a quarter of patents in Canada have foreign co-inventors.

Two prime examples of how integrating immigrant workers can bolster innovation are:

Xerox Canada, with half of its

New Study Finds Immigrants Vital for Canada

try. Underlying the report is a comprehensive approach to understanding and quantifying the relationship between immigration and innovation.

In an attempt to find a convincing reply to whether immigrants are making Canada more innovative, Downie argues, "immigrants are by definition seekers of a better way -- the very embodiment of innovation". The purpose of the research report, he adds, is to test this presumption.

Therefore, it examines different dimensions of innovation across areas such as research, the culture sector, business, and global commerce, as well as at the level of the individual immigrant, the firm, and the national and international economy. "At every level of analysis, immigrants are shown to have an impact on innovation performance that is benefiting Canada," concludes Downie.

The report titled 'Immigrants as Innovators: Boosting Canada's Global Competitiveness' also highlights actions that Canada can take to develop the innovative capacities of immigrants and harness the benefits of immigrant-driven innovation.

The report comes at the right point in time. According to the latest Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011, released by the World Economic Forum, Canada has slipped from ninth to tenth place. The United States is fourth behind Switzerland, Sweden and Singapore.

Until recently, Canada topped for having minimum procedures for starting a new business and held a respectable ninth position for the time required to start a business.

Canada has indeed the potential to be higher than its present position with the second largest territorial mass in the world, rich with natural resources, including the increasingly scarce resource of clean water and a low popula-



Suresh Jaura

card.

The Conference Board is an independent, not-for-profit applied research organization in Canada, affiliated with, The Conference Board, Inc. of New York, which serves nearly 2,000 companies in 60 nations and has offices in Brussels and Hong Kong.

The conclusions of the Conference Board's report are indirectly backed by Steven Johnson's latest book 'Where good ideas come from: The natural history of innovation'. The renowned author takes a look at how some of the world's greatest thinkers came to the conclusions that changed our world. He argues that the lone genius is the exception rather than the rule, and that innovation is usually a far slower, more collaborative process.

'LIQUID NETWORK'

Johnson defines innovation as occurring when "we take ideas from other people -- from people we've learned from, from people we run into in the coffee shop, and we stitch them together into new forms, and we create something new. This means that we have to change some of our models of what innovation and deep thinking really looks like."

He calls this the "liquid network" -- an environment that enables the coming together of ideas, in sometimes unpredictable but satisfying combinations.

risk aversion and a culture of complacency... This is a country that to a large degree has been built by newcomers willing to take risks," he added.

He said those attitudes should now help Canada shift to a culture of innovation at a time when many established executives are complacent and risk-averse.

Immigrants face too many "onerous and unnecessary" obstacles which limit their potential to inject life into the country's flailing innovation performance and full participating in the economy.

"Innovation, R&D, Venture Capital -- that is the equation we must solve for and they are all interrelated.

"I say this because Canada's labour productivity level in the business sector has been lower than that of the US for almost 50 years. And a recent report by the Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity shows that if the GDP per capita gap between the US and Canada were closed, Canadian families would have \$12,200 more in annual personal disposable income," Nixon pointed out.

"Canada cannot continue to ask immigrants to sacrifice their

There is a lack of recognition of international experience and qualifications which leads to discrimination or underutilization of their skills.

According to research by Naomi Alboim, Ross Finnie and Ronald Meng published by the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP), Canada should provide more points for young people and fewer for work experience. As it is, international experience is discounted by a factor of almost 70 per cent by employers in labour market. To continue to allot points for international work experience is disingenuous at best. Younger people, even those with little work experience, have long careers ahead of them to contribute to the Canadian economy.

Business leaders must take a stronger lead in addressing these challenges. Employers can start by conveying a strong message to new Canadians that they value them as creators, innovators and highly skilled workers whose performance improves results. They should also take advantage of the fact that immigrants can open doors to investment opportunities overseas and help attract foreign investment in Canada.

staff who are immigrants from 35 different countries, credits immigrants with boosting its innovation rate, which has reached about 130 patentable ideas a year. It says its staff are also helping the company better compete in a global market.

Toronto-based Steam Whistle Brewing, the beer maker with more than half of the management team as immigrants, says the composition means a stronger work ethic, while foreign-born workers bring new techniques and fresh perspectives to the job. It also helps them understand a diverse marketplace.

"I absolutely believe that ongoing immigration is going to turbo-charge this economy going forward," said Loudon Owen, managing partner of venture capital firm McLean Watson Capital.

Immigrants have a fresh view of Canada, and bring ideas from their country of origin that may be new to Canada, he said. "They are often driven to succeed in ways that Canadians aren't," he added.

(Suresh Jaura is President (North America) Globalom Media. This article first appeared in IDN-InDepthNews.)



Prime Minister Stephen Harper meets rising hockey star Taylor Hall prior to the Edmonton Oilers game against the San Jose Sharks. - Photo by Jason Ransom



Celebrating the festival of lights

"Diwali", the festival of lights, illuminates the darkness of the New Year's moon, and strengthens our close friendships and knowledge, with a self-realization!

Diwali is celebrated on a globe-wide scale on Amavasya - the 15th day of the dark fortnight of the Hindu month of Ashwin, (October/November) every year. This year Diwali was on 5th November 2010.

It symbolizes that age-old culture of India which teaches to vanquish ignorance that subdues

this day, people buy something for the house or some jewelry for the women of the house. It is auspicious to be buy something metallic, such as silver.

Whatever may be the fables and legends behind the celebrations of Diwali, all people exchange sweets, wear new clothes and buy jewelry at this festive time. Card parties are held in many homes. Diwali has become commercialized as the biggest annual consumer spree because every family shops for sweets, gifts and fireworks. However, in all this frenzy of shopping and eating, the steady,

day is spent in elaborate breakfast and lunches and meeting family and friends to exchange sweets and gifts. This day is also celebrated as Chotti Diwali in North India.

The third day: Badi Diwali or Lakshmi Pujan is celebrated in North India. New clothes are worn, gifts and sweets are exchanged and colourful rangolis are drawn. In the evening, Lakshmi-Kuber Puja is performed. In certain communities, Diwali marks the close of the financial year for businesses and opening of new books of account.

The fourth day: Govardhan

the cities and far-flung boundaries of these kingdoms were lit up with rows of lamps, glittering on dark nights to Welcome home the divine king Rama and his queen Sita after 14 years of exile, ending with an across-the-seas war in which the whole of the kingdom of Lanka was destroyed.

Second Legend: In rural areas, Diwali signifies Harvest Festival. Diwali which occurs at the end of a cropping season has along with the above custom, a few others that reinforce the hypothesis of its having originated as a harvest.

Every harvest normally spelt

Narakasura was a victory of good over evil.

It is interesting to note that Bhudevi, mother of the slain Narakasura, declared that his death should not be a day of mourning but an occasion to celebrate and rejoice. Since then, Deepavali is being celebrated by people every year with joyous celebrations with lot of fun and frolic, and fire works.

Fourth Legend: On this day Mother Lakshmi emerged from the ocean of milk called the Ksheer Sagar. She brought with Her wealth and prosperity for mankind. On that day, Lakshmi



humanity and to drive away darkness that engulfs the light of knowledge. Diwali, the festival of lights even to-day in this modern world projects the rich and glorious past of India.

Every year on the dark nights of Diwali the sound of firecrackers announces the celebration of the favourite festival of Hindus, Sikhs and Jains.. Homes are decorated, sweets are distributed by everyone and thousands of lamps are lit to create a world of fantasy. Of all the festivals celebrated in India, Diwali is by far the most glamorous and important. Enthusiastically enjoyed by people of every religion, its magical and radiant touch creates an atmosphere of joy and festivity.

On the day of Diwali festival, doorways are hung with torans of mango leaves and marigolds. Rangolis are drawn with different colored powders to welcome guests. The traditional motifs are often linked with auspicious symbols of good luck. Oil diyas are arranged in and around the house. Because of these flickering lamps, the festival has acquired its name : Dipawali or Diwali meaning 'a rows of lamps'. On

burning lamp is a constant symbol of an illuminated mind.

Traditions and rituals

While Diwali is celebrated over five or even six days in some parts of India, it is celebrated on just one day in the South and other parts of globe. However, spring-cleaning the house is common to almost all regions and so is preparing the sweets and savouries.

The first day: Dhanteras, the thirteenth day of the second half of the lunar month, marks the beginning of the Diwali celebrations in North India. It is considered auspicious for shopping. One day before that, Maharashtrians perform an aarti for a cow and its calf signifying the love between mother and baby.

The second day: Naraka Chaturdashi falls on amavasya and celebrates the slaying of the dreaded demon Narkasura by Lord Krishna. This is Deepavali day for South Indians; people wake up before dawn, have an oil bath, wear new clothes and draw intricate kolams; a special puja is performed where the whole family prays to Lord Krishna and fireworks are set off. The rest of the

Puja or Bali Pratipada is celebrated and marks the first day of the new year. It is also considered an auspicious day to start new ventures.

The fifth day: Bhai Dooj or Bhaubeej is celebrated. Brothers and sisters meet and express their love and affection; an ancient custom which predates even Raksha Bandhan. Bhai Dooj marks the end of the festivities.

There are a number of legends connected with the origin of Diwali.

But Diwali is widely celebrated as the day that Lord Rama returned triumphant to Ayodya after defeating Ravana. This aspect of Diwali is the most common and acceptable account with regards to the other origins of Diwali.

Main Legend: In the north, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar and the surrounding areas, Diwali is the day when King Rama's coronation was celebrated in Ayodhya after his epic war with Ravana, the demon king of Lanka.

By order of the royal families of Ayodhya and Mithila, the kingdom of which Sita was princess,

prosperity. The celebration was first started in India by farmers after they reaped their harvests. They celebrated with joy and offered praises to God for granting them a good crop.

Third Legend: Narakasura, a monster, ruled the kingdom of Pradyoshapuram. He was a trouble-maker to the gods and the pious sages and would disturb their penance or create havoc during the rituals.

To prove his power, Narakasura usurped some territory of Aditi, (the king of Suraloka and a relative of Satyabhama, Lord Krishna's wife).

Vexed with this harassment, Indra and other gods approached Lord Krishna and pleaded with him to protect them from the demon "Narakasura". Satyabhama appealed to Krishna to give her the golden chance to destroy Narakasura, as Narakasura was given a curse that he would be killed by a woman.

Krishna granted her a boon to fight with Narakasura. With Krishna as the charioteer, Satyabhama entered the battle field and killed the demon, Narakasura. The killing of

Pooja was performed to honour Her and as such, every year on Diwali day, Hindus perform Her prayer and worship. The making and distribution of various sweets and total vegetarian foods are the order of the day. This practice is alive and well to this very day.

Many people believe that Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and good fortune, visit the homes of devotees on this day. Worship of Lakshmi is performed in the evening.

Kanayalal Raina

(*Kanayalal Raina is a Bampton-based engineer by*



training, project consultant by profession and freelance writer by passion.)

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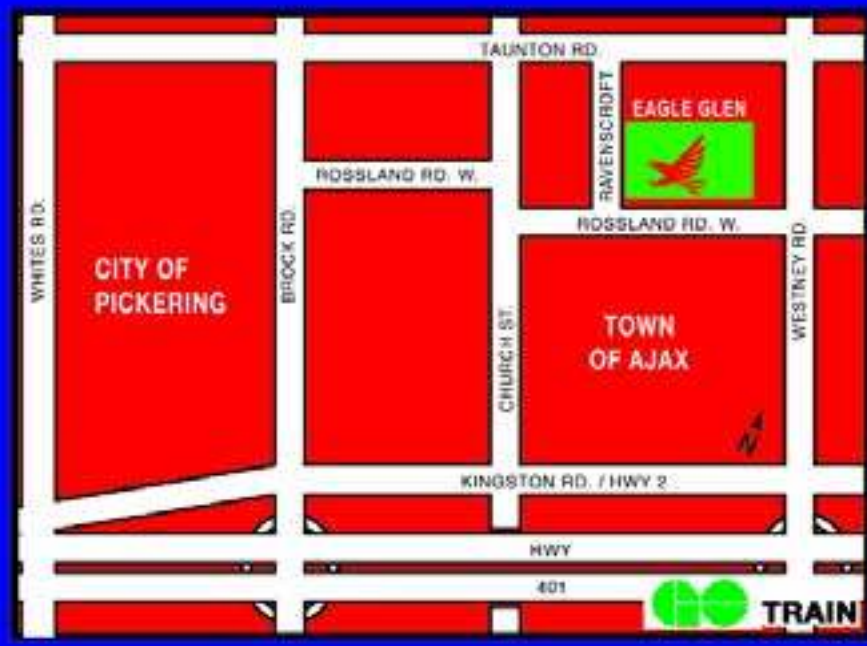
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JOHN BODDY HOMES PRESENTS 'EAGLE GLEN'

John Boddy Homes has been voted 'Best Builder' in Ajax/Pickering for the fourteenth year in a row for this year's Readers' Choice Awards and has released its next phase at their 'Eagle Glen' community in Ajax. Located just minutes east of Toronto 'Eagle Glen' combines the closeness and convenience of city living with a suburban feel, and its prime location makes it a great place to call home. Classic two-storey homes are available, as well as side and back splits, semi detached and townhomes. Homes start at 1,700 square feet and range up to a spacious 3,534 square feet. John Boddy Homes offers traditional size lots with a minimum of 105 feet in depth and a great selection of extra deep lots, pie shaped lots, 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



Lynton Semi



Mayfair Semi



Wyndham Semi

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.

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

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

allows residents all the amenities of the urban lifestyle while providing the beauty and tranquility of the neighbouring countryside.

Since 1955, John Boddy has been involved in the construction of thousands of new homes throughout Ontario, and has earned a reputation as an accomplished builder of fine residential communities. Of significance are the award winning 1000-acre 'Bridlewood Community' developed during the 1960's and 1970's in Scarborough, the 'Forestbrook' Community' in Pickering developed in the 1980's, 'Willowcreek' in Peterborough, and 'Eagle Ridge on the Green' in Ajax developed in the 1990's and early 2000's.

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

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

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

" THE LOVE STORY" Of Jesus and His Love

Many of us may remember the hymn we used to sing as little children and continue to sing it in life.

Tell me the old, old story
Tell me the old, old story
Tell me the old, old story
Of Jesus and His Love

Those of us who were fortunate to attend the well produced performance on Saturday, Nov 7 were reminded and lived through that experience retold of the immortal old, old story by a skillfully coordinated modern graphical, artistic, multicultural, musical, performance with sound theatrical expertise by the Eagle Chorus of Toronto. Year by year during the last few years the performance

has gained experience and maturity in a Christmas year end pageantry whose time has come with appreciable momentum with a very promising future.

To fit in western semi-classical songs, and melodies with Tamil lyrics, lively carols and dances is not easy, but it has been possible in a harmonious way in the last two years performances. The addition of a Korean dance troupe adds colour. Its most welcome.

The absence of youth specially the males in church and other such activities is a universal phenomenon. Studies and work have taken a regrettable toll for even dedicated youth to spend time on such serious performances. The

All Schools Carol Singing and the Carol services of St.John's and Chundikuli Girls' Colleges in Jaffna, concluded with the singing with gusto of the majestic Handel's Halleluiah Chorus. However, it still echoes through the years as the concluding event by the Eagle Chorus. It brings nostalgic memories of an era gone.

All of us well wishers owe Director Joel Joseph and his energetic team our heartiest congratulations for their courageous efforts and dedicated labour through many days and hours. God bless them all.

By: Rajan Kadirgamar

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6:30 PM – 10:00 PM

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As seating will be limited, please RSVP
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Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada's HST Seminar



Ari A. Ariaran, CGA President of Sri Lankan Accountants Association
welcomes participants at the HST Seminar



Ari Ariaran, CGA President of SAAC presenting the Memento to Joseph Mak
of CRA



Participants at the HST Seminar organised by the Sri Lankan Accountants



Grand Opening to New Location by Royal Shades

Royal Shades has been operating successfully for the last 10 years under the name of Royal Shutters. Thas who is the owner and operator with the support of his wife undertake their customers work very seriously and have very good reputation for their work in window drapery and shutters from his customers and among the business community.

The opening was grand with support from their customers, family and friends. Raymond Chow, the City Councillor was the chief guest who graced the occasion of the opening.



Customers, family & friends



Raymond Chow being garlanded by Thas family



Raymond Chow & Thas family cutting the ribbon



Tam Sivathasan & Raymond Chow lighting lamp



Raymond Chow with his congratulatory message

HCPPA Canada & USA elects New board at AGM

About 200 members attended the AGM & 22nd Hartley Nite that was held on Saturday, Nov 13 and elected the new board followed by lots of entertainments organized by the outgoing board members. Rajezwaran, an active member who has served in the board for many years was elected as the new President.

Seen here are some of the pictures taken, courtesy of Ninaivukal.com



Board Memebrs at AGM 2010 & 22nd Hartley Nite - HCPPA Canada & USA



Thenpullyoor Krishnalingam emceeding the event



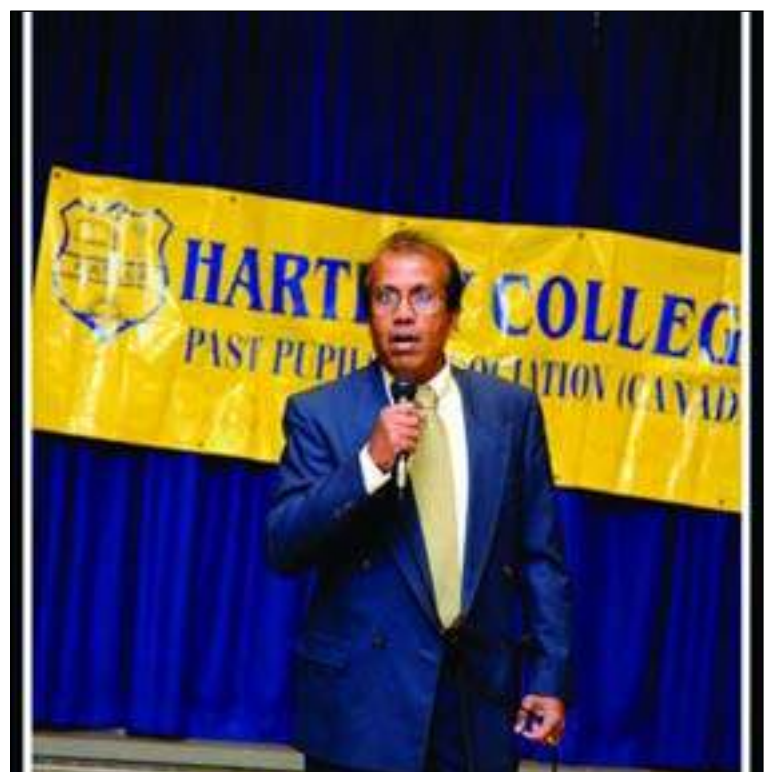
Chief Guest Dr. Santhakumar and Mrs. Santhakumr



Past President Jeyaraman making his speech



Front view of Royal Shades Inc.



Newly Elected President Rajezwaran with his first speech



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Education on the run in Eastern Myanmar

A chorus of children's voices echo from the bamboo hut on the edge of Oo Kray Kee village in Myanmar's Karen State. Nea Po Chee wants to be a teacher when she grows up. "I want to continue to study in grade five - if we have grade five here," says the 14-year-old, whose education continues to be interrupted by Burmese government forces in eastern Myanmar.

"I need to learn more to be a teacher because I'd like my nation to become better educated."

But as Nea Po Chee and 40 classmates finish their half-day of learning in the one-room school, ethnic Karen soldiers load their weapons in a nearby field preparing for another attack by Burmese troops.

Sixteen months ago, the village was bombed and burnt down by government soldiers, leaving the villagers with nothing more than a few personal belongings as they fled their homes.

Constant displacement due to attacks by Burmese troops has left generations of children without a proper formal education - let alone a normal childhood, say aid workers.

"Thousands of children are completely missing out on an education," explains Sally Thompson, deputy executive director of the Thai Burmese Border Consortium (TBBC).

"In cases where they are on the run, the children often resort to learning in a jungle school which might simply be a blackboard set up under a tree, taught by older students."

In 2009, more than 110,000 villagers in eastern Myanmar were displaced by military action, according to the TBBC.

In the same area, between 2002 and the end of last year, more than 580,000 civilians, most of them children, were forced from their homes, the group said.

"I'd say there were as many as 30,000

persons displaced after the elections and many of them came across the border to the Thai side. In some parts of eastern Burma the education system has basically collapsed," Thompson added.

"I NEED TO LEARN MORE TO BE A TEACHER BECAUSE I'D LIKE MY NATION TO BECOME BETTER EDUCATED."

Government spending on education and health is the lowest in the region at just 1.6 percent of Myanmar's gross domestic product, a 2009 TBBC report, Protracted Displacement and Militarization in Eastern Burma, said.

Much of the area remains without basic infrastructure such as roads and electricity following fighting between the ethnic Karen National Union, which has been seeking independence for decades, and the military government.

In eastern Myanmar, fewer than half the children aged five to 13 attend school regularly, according to a 2010 report by the Karen Human Rights Group, which focuses on human rights violations in rural eastern Myanmar.

Children often drop out of school to scavenge for shelter and food.

Compounding problems further, in rural eastern Myanmar, more than 40 percent of children under five suffer from acute malnutrition, according to the Mae Tao Clinic, which operates an emergency medical centre in the Thai border town of Mae Sot.



A Karen instructor teaching basic language skills in Oo Kray Kee

Attacks on schools remained a major concern last year, others say.

According to the Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, Burmese forces have occupied educational facilities for military purposes, recruited teachers and students for forced labour, and planted landmines close to or on the paths to schools.

The army has also reportedly set fire to whole villages - including schools - to prevent people from returning, the group says.

And as the danger for teachers increase, interest in working in the area decreases.

"We are scared of attacks from the SPDC [State Peace and Development Council government forces]. We have to move five or six times when our village comes under fire from the SPDC," explains head instructor Eh Thwa. "Here the salary is very low, so many

teachers are uninterested to work in such a difficult location."

Meanwhile, there are no signs of the difficulties letting up, following the 7 November elections, described by many as a sham.

Fighting is expected to increase as many ethnic groups have refused to lay down their arms and join the government's border guard forces.

Still, for Eh Thwa, there remains a glimmer of hope. "If the situation is good and we have peace and democracy, I think it will develop."

But just one day after IRIN visited Oo Kray Kee, her one-room school was closed down and most of the village's 300 residents were again on the run, living beneath plastic sheets in the jungle.

IRIN News

Food could cost more in 2011



Wheat could become even more expensive next year

If wheat and maize production do not rise substantially in 2011, global food security could be uncertain for the next two years, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has warned.

Wheat and maize prices have shot past their 2009 highs, with FAO adding that international food import bills could surpass one trillion US dollars in 2010. Food imports last topped the trillion dollar mark during the 2007/08 food price crisis.

The organization anticipates that world cereals stocks will shrink by seven percent, with barley declining 35 percent,

maize by 12 percent and wheat by 10 percent.

Cereal stocks are not as low as they were in 2007/08, "but we are being slightly alarmist in our outlook to get production figures up next year," said Abdolreza Abbassian, secretary of the Intergovernmental Group on Grains at FAO. "Stocks of yellow maize, which is used largely for animal feed, are getting to the low level they were in 2007/2008."

Six percent more maize will have to be produced in 2011 than in 2010, while wheat stocks need to rise by more than 3.5 percent to ensure the world has enough reserves to tide it over 2011, said the FAO Food Outlook, released on 17

November. "We not only need to replenish our stocks in 2011 but we need to do better than that to ensure we have stocks to last us in 2012," said Abbassian. FAO calculations have not taken into account the possibility of unfavourable weather conditions next year.

We are assuming we will have normal growing conditions, but if we have heavy rains or drought in some of the cereal-producing countries we could be in trouble, or if we have great growing conditions production could go up by more than expected levels," Abbassian said.

Global wheat and barley stocks declined in 2010 as severe drought and fires slashed production in Russia and Ukraine two of the world's largest producers. The news drove up wheat prices by 45 percent and even 80 percent in the second half of 2010, with an export ban imposed by Russia adding impetus. Canada, another major wheat producer, was also hit by bad weather.

World wheat inventories are forecast to fall to 181 million tonnes, 10 percent below the 2010 level but still 25 percent above the critically low level of 2008, the Outlook said.

Maize stocks are already low as production slipped in the United States, the world's largest producer, while demand continued to grow. "With soya beans fetching good prices at the moment, many farmers in the US tended to devote more of their land to soya beans, which affected maize yields," said Abbassian.

The pressure on wheat prices affected maize, forcing prices up 50 percent from 2009 levels.

Fortunately, stocks of rice - the staple consumed by more than half the world's population - are adequate, but prices could come under pressure if other cereals become more expensive in 2011, according to FAO's Outlook.

Global cereal prices were not going to come down at any time soon, Abbassian commented, and "It is still very early to predict how much farmers will plant in 2011 - so still a lot of unknowns."

IRIN News

Ontario Black History Society and PricewaterhouseCoopers 2011 Scholarship

OBHS & PwC Scholarship Details

The OBHS was founded in 1978 and is dedicated to the study, preservation and promotion of Black history and heritage. Founded by educators, the OBHS exists to further the story, experiences and achievements of Canadians of African origin - seizing our past to transform our future.

To further our mutual mandates, the OBHS and PwC wish to provide a means to support the achievement of African-Canadian young people in their post secondary education. This OBHS & PwC Scholarship will be for one student who plans to pursue a career in chartered accountancy.

Scholarship recipients must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents between the ages of 17 and 25. They must provide support of their academic achievement, community involvement, financial need and rationale for wanting to enter the field of chartered accountancy.

OBHS & PwC SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

ELIGIBILITY

Applicant must be a Black Student who is:

- A Canadian citizen or a permanent resident
- Between 17 to 25 years of age as of September 1st of the year in which the scholarship is applied for
- Enrolled full-time in last year of High School, diploma or certificate program at an accredited Canadian college, or university for the academic year commencing in 2010. Students commencing their studies in the fall are eligible.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- High academic achievement
- Compelling interest in the field/Financial need
- Recognized contribution to the Black community

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Please submit 3 copies of each of the following:
- Complete current contact information for applicant (i.e. address, phone, email)



- A completed 250 to 500 word letter of application describing the reasons why you would be a worthy recipient of the OBHS & PwC Scholarship. (Include your contribution to the Black community, other volunteer activities, your academic achievements, your most important accomplishments and your future goals.)
- Letters of reference from two individuals (e.g. One must be a teacher and another from an individual, other than your teacher or a family member, who is familiar with your community service.)
- An updated copy of official transcript
- Two passport size photos -

head shot

Once submitted these application packages photos will become the property of the OBHS & PwC Scholarship Fund.

DEADLINE

All application materials must be submitted by Jan. 7, 2011 before 4:00 p.m. addressed to:

Scholarship Committee

Ontario Black History Society
10 Adelaide St. E. Suite 402
Toronto, ON. M5C 1J3

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the complete application is postmarked by Jan. 7, 2011 or received by the OBHS by Jan. 7, 2011.

QUESTIONS

For all enquiries in advance of the deadline, contact the OBHS directly at 416 867-9420 or by email at admin@blackhistorysociety.ca. No questions will be answered regarding the status of the application. No applications will be accepted by email or fax.

OBHS & PwC 2011 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD PRESENTATION – the BRUNCH

The Scholarship will be pre-



sented during the OBHS Annual Brunch launching February as Black History Month. This year's event will be held at The Old Mill Inn, Toronto on Sunday, January 30, 2011 from noon to 4:00 p.m.. Early bird tickets for the Brunch can be purchased from the OBHS 416 867-9420 or through our website: www.blackhistorysociety.ca on a first come first served basis.

NOTE: The Scholarship Committee thanks all applicants for their submissions, but only the scholarship recipient, the 'awardee' will be contacted by the OBHS. Should the awardee not reside in the Toronto area and/or be unable to attend the OBHS Brunch on Jan. 30th, 2011, the awardee may name a designate to accept the scholarship on their behalf.

SPONSORSHIP

Should you wish to support the efforts of the OBHS, please contact the OBHS for further details.

www.blackhistorysociety.ca

The Score on Cricket

by Tashvir Narine

West Indies opener Chris Gayle put his name in the record books once again with his second test triple century on November 17th at the Galle International Stadium. Gayle's 333 over Sri Lanka on the third day of the first test made him the fourth batsman in history to record two triple centuries in their careers and put the W.I. at an incredible score of 580 runs. Sri Lankan spinner Ajantha Mendis bowled the Jamaican star batsman, but not before a wonderful innings that included 34 fours and 9 sixes, landing him Player of the Match. Despite Gayle's dominance, the match ended in a draw with rain washing out play on the final day.

Lead by newly-instated captain Darren Sammy, the West Indies cricket team are in Colombo for three tests with the home side. This will then be followed by five ODIs starting December 9th and finally one T20 match on December 21st at the R Premadasa Stadium to culminate the series.

It appeared that some changes were needed on the West Indies side before the start



Gayle force: Chris Gayle celebrates reaching his triple-hundred in Galle and enjoying the moment

of this series, and this came in the form of appointing Sammy as captain over Gayle, along with former West Indies fast bowler Joel Garner as the interim manager. The move also placed Brendan Nash as vice-captain, removing bowler Dwayne Bravo.

On the flip side, the Sri Lankan selection squad have chosen to drop star bowler Lasith Malinga for the test series with the W.I., and there is also a chance that he may miss the entire series in an attempt to keep him rested for the upcoming World Cup in February. Regardless of Malinga's presence, the squad is still equipped with capable bowlers, and captain Kumar Sangakkara will use his side's healthy spin attack, lead by Mendis. This also marks the first test series Sri Lanka will play following the retirement of Muttiah Muralitharan.

Despite the apparent controversy following this series, both teams looked strong in the first test and appear to have many positives to look forward to for the upcoming matches. Vice captain Mahela Jayawardene recorded a half century in each inning of the first test and West Indies spinner Shane Shillingford lead their bowling attack took 5 wickets even though rain washed out



the second Sri Lankan innings. Good luck to both teams for the rest of the series.

In nearby India, New Zealand continued their series on the sub-continent, which hosted three tests and five upcoming ODIs. India recorded their third largest margin of victory in test play, by beating New Zealand by an innings and 198 runs in the third test in a dominating performance that is all too familiar to the cricketing world. Player of the match Rahul Dravid scored 191 and fast bowler Ishant Sharma took 7 wickets, showing the perfect balance of an experienced batting and efficient bowling attack. The teams begin a series of the ODIs starting November 28th and ending December 10th, which will then see South Africa visit India for another series spanning December and January, and then a small rest before the World Cup next year.

Will the DMK Survive the “Raja Gate?”

By Chakravarthy

India has many gates like the Gate of India in New Delhi, Gate way of India and Church Gate [a county well known for its suburban Railway station] in Mumbai, and few others. There are Raja gates in many Maharajahs' palaces too. Of course Indians know Bill Gate and Watergate [scam]. Now what is in the main news is a different gate called “Raja Gate” or “Spectrum Gate”. Who is Raja? What is Spectrum?

Andimuthu Raja known as A.Raja and **திரு.ஆ.ராசா** [Mr.R.Raasaa] in DMK Tamil, is a DMK member [M.P] of the Indian Lok Sabha representing hilly Nilgiris constituency of Tamilnadu. He resigned on the 14th November 2010, on corruption allegations, as Minister of Communications and Information Technology, the portfolio he inherited in 2007 from Dayanithy Maaran, another DMK Minister, and a grandson of DMK leader Karunanithy's own late sister. He was withdrawn by Karunanithy himself due to in house fighting.

But A. Raja, a law graduate who struggles to speak proper English was in no way match in any sphere, except in controversy, to the Harvard educated arrogant and youthful Dayanithy. His appointment itself as Minister of Communications and Information Technology sans broadcasting was ethically wrong since he and his brother Kalanithy were partners of Southern India's most dominant SUNTV group, that has interest in TV channels, publication of newspapers, magazines and radio channels in Tamilnadu and the neighbouring states. Though Congress party was hesitant, Karunanithy



A.Raja

dictated terms in 2004 with his “power” and picked cherry plum portfolios. In brief, he named it - he got it.

Dayanithy used his clout to enrich SUNTV group, suppressing competitors in the media field of Tamilnadu. A notable victim was RajTV, owned by Sri Lankan Tamils of Indian origin. Though exceptionally efficient in his job, Daya was well known for his high handed attitudes. He created a controversy with the legendary Tata group, twisting their arms and threatening them to face consequences if they did not accept SUNTV group as 33% stake holders of a TV, telecom venture for which Tatas were seeking his approval.

In the mean time a family war was erupted when Kalanithy's Tamil daily “Thinakaran” published the result of a public poll that the masses prefer “leader's” younger son M.K.Stalin, a friend of Maaran family, and Tamilnadu's Deputy CM, to become the next CM than the elder brother Alaghiri, current Union Minister of Fertilizers. In retaliation Alaghiri's goons vandalized the newspaper office in Madurai causing death to three. The veteran politician took the side of ‘hit man’ against his grandson. As a result Dayanithy's head was chopped from Delhi cabinet.

A rapprochement was made before the parliamentary election last year as DMK needed SUNTV group as a propaganda tool. Dayanithy won the South Madras seat again and today he is the Minister of Textiles but his attempt to regain MCIT was thrashed as the “leader” solidly backed the questionable Raja.

SUNTV group presently plays a big part

in producing Tamil movies. Kalanithy who is ranked to be one of the 20 richest in India with \$ 1.9 billion, has produced the most numbers for the year 2010 including the mega hit “Enthiran”, with Rajanikanth and Aiswariya Rai. Also sons of Karunanithy's sons Alaghiri and Stalin are in the production of movies. It is not exaggeration if I say that the Tamilnadu CM's family virtually controls cinema field in Tamilnadu. Actor turned politician Vijaykanth, a foe, right now finds no good theaters to release his movie as they are under spell of K family.

What is Spectrum?

In simple, it was a case of you selling a property in year 2008 for the assessed value of 2001 when the market is on the surge. Will you do? No, you would not but Raja did. He sold the 2G Spectrum bandwidth basing on the 2001 value in 2008 to a selected few including the big named cooperates like Tatas, Reliance and Airtel.

The deal was not done transparently as per market prices, and the final allocation was distributed with short notice on first come first served basis whereas favoured few were already in the Formula One race track with engine tuned, thus resulting in a scam that cost the government in revenue of Indian Rupees 1.70 lakh crores -US\$ 40 billion. So this Spectrum gate or Raja Gate is described as the mother of all scandals in Indian history.

This scam surfaced in 2008 itself but the government denied any wrong doing and the opposition also possessed not much documentary proof in hand. Now the Comptroller and Auditor General's [CAG] report submitted in August 2010 indicted Raja with evidence that he had personally signed and approved the majority of the questionable allocations.

The CAG had meticulously documented how Raja circumvented norms at every level and obdurately avoided scrutiny in awarding 2G licenses in January 2008 at 2001 rates. Unlike the usual scams, there is nothing secretive about Raja's Spectrum scam. He carried out the dubious 2G license awards in full public view, said to be defying the PM and senior Cabinet colleagues.

A volcano erupted in the parliament and the entire opposition wanted Raja's head not his crown or throne. But things were put in the back seat due to the Common Wealth Games and President Obama's visit.

Sooner America's Air Force One took off for Indonesia from Delhi's Indira Gandhi Airport, with the weeks followed Raja and the Spectrum replaced Obama as the top news in the Indian media and the parliament was put into turbulent air pocket ever since demanding Raja's removal. No session was conducted.

A case filed in the court by the CBI and another by Dr.Subramaniam Swamy made matters worse for the defendants. Unlike in Sri Lanka, the judges pulled up the government and specifically the Prime Minister for administrative negligence and lethargy and asked the PM to reply. As ‘Mr. Clean’ image of Dr.Manmohan Singh was put to test, the Congress party woke up and pressurized the adamant DMK to withdraw Raja.

Raja on his part refused to resign stating his innocence and challenged to face inquiry. His stand was backed by his party and the “leader”, saying he did no wrong, he was a Dalit [low cast] and removing him would affect the prospects in the forth coming Tamilnadu state election and threatened that he would withdraw all 18 DMK MPs from the Government if Raja was sacked which added to the Congress dilemma.

Had Karunanithy done that he would have dug his own grave. Congress would withdraw support to his minority state government that would fall. AIADMK leader Jayalalitha came like a bolt from the blue and offered to give unconditional support to the centre if DMK withdraws. This was an issue that drew Karunanidhi's ire. That way the Congress might have saved the



government or opted to go for election.

If Congress joins hand with AIADMK, Karunanithy would lose the state as well as the center. So he desisted. The Congress party reached the final stage whether you resign or we sack and eventually face an election.

Raja on the eve of his departure to Delhi on Sunday 14th November told reporters at Chennai airport that his resignation was out of question. When that news was on the air, landing in Delhi after three hours he drove



Kanimoly

straight to the Prime Minister's 7, Race Course Road residence and handed over his letter of resignation.

Later he told the media “In order to avoid embarrassment to the Government and maintain peace and harmony in Parliament, my leader (DMK chief M Karunanidhi) has advised me to resign”. What a drama it was? It is true politics is a stage where politicians are actors.

The all powerful-mighty Machiavellian Muthuvel Karunanithy who received defeat only in the hands of MGR, knelt down like Raja elephant before Sonia Gandhi and Manmohan Singh for the first time, having tried all the magic in his fingers to save Raja's head that got shaved off finally.

The episode is not over with Raja's resignation. The opposition, still paralyzing the winter session now wants to expose Rani also. I mean Lok Sabha vehemently demands a Joint Parliament Commission JPC to strip Raja on the Spectrum Gate for which the government steadfastly refuses.

The reason is; as assembly elections in Kerala, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Assam are due next year, the Opposition will keep this issue alive through the JPC, and as long as a JPC probe continues, there would be leaks, insinuations and innuendos to the effect that the Congress will be on the defensive rebutting the Opposition charges all the time. Besides the government cannot be seen “surrendering” to the Opposition's pressure on every issue.

Why did Karunathi stood like a fire wall for Raja?

Raja is a snake hanging around the neck of Lord Siva under whose command it acts or bites. The loss of revenue is estimated to be US\$40 billion. No doubt the companies had a wind fall. Will Raja do such a thing for nothing? Don't you think at least half the amount of \$40 billion would have changed hand? Where did that money go? Your guess is as good as mine.

Will the DMK survive the “Raja Gate”?

In a way, the DMK and its leader stands naked before the eyes of the people. Of

Body - The First gift

By Sadhguru Vasudev

Now people have come to the conclusion that body means pain. Body is not pain; body can be very, very beautiful. You can make your body in such a way that you need not have to carry it around, you can let it just float with you. Just food, practices and a little change in attitude, you will see this body becomes a miracle. If you look at this body as a mechanism, definitely it is the most sophisticated mechanism on this planet right now. All your super computers do not match this one. They say a single molecule of DNA can perform 100 times more functions than all the computers in the world put together. A single molecule of DNA contains that many functions. So, this is definitely the best machine.

This is the first gift that was given to you. And those people who do not appreciate this gift, those people who are not bothered to take care of this one properly, will God give any more gifts to them? It stops there. God gave you this wonderful body. Whoever

is your creator, he gave you this wonderful body; the first gift that is given to you is a physical one, and then if he sees you are abusing it so badly, if you do not know how to take care of it, he knows it is not worth showering more gifts upon you. So it is very important that the body is kept in a comfortable and joyous state. If the body is joyous, it will encourage you to go further.

You don't have to become a great athlete or something, but you can keep it well, healthy, comfortable and happy. Keeping the body happy is very important, otherwise it will pull you down, wherever you want to go it will pull you down very easily. The physical body itself can be happy in the sense – after a bout of rain, if you go out and see, all the plants seem to be happy. Have you seen that they are almost laughing? Not just washed and clean, if you are sensitive you can see they are exuding happiness. Have you felt this?

So particularly the body can be happy if it is kept properly. If you eat certain foods, the body



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

will become happy. If you eat certain other foods, the body will become dull and lethargic, it will increase your sleep quota; we have not come here to sleep and go, isn't it? I am talking about life, you know. See if we are sleeping for 8 hours a day, if we live for 60 years, we have slept for 20 years. 20 years of our lives we have slept; that is one third of our lives we have spent sleeping. Now, if

we are sleeping for 12 hours, 50% of our lives we spend sleeping, the remaining 30 to 40% goes in eating, toilet and the other ablutions, so what is left for life? There is really no time left.

Nobody can enjoy his sleep. In sleep you don't exist. The only thing that you can enjoy is restfulness. The body is well rested, that you enjoy. How to keep the body well rested? First of all, why tire it? Tiresomeness doesn't come to the body because of work, for most people. People who are working more, are more active, isn't it? Food is one important aspect, attitudes are also there, but food plays an important role. If you eat the wrong kind of food, you have to drag your body and go. If you eat the right type of food, it goes ahead of you, and that is how it should be kept.

Sadhguru J. Vasudev is a contemporary mystic rooted as strongly in worldly and pragmatic matters as he is in inner experience and wisdom. Named one of



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

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

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

Young couple wins Home Life GTA Realty's Lucky Draw - 2011 BMW

Home Life GTA Realty's Lucky Draw was held on Nov 28th – First Prize: BMW 2011, 3 series, 2nd price: 2 to Cuba for one week vacation and 3rd price: 42" LCD TV and 10 other consolation prizes. Congratulations to all winners and participants.



I DO NOT PRAY

Being ill, I have been told
By different people, to pray
In many different ways.
Some say I should make a vow,
Others ask me to appeal to the souls
Of those gone ahead, to intercede;
Holy places, holy water, all have been
Given as means to approach God.
My faith is of a different kind
And so I do not pray at all.
To me it seems He knows best,
And will make me well or not,
As He sees fit. Whatever
The decision, it should come from Him.
Whatever it be, I shall accept
And praise my God for His love and care.

-By Betty Paul Thottam

An excerpt from the book ?Living with God?
ISBN 978-0-9866773-0-4
for information contact www.thoughtsanctuary.com,
thought.sanctuary@gmail.com

WORLD ECONOMIC POWER SHIFTING BACK TO ASIA FROM THE WEST



Speech made by

Ranil Wickremesinghe leader of the opposition, Sri Lanka at the Rotary International South Asia conference in Bangkok on November 27th 2010

By the 4th century BC, Asia had begun its first cycle of economic growth and power. This was the reason why Alexander the Great decided to travel eastward to establish an empire. At that time there was nothing worthwhile to the west of Greece. On the other hand, to the east of Greece was Persia, and beyond were rich kingdoms in India and China. A Roman Emperor once complained Rome had to import all its luxuries from India and China; but had nothing to offer these Asian countries. Until

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The Return of the Asians' - because contrary to common opinion what we are witnessing today is not the rise of Asia but the return of Asian countries to recapture the global economy

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the 1820s, Asia was responsible for 60% to 75% of the world's GDP.

Asia is not a continent that can be brought together like the European Union. Historically, culturally and climatically we fall into five distinct categories: East Asia, Indo-China, Central Asia, West Asia and the Indian Ocean region. In the past these regions were all integrated by the Silk Route. This is why I have titled this speech 'The Return of the Asians' - because contrary to common opinion what we are witnessing today is not the rise of Asia but the return of Asian countries to recapture the global economy.

The first cycle of Asian dominance was crushed by the rampant forces of European colonialism, and by the Industrial Revolution which led European manufacturers to look to Asian markets for their goods. Thereafter, for the greater part of the 19th and 20th centuries, Asia was turned into captive markets for European industry.

No Asian country, other than Japan benefited from the Industrial Revolution. As a result by 1940, Asia accounted for only 20% of the world's GDP. In a reversal of fortunes the affluent western consumers of the seventies enabled Japan and the four Asian Tiger economies, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia and Taiwan to emerge as low-wage manufacturing bases for consumer goods. The story of the return of the Asians begins here.

The next phase was in 1979; the year which ushered in the Thatcherite revolution. I remember listening to Mrs. Thatcher at the Commonwealth summit of 1979 explaining to us her policies for promoting economic competitiveness. That same year Jiang Zemin - the successor to Deng - visited Singapore and Sri Lanka to study our free trade zones. This was the start of the migration of industries to China.

Thereafter, China became the workshop of the world. China, which barely produced

a few thousand air conditioners in 1978, today, manufactures nearly 50 million air conditioners, half of the world's microwave ovens, 1/3 of its television sets, 70% of its toys and 60% of its bicycles are manufactured in China. Chinese exports in 2005 were 1.15 trillion US\$.

Today, as much as China is the centre of global manufacturing, India has become the international hub for global service industries. India's IT and outsourcing exports amount to over 40 billion US\$. The economic resurgence of China and India has also made way for the emergence of Thailand, Indonesia, Pakistan and Vietnam as manufacturing bases.

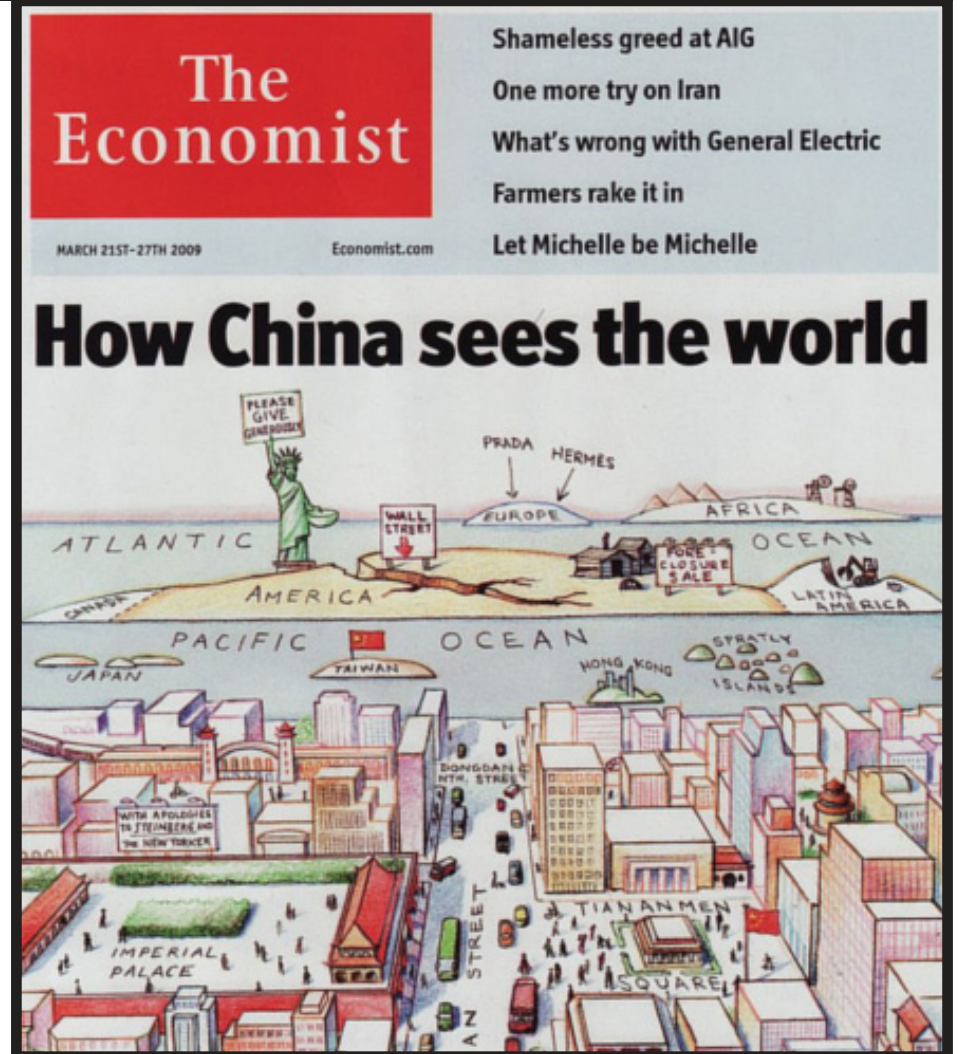
This shift of world economic power from the west back to Asia is highlighted in the Asian Development Bank Key Indicators (for Asia and the Pacific) for 2010.

Today, the Asia Pacific accounts for 36% of the world economy. Europe comes second, and North America, third. Within Asia over 65% of the GDP comes from three countries - China, India and Japan. It is predicted that Asia will be the main driver of global growth over the next two decades with a newly emerging Asian middle class of nearly 1.5 billion. Since 1980, 400 million Chinese people have transcended poverty lines. By 2030 the Chinese middle class is expected to exceed 600 million. In numbers - this will be the largest middle class in the world; and the world's third largest consumer market. India will be the fifth largest in the world with 520 million



consumers. It is this demographic transformation of 1.5 billion Asian consumers which will fuel global economic growth.

This trend has been evident from my visits to India during the last two years; as there is a channelling of new products specifically



aimed at the Indian domestic market on the part of Indian entrepreneurs. The best example of this is the Nano-car or the one-lakh car that targets the lower middle class - the Indian version of the model T Ford. This is what I call the return of the Asians. The Asia of 2050 will be similar to the Asia of the mid 17th Century which dominated the world in total wealth - what we call the GDP today - despite the fact that some of the European countries had a higher per capita

GDP. Similarly, in 2050, most of Asia will be middle income economies while the west will constitute high income economies.

However, the return of the Asians will not be an automatic phenomenon. Nor can it be allowed to be confined to economic growth only. The success of the region depends on correct political decisions and appropriate action being taken by governments and civil society - if it is not to be a flash in the pan. In the remaining half of my speech I propose to speak on the key issues that will require our attention in the years to come.

At one time the regions of the Indian Ocean were the richest in the world - even richer than East Asia. This was the reason that compelled Elizabeth I of England to send an Ambassador to the Court of the Mogul Emperor Akbar the Great

in the 16th century. The wealth of Nizam of Hyderabad in the 19th Century (valued according to the present day) would be 200 billion dollars, four times the wealth of Bill Gates.

Once the sailors had mastered the Asian monsoons, the merchants wove a web of trade across the seas. It was a maritime

Shameless greed at AIG

One more try on Iran

What's wrong with General Electric

Farmers rake it in

Let Michelle be Michelle

crossroads bringing together traders from the Mediterranean, Arabia, South Asia and China. The kingdoms of South India, Sri Lanka and Sri Wijaya rose to prominence due to two reasons, due to merchandise exports, and as a centre for trans-shipment from East to West.

By 2030, not only will India become the world's third largest economy, it will also be

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Today, as much as China is the centre of global manufacturing, India has become the international hub for global service industries. India's IT and outsourcing exports amount to over 40 billion US\$. The economic resurgence of China and India has also made way for the emergence of Thailand, Indonesia, Pakistan and Vietnam as manufacturing bases

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the world's fastest growing major economy. Indonesia - the successor to Sri Wijaya, will become the fifth largest economy - overtaking Russia. By then the combined GDP of India and Indonesia will be US dollars 39 trillion - the same as the predictions for the US during this time. Add to this, the fast growing economies of Pakistan, Bangladesh,

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SRI LANKA - PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN SIGHT?

by I. S. Senguttuvan

Echoing the shared hopes of an exasperated and divided people in the four corners of the island, a Sunday English newspaper editorially commented on October 21 "President Rajapaksa has been granted an opportunity to right the wrongs of history. He must grab that chance before it slips away" The editorial continued "What is special in this instance is that the confidence he enjoys among the people is such that they are likely to accept a solution put forward by him as being fair and just...This is an opportunity that has not been available to any leader of this country since independence and that is why the President must act and act now too.the wisdom to govern for the next six years not only with the astuteness of the past but also with compassion towards those who were ill-disposed towards him"

That the newspaper concerned is close to the Rajapakse regime gives these words of optimism both significance and relevance. Some might even suggest that the newspaper concerned changed hands not long ago with funds said to be from VVIPs in the ruling elite. This taken together with the special interview he gifted his friend Shri N. Ram of the Madras "Hindu" with - on the very day he took his oaths for his "second innings" - could well herald a new welcome path the three decades war-battered and near-bankrupt country might soon take. Sometimes it is not what the solution, even the most ideal, is that matters but who brings this "fair and just" solution - and when. Is this "the opportunity that has not been available to any leader of this country since Independence?" More crucially perhaps is that emphasis in that central in Buddhist philosophy - Compassion. What better way of persuading the majority Sinhala Buddhist to join in and settle our Question of all Questions than "with compassion towards those who were ill-disposed towards him" The Tamil nationalists from the fringe might argue they were not ill disposed towards Rajapakse in the personal sense but, as a grouping of over 4 million Tamil-speaking people, only offered legitimate resistance to the injustices imposed on the Tamil people for over five decades on language, access to the State's resources - and finally, their very homeland. The latter is now being

insensitively subject to State-aided demographic change is there for all to see.

Now that there is hardly any opposition worth its name - with the traditional UNP both in unmanageable disintegration and virtually headless there is nothing to stop President Rajapakse from bringing back the estranged Tamils to the National fold. Rajapakse is far too politically savvy to take the JVP as worthwhile opposition because the JVP are themselves creatures of Sinhala extremism - that originally had the backing of the power bloc of 1956 pancha bala vegaya - sangha (the Buddhist priesthood), govi (farmers), guru (teachers), veda (ayurvedic physicians) and kamkaru (the working class) Since then, in more recent times, this cabal is strengthened by politically-inclined Buddhists in the armed forces, the Police, the State Administrative services, the Clerical and lower services, State Banks, powerful Buddhist millionaire Mudalalis (Industrialists, drug-traffickers, Underworld kings, power brokers et al) - a very formidable group who insist all resources of the State belong to them. The Sinhala State does not have sufficient space to accommodate the JVPs and the regime's extremism. One has to be jettisoned - and that certainly is not the wagon in which the Rajapakses are ensconced. The present Sinhala extremist position is that minorities may live - but at much lower tiers than the majority. The JVP is just as decimated as the UNP today. Ironically they now trek to the North to suddenly realize "our Tamil brothers live in fear and insecurity. They do not even have the right to put up posters in their areas"

In his interview with Hindu's Ram President Rajapakse invokes his own 3 Ds' as a formulae to future peace and reconciliation - Development, Democratisation and Devolution. In the same interview Rajapakse also expresses his appreciation to the TNA agreeing to work with him on a development package which he calls "a very good development" Basil Rajapakse, the other power house, also thanks the TNA for the assistance given to the Task Force to rebuild the North - a project that was essentially under his stewardship titled "Uthuru Wasanthaya" (The Northern Awakening).

Compared to the total lack of development in the North in the past three decades, one cannot



but concede the government now is doing much to keep the nation together. On October 27 "The Island" reported Northern civilians praise the security forces for helping in housing. The report quotes Maj Gen Udaya Medaweera who claimed 4,575 new houses were built and 2,578 re-constructed as follows - 2,293 Kilinochchi; 1,030 Mullaitivu; 662 Vavuniya; 572 Jaffna and 18 in the EP. Reconstructions - 952 Kilinochchi, 897 Mullaitivu and 2 in Jaffna .

On October 11 the Ceylon Daily News reported Fisheries Minister Rajitha Senarathne - after meeting the Defence Secretary - announced removal of restrictions on fishing in our waters - except in certain specified N-E points said to be mined. 30 HP motorboats are now allowed. He further confirmed 141 power boats, earlier held, will be released to their original owners. This certainly must be welcome news to the fisher folk in the North.

Namal Rajapakse MP - Son of President Mahinda Rajapakse and is widely believed to be groomed as the virtual Prince-in-Waiting. There he was mid-November in the company of senior Cabinet Minister Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister Douglas Devananda, the Jaffna Mayor, the G.A. and many other invitees to inaugurate several multi-million dollar infra-structure Projects - largely financed by the Chinese government. China Railway No.5 Engineering Group will re-build railroad capacity; China Aero Technology Engineering Group will help in modernizing air services and China Hydro Corporation will help improve the irrigation and water requirements of the District.

It is also understood the World Food Programme/UN is to set-up 155 Food Storage facilities in 31 locations in Mannar, Vavuniya, Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi with financial support from Australia, Norway and



LETTERS & OPINIONS

dards in the politest terms, is nothing but bizarre.

As to the flood of diaspora funds and the invasion of rich Tamils from the diaspora in investing in the new economic Utopia State propaganda tried to create, all this may have to wait and see how the Government proceeds on the implementation of its many promises to the Tamil people. As the Wall Street Journal underlined last week "President Rajapakse will find announcing reforms easier than their implementation" The government also cannot be oblivious to the fear of diaspora Tamils several of whom arrested at the BIA on arrival and since missing. Efforts to trace these missing by their relatives and friends through the Police and judicial process prove futile in a country where abductions are now almost normal. The alleged presence of an illegal Intelligence Unit of the MoD at the airport can in no way encourage Tamils from the diaspora to come in with short and long term investment plans.

The above is not to even remotely suggest everything is now to the satisfaction of the people of the Jaffna District. They certainly are not. But now the President is on a reconciliatory mood we will not list the widening litany of woes of the Tamil-speaking people of the North. Let us, as reasonable men and women, see that President Mahinda Rajapakse gets a free hand to show the country and the world what he has under his sleeves on his own fond 3 D's formulae. In the interest of national unity, Sri Lanka's future and peace in the region we can only wish him well.



Prime Minister Stephen Harper congratulates the Montreal Alouettes and their President Larry Smith on winning the 98th Grey Cup

(Pg38 cont...)

WORLD ECONOMIC POWER...



Speech made by

Ranil Wickremesinghe leader of the opposition, Sri Lanka at the Rotary International South Asia conference in Bangkok on November 27th 2010

Malaysia, Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda on the one hand together with the Gulf oil economies, Singapore, Brunei, Iran, Myanmar, South Africa, Kenya and Australia and you have a cocktail of rapid growth.

Unlike East Asia and the Pacific which has APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation), the Indian Ocean has no regional mechanism for trade and economic cooperation. Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IORARC) is a non-starter. One reason for this is the predicted increase in its population by an additional 500 M. by 2050. Furthermore, the lower income levels of the Indian Ocean - compared to East Asia - gives a natural advantage to Indian enterprises who have already commenced designing low price products and services to reach the lower income rural consumers. The ADB calls this 'frugal innovations'; and foretells its prospects of reaching the east African coasts, creating new trade linkages.

It is time that SAARC, ASEAN, OAU, and the Commonwealth which has 19 members in this region initiate discussions to seriously consider this new alignment of trading nations; and create a formal mechanism to bring together the three continents - Africa, Asia and Australia which border the Indian Ocean. Those of you who are part of civil society can make people to people contact within this region and thereby complement regional level economic cooperation. Rotary International should take the lead in bridging the continents of the Indian Ocean.

The return of the Asians will not be without adverse effects and strains on the region; particularly on the demand for global energy and food. Finding an appropriate food - energy - water nexus is an immense challenge. For example, by 2025, the world oil consumption will increase to 120 million barrels, 80 per cent of which will be to supply the demands of the Asian economies. Since the bulk of these oil supplies have to pass through the Straits of Malacca and Straits of Hormuz Asia's strategic importance will be tremendous. 50,000 ships pass annually through the Straits of Malacca which is only 2.5 kilo metres wide at its narrowest point; and the Straits of Hormuz (between Iran and Oman) through which the Gulf oil passes is only 89 kilo metres wide. The vulnerability of these straits to terrorist attack is of grave concern to economic and military planners.

The surge in economic growth has led to the swell in the demand for other commodities and minerals - such as uranium, iron, and coal. In 2009 alone, China accounted for

39% of the world consumption of aluminium, copper, iron and nickel. Thus resource rich countries will be the natural beneficiaries; and as the demand for energy and minerals keep augmenting many poor countries in Africa and Latin America will also develop alongside Asia.

The global food balance will be determined by Asia's economic and population growth. There will be additional numbers to feed. Asia will dominate both demand and supply. Two things are certain by mid century: much higher food prices and a greater stress and strain on the already limited water resources.

We are already aware of the intensifying problem of water scarcity - since the availability of per capita water is limited in the West, South, and South East Asia. The Indian Network of Climate Change Assessment (INCC) says that India could get warmer by 2 degrees Celsius by 2030 - leading to changes in rainfall patterns, and vulnerability to more severe floods, droughts and other natural disasters.

Already, periodic floods hit South and South East Asia; cyclic droughts have intensified due to widespread weather changes; while rising sea levels continue to threaten both the Maldives and the Mekong Delta.

North China including Beijing and the Hai River basin have experienced wells and rivers drying up, and groundwater levels falling two metres per year. While all Asian countries need to take heed of these predictions, the regional giants of China and India have a singular responsibility to safeguard the climate security of the region; as in the long run it will be the energy, decarbonization and the emission targets of China and India that will determine the success or failure of this effort. This is why many of us were disappointed with the stand taken by India and China at the Copenhagen summit of last year.

On the other hand, Japan has shown the region how to tackle climate change - as the Japanese have achieved an appropriate balance of meeting demand and decarbonizing. The media and civil societies in many of our countries have taken the lead in creating awareness of climate change. The time has come to exert greater pressure on governments to ensure that the impulse for economic growth does not compromise on other imperatives.

When I visited India last week, my Indian friends jokingly referred to their country as the Scam Raj. This was in reference to the

two big corruption scandals dominating local news. One is the 2G spectrum issue where the Indian government's loss of revenue in the allocation of telecom spectrums is deemed to be Rs. 176,379 Crores (US\$ 38.6 billion). This comes two months after another scandal where Rs. 7,000 Crores (US\$ 1.5 billion) were alleged to have been misappropriated during the Commonwealth Games. Being an open society, the Indians are able to discuss these corruption scandals freely, while the Indian media is able to report their views fearlessly. Unfortunately, this is not so in many of our countries.

Yet, the challenge of human greed - corruption - is not limited to India. Corruption is also unchecked in China where Party cadre and bureaucrats make so much money that it is today called 'a predatory state'.

The following doggerel by Chinese peasants from The Blue Book:

Seven hands, eight hands, everybody extends hands to the peasants

You collect, I collect, he collects, and peasants are distraught;

You solicit, I solicit, he solicits, and peasants are upset.

Demand grain, demand money, and demand life;

Guard against fire, guard against theft, and guard against cadres.

In my own country, political power has become the quickest avenue to amass wealth. On the other hand, in many Asian countries there is a new development; that of the countries' leading business enterprises seeking to capture political power. In this context, civil society needs to take its responsibilities more seriously; and become more strident and effective in demanding the right to information laws and their strict enforcement by Parliament. Corruption touches all of us as it delays, detracts and destroys human development and promotes inequity.

This brings me to the next critical side-effect of the current economic system of growth - social inequity. We are all aware of marked income disparities between the industrial urban areas and the backward rural areas; the large pockets of poor migrant workers living in slums in big cities, the poverty of female-headed households, the neglect of street children, and those who have regressed into poverty due to the global economic recession.

After decades of ineffective welfare and poverty alleviation schemes and scams, how should Asia address this issue so that it can make a real difference in the lives of people? One example can be from the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. Though micro-credit schemes sometimes take a generation or so to bear fruit, the GrammenPhone empowered the poor in Bangladesh to purchase cellular phones. This sparked a revolution as people utilized cellular phones in their daily life and business to become more productive. A case in point is the Philippines. In the 1980s the Philippines government offered low-interest housing loans to the poor - well below the market rates.

While on the surface the programme seemed to be a success, a World Bank evaluation found it had been hijacked by the rich and middle-income households - with only 21 per cent of the beneficiaries being

from the poor. Meeting the aspirations and frustrations, hope and despair of the poor in Asia remain a massive challenge particularly as recent reductions in government spending have affected health and education services - the two sectors the poor have always been able to access. Thus it is doubtful that many Asian countries will reach the targets set by the Millennium Development Goals.

There is a common stereotype in the West that Asians are submissive animals due to our past histories; a myth that Asia will accept the inequalities that have arisen due to market predominance. I seriously doubt this as being the case. Already, there are social protests taking place in China, the growth of the Naxalite movement in India and the Maoists in Nepal. Moreover, we in Asia have shown our opposition to inequality in alternative ways for thousands of years. The spread of Buddhism in India, the dispersion of Theravada Buddhism in South East Asia, the expansion of Islam in both these regions were basic responses to social and economic inequalities existing at that time.

Today, however, in the midst of a system that has resulted in sharp divisions in wealth we need a remedy that will satisfy the basic needs of the underprivileged. There is no other way than for the winners to look after the losers and the marginalized. In other words, the Asians have to take the leadership in ensuring that socio-economic systems are in place that can take care of those in need.

Examples can be found in the Nordic countries and the Japanese who have developed such fallback systems to care for the sick, the homeless, the poor and the disabled.

This is imperative, especially that the IMF has failed us - first in the Asian crisis of the late 1990s and then in the global economic meltdown of the last couple of years. The bottom line then - a system in which the market punishes the poor and the middle class for mistakes they are not responsible for and rewards the wrongdoers is abominable.

The G20 - the self-appointed global leadership committee has so far not advocated reforms. Nor have the Asian leaders within the G20 displayed any boldness in suggesting reforms; rather they have merely perpetuated the existing system of inequity. In contrast, the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel has shown singular courage when she stated last Tuesday 'that the primacy of politics over the markets should be enforced'. The need of the hour is not the additional voting power in the IMF that seems to be the focus of the G20 but far-reaching restructuring of the global financial architecture. The time has come for Asian leaders to capitalize on the shift in global political power that accompanies the shift in global economic power so as to wrest control of our future. Today, as we face the promise of an Asian resurgence we cannot afford to ignore the warning signs of inequity and social dissent, environmental degradation and depleting resources. Kishore Mahbubani in his book *The New Asian Hemisphere*, refers to a remark by Larry Summers that during the Industrial Revolution living standards in Europe improved by 50% in one life time. The super cycle boom driven by Asia will increase our living standards not by 50%, nor by 100%, but by a 100 fold - in one life time. If this occurs, then the return of the Asians will indeed be one of the biggest revolutions in history.

Will the DMK Survive (Pg36 cont...)

course Dr. K has done enough to the state and people do appreciate it. But the "Raja Gate" seems to have wiped off that good will. No doubt it will affect the party's prospects in the state election.

Though Karunanithy pleads to retain the tie with the Congress, it is unlikely if the same bitter situation prevails. With what face can the Congress go before the people with a tainted party that pushed them into a burning petrol tank? Therefore a shuffle is possible unless Raja elephant obeys the Mahout unconditionally.

Rahul Gandhi, unlike his mother, does not see eye to eye with Karunanithy for his arrogant political maneuvering and corrupt practices, and he openly shows his displeasure avoiding the CM whenever he visits Chennai. His youth Congress prefers to go away from the DMK. Therefore it is not possible for the DMK to survive the "Raja Gate". In 1996 when the DMK was spiritless under Jayalalitha, it was Rajanikanth and a breakaway Congress group brought to power.

If Congress decides to align with Jayalalitha now, that will bring the end of Karunanithy's political and physical life. Is Jayalalitha, the chief beneficiary of this scandal, a holy cow? No. How can one forget the days when the media dubbed her "Bandit Queen" for her autocrat and corrupt rule? During her last tenure she demanded one million Rupees "for party fund" to meet business people for discussion.

I remember what I wrote in the early 90s 'everybody drinks water from the river but Jayalalitha diverted the river to Poes Garden', her residence. But now the Indian Ocean is diverted to ---- ? You know where. It is a question of whether the kettle is black or the pot is black? Both are black.

When Maaran brothers hosted a lavish dinner party to some friends and family members in Chennai on the 14th to celebrate Maharaja's dethrone with the presence of Karunanithy's two sons Alaghiri and Stalin - the daughter of Karunanithy, Kanimoly, from his [traditionally] unwed wife Rajathy Ammal was observing mourning. Out of the

family members only she defended Raja to her best. It showed the family is diametrically divided.

A tapped taped conversation [visit <http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?268064>] of last year released by media on the 18th November, between Ms. Niira Radia, a power broker cum owner of a consultancy firm, Raja, Kanimoly and few others, sheds some light on Spectrum links and Raja's closeness to Kanimoly who he calls as Kani. Is she a Kani - fruit in Tamil, to him?

Chairman of the Rs 320,000 crore salt-to-software conglomerates Ratan Tata who feels the publication of intercepts of his conversation with Ms.Niira Radia, who handles corporate communication for the group, has violated his right to privacy and may move Supreme Court on Monday against the publication.

He holds that as Radia's [A British citizen] phones were tapped by government agencies [Exchange control & Income tax dept] specifically for investigating a possible

offence [Forex & taxation]. Therefore the recorded conversations should have been used for that purpose alone and it has no bearing on the [Spectrum] case under investigation.

Ratanji, you know well you are wrong. It is true, but the said tape talks about Spectrum and mentions the names of telecom giants, Mukesh Ambani, Barti Mittal and you. Also Niira tells Raja that he should be neutral pointing to his friendship with Mukesh. Raja tells Niira strongly, to tell Mittal that he will have to work with him for the next five years. Are not these have bearing on the Spectrum case under investigation?

Besides, in Tamilnadu it is gossiped that twice divorced Kanimoly is a Rajathy to 47 year old Raja who is already married to Parameswary with a daughter Mayuri. God only knows the truth. As long as people of Tamilnadu are willing to give their lives for corrupt politicians and cine stars, as Rajanikanth said once, even if God comes he cannot save Tamilnadu !. [transCurrents.com]

Pointing out white students spend as much time partying as they do studying, while Asian students tend not to party with white students is not racist

"The 'too Asian' controversy is unwarranted"

by Amarnath Amarasingam

I must admit that I learned about the criticism of the "Too Asian" article in Maclean's before I actually read it. I received emails asking me to write letters of protest to universities that were warning of an "Asian invasion," help with community outreach, and was later invited to two "Youth Coalition Against Maclean's 'Too Asian'" meeting in Toronto and Waterloo.

The Chinese Canadian National Council also condemned the article for fostering an "us versus them" mentality. In other words, when I finally sat down to read the article I was ready to read about how university administrators trapped under an avalanche of Asian enrollment were asking governments for help, or, at the very least, interviews with professors and students stating that white students, all things being equal, were being given preferential treatment over Asian students because the universities were already too Asian. I was primed to be enraged.

After reading the article, I suspected that many of the critics had not bothered to read past the title before concluding that Maclean's was engaging in moral panic, fear mongering, irresponsible journalism and racism. The

"An article in a major Canadian magazine simply pointing out certain trends in our society need not be accused of racism and fear mongering."

article, in essence, tackles two main issues. First, white students, who apparently want to party as much as they want to study don't go to certain universities because they are too much of a "study school." These white students, the article concludes through interviews, do not want to compete with studious Asian students, and want to party at university, so they choose other schools. This first argument, if one wants to venture into racial territory, is likely more, or just as, racist towards white students as Asian ones. The article states plainly that Asian students tend to be "high achievers" and states that white students care more about "social interaction" and "alcohol."

Second, the article points out that campus life is becoming too skewed in one direction -- the social or the academic. It is true that these camps are often highly racialized. But, pointing out that white students spend as much time partying as they do studying, while Asian students tend not to party with white students is,



The University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)
[pic: media.utoronto.ca]

again, not racist. Research does support the argument that minority students in general are more academically studious. As sociologists have pointed out for years, this does create a facile multiculturalism in which student of different backgrounds attend the same university, but rarely talk to one another. University administrators may be spending time, as the article suggests, worrying about how they can get everybody to "hang out" with each other, but that is their prerogative. Racism it is not.

The Maclean's article also notes that the impact of high admissions rates for Asian students has created much controversy in the United States. As the article points out, some studies

support the idea that "Ivy League schools have taken the issue of Asian academic prowess so seriously that they've operated with secret quotas for decades to maintain their WASP credentials." If similar secret quotas were being implemented in Canada, then that would indeed be despicable. At that point, we should be organizing Youth Coalition meetings, letter-writing campaigns, and protests. An article in a major Canadian magazine simply pointing out certain trends in our society need not be accused of racism and fear mongering.

The Youth Coalition meeting to which I was invited states that "we need to mobilize a Youth Coalition to form a unified stance against the article's attempt to



instill a panic of an 'Asian Invasion' of universities, reinforce racial stereotypes and irresponsible journalism." It does not seem to matter much that the words "Asian invasion" do not appear even once in the Maclean's article, nor is the overall tone of the article suggesting anything of the sort. In accusing Maclean's of fear mongering, critics have begun to do the same. Based on interviews with Chinese, Korean, and Japanese students in several Canadian universities, the article only attempted to explore some of the sociological trends that these communities are undergoing.

I suspect that if the article was entitled "Asian students working hard at Canadian universities" instead of "'Too Asian'?" it would not have incited much controversy. This is not to say that students from minority populations do not experience challenges, racism or otherwise, at universities. In fact, this is precisely my point. There are enough real issues that should be occupying the time of anti-racism campaigners. They do not need to invent new ones.

(Amarnath Amarasingam is a doctoral candidate at Wilfrid Laurier University, and is currently completing his dissertation entitled, *Pain, Pride, and Politics: Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism in Canada* He can be reached at: amar2556@wlu.ca)

An Open Letter to President of Iran

Recently Mrs. Laureen Harper hosted a roundtable chaired by Indigo President, Heather Reisman on the challenges facing women in Iran. Following the roundtable, Mrs. Harper and Ms. Reisman issued a second open letter to the President of Iran condemning Iran's persistent disregard for the rule of law, human and women's rights, as symbolized by its mistreatment of Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani.

Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani was accused and convicted of adultery -- sentenced once to 99 lashes (which was carried out), and a second time to death by stoning for the same offence (which was suspended). Now, she faces murder charges, which could carry a death sentence by hanging. Last week, Iranian television broadcast what they claimed was a confession by Ms. Ashtiani of her "sinfulness" -- the second such broadcast, and another clear violation of due

process. The continuing injustice that Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani and her family faces is rallying thousands of women around the world to defend her rights and take up her cause.

President Ahmadinejad,

We are writing you today as Canadian women who enjoy the benefits and protections of a democratic society that values and promotes human rights and freedoms. We, and our fellow Canadians from all walks of life, remain gravely concerned about the human rights situation in Iran. We are particularly troubled by the ongoing mistreatment of Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani.

Last week's broadcast of confessions of questionable authenticity, is reprehensible. Rather than a "guilty" woman, the world saw only a country willing to intimidate and humiliate its citizens, and prejudice the outcome of cases before the courts.

We remain deeply concerned



by Iran's failure to follow due process, as shown by the unfair and unjust legal process faced by Ms. Ashtiani, and women in general in Iran.

We remain convinced that a fair trial would result in her speedy release, and the exoneration of her lawyer and her son whose arrests for defending Ms. Ashtiani further discredit your country.

We call on Iran to meet its international and legal obligations and reverse the deterioration of

its citizens' human rights, starting with a fair and due judicial process for Ms. Ashtiani.

We are also disturbed that the repugnant sentence of death by stoning, which Ms. Ashtiani faced, continues to be rendered predominantly against women in Iran and almost nowhere else in the world. We further call on Iran to amend its laws and forbid this cruel and inhuman punishment forever.

We met in Ottawa today to discuss the situation of women in Iran representing a rapidly grow-

ing coalition around the world which is determined to keep the spotlight on the actions of the Iranian government and the status of women in Iran. By adding our voices to the international outrage, it is our hope that women in Iran may one day enjoy the same benefits, rights and freedoms that we are so fortunate to have here in Canada.

Finally, we applaud the strong message which the international community sent your country last week in passing -- for the eighth consecutive year and by the largest margin ever -- a resolution in the UN's Third Committee roundly condemning Iran's human rights record, and showing Iranians that they are not alone. This time, we hope that Iran will listen to the world and begin fully protecting the rights of its own citizens.

We pledge once again to continue our vigilance in highlighting the case of Ms. Ashtiani and all other similar cases in Iran, and elsewhere in the world.



Compassionate care at The Scarborough Hospital leads to \$100,000 donation

When Harvey Walker talks about his late wife of 50 years, he immediately smiles.

"Joan was a very nice person. She was my life for 50 years. We had a lot of the same interests. We both liked to golf, we loved to travel. She was a very good swimmer," he says. In fact, while the Walkers enjoyed summers at the cottage, Harvey says they'd often swim across the bay. But Joan always made it to the other side first.

About a year after Joan underwent treatment for pancreatic cancer, she learned the cancer was back. While waiting for another round of chemotherapy, she had a stroke.

Joan spent her final weeks in the palliative care unit at The Scarborough Hospital. It was the care of the palliative care team that inspired Harvey to make a \$100,000 donation to the hospital after his wife died in April.

"My wife and I had talked about making a substantial donation before, but we didn't know where to make it," says Harvey. "The nurses in the palliative care unit did a really good job caring for her. They have a very tough job, but they do it very well. So when Joan died, it made sense that I give to The Scarborough Hospital. I thought it was a nice way to honour my wife's memory and I know it will help the hospital."

"I enjoy Harvey's company and am grateful for his support," says Michael Mazza, President and CEO of The Scarborough Hospital Foundation. "It is evident that Harvey and Joan shared a wonderful love and this gift was a great way for Harvey to commemorate that love and to help so many other people."

Later this month, the palliative care nursing station will be formally dedicated in Joan Walker's



Harvey Walker (centre) was inspired to make a generous donation to The Scarborough Hospital because of the care his late wife Joan received from the palliative care team including Sonia Johnson, Oncology and Palliative Care Nurse Clinician (left), and Sari Greenwood, Patient Care Manager, Oncology and Palliative Care.

memory.

Long-time residents of Scarborough, Harvey was an electrical contractor and Joan worked by his side, running the office and doing the book-keeping. The couple had both of their sons at The Scarborough Hospital, General campus.

"This has always been our hospital," says Harvey. "Fortunately we didn't need to come very often, but when we did, we always had great care."

While Joan was in the palliative care unit, Harvey was at her side. When he needed a rest, one of his two sons or his sister-in-law

would stay with Joan.

"The nurses really were very good to her. They treated her very well," he says. "And when we needed them, they were there for us."

Just over a year ago, Joan and Harvey took their final trip together, a cruise up the Rhine.

"It was a great trip. We really enjoyed travelling. We had been to Africa, Egypt, Costa Rica, Hawaii and all over Europe. London, England was one of our favourite cities and we made several trips there."

This past Thanksgiving, Harvey cooked his first turkey. His sons and their families – including five grandchildren – gathered around the table. To Harvey's surprise, the turkey turned out well.

"It was always Joan who did the cooking so I wasn't sure I could pull it off," he says smiling. "We had a good life together."

The Scarborough Hospital hires two full-time interpreters to better serve global community

The Scarborough Hospital now has two full-time, certified interpreters – one who speaks Tamil and one who speaks Mandarin and Cantonese – to better serve our global community.

"Since I joined the hospital, one of the main challenges I have heard consistently among staff is the difficulty in providing the best care experience to patients when language is a barrier to that care," says Waheeda Rahman, Director of Diversity, Equity and Stakeholder Outreach at The Scarborough Hospital. "By having two interpreters, the hospital is working towards removing linguistic barriers in serving the Scarborough population."

The Scarborough Hospital serves a diverse community in which two-thirds of residents are a visible minority and more than half the population speak a first language other than English or French.

"We want to ensure that all of our patients have access to care. We want them to feel comfortable communicating with their healthcare provider in their own language," says Waheeda.

The Tamil-speaking interpreter is based in the hospital's General campus emergency department and the Cantonese

and Mandarin speaking interpreter is based in the Birchmount campus emergency department. They are available to assist with communication between hospital staff and patients and their families in the emergency department and throughout the hospital. The interpreters – whose services are confidential – are also available to provide interpretation for domestic violence cases.

The hospital is committed to meeting the unique needs of each and every patient. While the full-time interpreters help ease the process for many patients, the hospital also has several resources available to ensure accurate communication for patients who speak other languages. Telephone interpretation services are available at no cost to patients. For non-medical related conversations – like getting directions – the hospital's employees, physicians and volunteers speak over 100 languages.

Janaki is the Tamil-speaking interpreter based at The Scarborough Hospital's General campus. Janaki worked in Dubai for ten years before moving to Canada about a year ago to provide more opportunities for her twin daughters. As a new immigrant, she understands the diffi-



Tamil-speaking interpreter Janaki (left) is based in the emergency department at the General campus of The Scarborough Hospital, but can provide interpretation services for patients throughout the hospital. Here she interprets for a woman attending a diabetes education class.

culties and challenges many of our patients face.

"Many new immigrants, especially those who don't speak

English, are not aware of the resources available in the community and some are hesitant in asking because of the language bar-

rier," says Janaki. "It is my privilege as an interpreter to help our patients."

In addition to providing interpretation services for patients in the emergency department, Janaki can be pre-booked for appointments in other units and can assist in interpretation elsewhere in the hospital when available.

"Many patients are very happy to have somebody who can help out," says Janaki, who has a degree in chemistry and experience as a medical underwriter and medical transcriptionist. "They are so grateful and that's very rewarding."

Waheeda says she's committed to empowering patients by ensuring language is not a barrier to healthcare at The Scarborough Hospital.

New blog shares health advice with the world

Studies show that more and more people are turning to the Internet for health advice, yet the information available online can be difficult to verify.

The Scarborough Hospital recently developed a blog to share proactive health advice in an easy-to-use, searchable online forum. The Top Tips for Staying Healthy blog contains advice and health tips from its own healthcare professionals, branded with the hospital's

name.

The idea is to provide reliable advice for site visitors that builds upon the hospital's reputation, drives traffic to the website and positions staff as experts in their fields. Other social networking channels, such as Twitter and Facebook, are being successfully used to promote the blog and to expand the reach of the audience.

Recent topics have included reasons to be tested for prostate

cancer, tips for protecting the frail elderly and tips for minimizing your risk of osteoporosis.

The Top Tips for Staying Healthy blog also allows visitors to comment on posts and encourages two-way communication.

You can read the blog at <http://tshtoptips.wordpress.com>.

You can also enter your email address on the site to receive immediate alerts when new blog entries are posted.

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Durham Tamil Association Youth invites you all for their

10th Annual Kids Christmas Party

When: Sunday, December 5th, 2010

Location: OPG Ontario Power Generation info Centre
1675 Montgomery Park Road, Pickering

Time: 5:00pm to 8:00pm

What: Fun Christmas activities, games and snacks provided

* \$10.00 fee for each child participating including food, activities and gifts.

REMINDER!!!

Durham Tamil Association's Youth is asking YOU to donate to their Food Drive

There are many less fortunate people in the community who want to have a happy Christmas this year. You can help those in need. The following donations will be towards Charitable Organizations in Durham. We kindly ask you to bring any non-perishable food items. Please give generously and make a Happy Christmas for everyone this year.

FREE TAMIL CLASSES

(WHITBY & OSHAWA)

Durham Continuing Education and the Durham Tamil Association are excited to announce that Tamil Language classes are now available in Whitby on Wednesday evenings from 6:00 to 8:30 PM

Anderson Collegiate

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Call Durham Continuing Education at 905.436.3211 or 1.800.408.9619. or DTA 905.428.7007

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DTA extends their sincere thanks to all their volunteers, sponsors, Monsoon Journal readers for all their support for making 2010 a successful

10th Anniversary for

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Required commitment is 8-16 hours per week.

Though these are Volunteer positions, an honorarium of \$150/month will be given to selected candidates. Certificates for completed hours will also be provided.

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"MAVEERAR NAAL" IN TORONTO

Thousands of attendees in Toronto paid homage marking the "Heroes Day" at the Markham Fair Grounds north of Toronto, on Nov 27th, 2010.

Similar gatherings were reportedly organized by Tamils around the globe as well on this day.

Moments from the events held in Toronto are featured on Ninaivukal.com





Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham (TCASD) Youth

Durham Tamil Cultural & Academic Society participates in Santa Claus Parade

Wing headed to the Ajax Santa Clause Parade on Nov 13th evening. This was a proud moment for TCASD because this was first year for a Tamil float to enter in the parade. A 40 Feet float was decorated in the theme

of "The Night before Christmas" The float was decorated with lots of lights ready for Santa with cookies, carrots and milk. Most of the kids were in the float. All the youth and adults walked and handed out Christmas candies to

the kids in the viewers section. All the TCASD kids and youth hope for Santa to bring lots of goodies, love and peace around the world. Everyone had a wonderful time. TCASD thanks the Town of Ajax for the opportunity

to be part of such an amazing festive celebration. Thanks are also due to Abiramie Shamuganathan for decorating the float according to the theme. TCASD wishes everyone a very happy holiday!





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TCASD Academic Awards and Volunteer Recognition Night

With great pride, Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham (TCASD) hosted its 2nd Annual Academic Awards and Volunteer Recognition Night on Nov 21st, 2010 at the West Shore Community Centre in Pickering. It was a wonderful feeling to be celebrating the contribution and achievements of our children. Fulfilling one of TCASD's objectives, Awards and Volunteer Recognition Night is an initiative of TCASD that aims to encourage Tamil youth and children to become positive contributors to the society and to promote higher education.

This ceremony celebrated and recognized many aspects of achievement that students accomplish including Academics, Community Service and Leadership and Arts and culture. We believe it is important have a dedicated night to reflect and celebrate the successes and the contribution of our children and youth. By recognizing the dedication, commitment and achievements we are boosting their morale, increase productivity, enthusiasm and fostering great leaders of tomorrow.

We want to build a good character of our children and provide opportunity to discover the hidden talents from each and every child in all aspects. Also our children need to be challenged and TCASD offers a variety of opportu-

nities. Competition serves as a platform for students to showcase their intellect and creativity. We sure did see that with our Science fair projects essay writings and Math contest. In arts and culture, TCASD offers prospects to all children to participate in the community events show their artistic talents such as cultural dances, vocal and instrumental.

Contributing to the society is valuable. Volunteering is a great way to connect with the community, be open minded, to embrace wisdom learned from others and also let the experience of volunteering lead to personal inner growth. It is also a big part of building vibrant and diverse community. Volunteering allows one to discover themselves and bring out hidden abilities that may never been identified.

We were very grateful to have diverse well qualified guests to present the awards. They are the role models and motivation for our youth. Sincere thanks to our chief guest Dr. Bentley-Taylor, senior Cardiologist and Internal Medicine Specialist at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre (Toronto) and Toronto East General Hospital (Toronto). He is not only known for his excellent medical practices but for his passion for volunteerism. He has worked in many health-related missions in China for 10 years and in Africa for 8 years in cardiology. Our Honorary

Guest Dr. Christopher Collins SHARCNET Research Chair in the Faculty of Science at UOIT. Our special guests include, Mr. Joe Dickson, MPP for Ajax-Pickering, Councillor Colleen Jordan Regional Councillor for Ajax Wards 3 & 4. Luigia Ayotte, Superintendent of Program Services with Durham District School Board, Dr. Mannivannan Chemistry professor at Jarvis Collegiate, Mrs. Clark-Boutilier, Nursing Manager at Ajax Pickering Hospital, Mr. Kubes Navaratnam, LLB, Sherri Gauvreau, Executive Director for Ajax Soccer Team and Ken Burgess, Vice President of Ajax Soccer Team and Roland Rutland, Bhai Community External Affairs.

TCASD offers its sincere thanks to the chair of Academic Awards and Volunteer Recognition Night Committee Mrs. Susila Pathmanathan for a great evening.

Awards that were presented consisted of a: Math Contest, Science Contest, English Essay Contest, General Knowledge, Community Participation Award, Soccer Participation Award/Trophy, Believe in You 2010 show participation Award, Dedicated Senior Award, Dedicated Mother Award, Dedicated Father Award, University Scholarship Award, Community Partners Awards



children went on a Costume Runway encouraged by their parents. It was great to see all the children smile and have wonderful time.

Seen here are some pictures of the get-together.

TCASD Youth Wing organizes a Ghostly Gettogether for Kids



Youth boys in their costumes



Let's carve the pumpkin



Minoja in Batman Costume



Dr. Bentley-Taylor presenting to Tanusan Ramanasingam



Dr. Collins presenting to Jathika Mahadaya



Mr. Joe Dickson, MPP Ajax - Pickering presenting the Dedicated Volunteer Award to Renuka Swaminathan



Some of the award recipients

TCASD Up-Coming Major Events

- TCASD is offering free Yoga Classes for seniors and five free sessions for others, for more information please contact 905-493-0160
- Family Holiday Celebration, December 18th, 2010
- Thai Pongal Celebration, January 15th, 2011
- Health and Healing Seminar for seniors, Adults and Youth, Jan 29th, 2011
- Summer Employment and Volunteer Seminar, Feb 5th, 2011



Gods Own Children Foundation updates on Mobile Library

Letter from the Chairman to European Union Delegation

25 November 2010

Ms Sandali Wijayatilleke

Trade, Press & Information

European Union Delegation,
Sri Lanka

26 Sir Marcus Fernando
Mawatha . Colombo 7

Dear Ms Wijeyatileke,

On behalf of Gods Own Children Foundation, I am pleased to forward you the following:

1. A Report from the Chief Librarian - Jaffna Public Library, on the Inauguration and implementation of the Mobile Library Service in the Jaffna Peninsula.

2. A List of Schools visited by the Mobile Library Service during October 2010.

Yaso

GOCF Project Co ordinator for liaising with the Officials of the Jaffna Public Library, has provided the following information, which we are listing here in summary

format.

1. The Mobile Library Service has been well accepted and is popular among school students and teachers.

2. There has been an increase of Teachers visiting the Jaffna public Library since the mobile Library commenced.

3. We can reconfirm the Library statistics that Reading Habits have increased among the Jaffna Student and Teacher Population.

On behalf of Gods Own Children Foundation, the Jaffna Public Library, the Student and Teacher Community of the Jaffna Peninsula, I take this opportunity to thank the European Union for Funding the Mobile Library Service in the Jaffna Peninsula.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. B. Anandkumar

Chairman - Gods Own Children Foundation

Jaffna Public Library
National Reading Month Program

Mobile Library service conducted to mark the National Reading Month 2010. This service was conducted with the sponsorship of Gods Own Children and the aid of European Union.

The inauguration was conducted on 07.10.2010 in Jaffna Public Library. His Majesty of Jaffna Youth Welfare Commissioner Mr. Was. Prabhakaran of J.I. with the Chief Librarian of this programme. A MOU was signed in this function between Jaffna Municipal Council and European Union to set up a collection centre in Jaffna Public Library.

The Mobile Library Service was inaugurated by the EU's Sri Lanka Representative and His Majesty of service, was given to J. Camperman M.M.V. The principal, the teachers and the students warmly welcomed the service and more than 200 students and teachers used the service satisfactorily on that day.

The service was conducted according to the list of Schools selected by Gods Own Children and Director of Education. Most of the schools used this service with very attention. We observed most of the schools have good library facilities. Some have no library. These are very poor students learning in these schools also. They were very glad when this service was given to them.

Totally 22 schools benefited from this service. Most of the schools made request to continue this service. Some schools requested for 2000 of books through this service.

It is also observed that the students were unable to reach Jaffna Library and hence their school library facilities encouraged to read through this service.

After the Mobile Library Service conducted to schools, most of the schools visited to Jaffna Library and used the Library for more times in their educational year. Most of the students made requests for TV. Educational programme on their visit to this Library. Nearly 2000 students and teachers benefited from this service. We think the reading habits developed up to 25% from this service.

I strongly state that the aim of this service was attained successfully.

Mobile Library service were rendered to the following schools during this month. (List attached)

Chief Librarian,
Jaffna Public Library

The Schools visited	
1. 07.10.2010	J. Camperman M.M.V.
2. 08.10.2010	J. Nalle R.E.G.S
	J. Nalle Senior C.C.T.M.S.
	J. Nalle Mahaveer Mahaveer V.
3. 11.10.2010	J. Kondeil C.C.T.M.S.
	J. Kondeil Panamulla V.L.
	J. Kondeil C.C.T.M.S.
4. 12.10.2010	J. Nalle Goddava V.L.
	J. Nalle Kankilai V.L.
	J. Nalle R.C.T.M.S.
	J. Thiruvady H.T.M.S.
5. 13.10.2010	J. Nalle Saranath V.
	J. Arunagal Maligala V.
	J. Arunagal Nandan Kattalinga V.
	J. Kopy Saranathalinga V.
6. 18.10.2010	J. Kopy Nalle V.
	J. Kopy North R.C.T.M.S.
	J. Kopy South R.C.T.M.S.
	J. Kopy South Kankilai V.L.
7. 19.10.2010	J. Uthrali M.M.V.
	J. Chundikuli R.T.M.S.
	J. Uthrali Uthrali C.T.M.S.
8. 20.10.2010	J. Kankilai G.T.M.S.
	J. Uthrali R.C.T.M.S.
	J. Uthrali A.M.T.M.S.
	J. Uthrali M.M.V.
9. 21.10.2010	J. Puzhalakudiyawa M.M.V.
	J. Puzhalakudiyawa U.L.M.S.
10. 25.10.2010	J. Puzhalakudiyawa V.
	J. Marthandapuram R.C.T.M.S.
	J. Marthandapuram R.C.G.S.
11. 29.10.2010	J. Camperman M.M.V.

Chief Librarian
Jaffna Public Library

X'Mas Season Unfolds in the GTA with Carol-Services

Many Sri Lankan School Alumni Associations busy themselves with organising carol-services starting as early as the first week of November culminating in the Christmas celebrations on December 25th. It gives an opportunity for all of them to use their talents and resources to celebrate the advent of Christ. They also give the chance for the elders in the community to train the younger generation in the art of Tamil cultural arts and music so that they could imbibe them effectively and propagate them for generations. The Drieberg College, Chavakachcheri gave as presentation of carol singing at the Bridle Park Church at Scarborough last Saturday which proved to be a grand community effort. It will be followed up by other alumni associations like those of Eagle Christian Fellowship, Jaffna College and Uduvil Girls' College; Chundikuli and St. John's Colleges, Sri Lankan Schools and Colleges, All Tamil Churches and Tamil Christian Church of Canada spread over a period of seven weeks.

The curtain raiser, Drieberg College Alumni's carol service was a blessing to all those who participated. Ebenezer Thevasagayam who organised the program did a splendid work. He was able to



bring all, the talents at his disposal and provide a rich spiritual experience through songs, dances and music. The dance cum carol-singing was a novel feature that was appreciated by all the members of the congregation. Rev. Selvaratnam who gave a humorous and inspirational message said that Christmas must make us to absorb its true meaning. We must grow up to the measure of the fullness of Jesus Christ. He stressed on the need for vision on the word of the Lord in thought, word and deed. It is not just a celebration.

The Christmas -based programs took a different format when The Eagle Christian Fellowship in collaboration with the Alumni Associations of St. John's and Chundikuli Girls' College to present Choreographed Musical Drama entitled 'The Love Story' staged at the

Markham Theatre for Performing Arts on Sunday. The story was built round the theme of the sacrificial love of a soldier who died in a recent war. The producer was able to draw talents and resources from various corners of the GTA to create a presentation which gave a memorable spiritual experience to the audience. The scenes that compose the drama brings into focus the major stories- the Creation story, the Birth Story, the Redemption Story- as depicted in the Bible to provide a wonderful display of human and divine love. The introduction of Tamil cultural forms into the main program is a welcome feature. The artistic and spectacular classical dance to the tune of "Marithaalum Pizhaippan" had nuances of meaning both spiritual and temporal.

These Christmas-based programs provide opportunity for the spiritual, social and cultural interests of the participants. Members of the Tamil community who live in various parts of the GTA, country or even continent are brought together to enjoy Christian and community fellowship. It is indeed a great privilege for the community to get together and witness to His glory and grace in various patterns of praise and song.

By: jja

'Thamizhar Sangamam' & 33rd AGM of Sangam

The Sangam celebrated the 'Thamizhar Sangamam' along with our 33rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Monmouth Junction, New Jersey on Friday Nov. 19th and Saturday Nov 20th 2010 to renew the ties of our community and to present programs of interest to our members and well-wishers. The Sangam invited all the Tamil organizations in North America, such as the NJTS, USTPAC, TAG, TGTE, CTC, FETNA and WTO to participate in the Thamizhar Sangamam. The US Tamil Political Action Council, an advocacy and political action group, also held its AGM at the same venue.

The event was very successful with participation from many different Tamil organizations. There were a wide variety of programs such as lectures on Tamil literature, classical dance, speeches, informative sessions, panel discussions and a music program. Due to overwhelming response, the reserved capacity of the banquet hall was reached and the online registration was closed 5 days ahead of the event.

"The Sangam event was well-attended, interesting and smoothly run, and compares well to some of the best programs of previous years," said one long-time Sangam member. A more recent member noted that he particularly enjoyed the youth mixer on Friday where he reconnected with old friends and made new ones.

A prominent member of the Indian American community was given the year's honorary award for "service to the Tamil people," noting that other members of the Indian community have also contributed their time, energy and expertise on an exceptional scale. Tamil Nadu politician Vaiko of the MDMK gave an enthusiastically received keynote address to the assembled members and guests via video link, while TGTE PM V.

Rudrakumaran gave a second keynote in person to wide applause. The UK Tamils Against Genocide spokesperson, Jan Jananaygam gave the first afternoon keynote on the general political ideology used to frame the Sri Lanka situation by the international community. During the second afternoon keynote, Canadian Tamil Congress officer Gary Anandasangaree discussed ways for us to join the international discussion more vigorously in United Nations bodies, etc., and exhorted us to self-reflection and self-criticism in how we deal with the wider world.

A wide variety of programs to please all tastes and to stimulate discussion followed each other in smooth succession throughout the two days, beginning with a youth mixer and a well-acclaimed new film done by a Tamil Canadian on Friday, followed on Saturday by, among many others, "Leading a Purposeful Life: the PuraNaaNuru and Tirukkural, etc.," a panel on crimes against humanity, a film on Muttukumaran who self-immolated in India in 2008 to bring attention to the coming tragedy for Tamils, a panel on humanitarian efforts on the island, a presentation on their work by the World Tamil Organization, a light-hearted, yet competitive sari auction, singing, dance, light music, good food, good company and a general wonderful time.

The Thamizhar Sangamam was well-attended by Tamil Americans from all over the country, who came together to celebrate our community in all its multiple facets

Undoubtedly the success of the AGMs will be followed by many more in future years.

For more information, please email secretary@sangam.org or visit www.sangam.org

The Harvest Dream of Fr. Michael Rodrigo: Bread of life for the people of Uva

By Eymard de Silva Wijeyeratne

"Ah look at those lovely people
Eleanor Rigby picks up the rice in the church
Where a wedding has been,
Lives in a dream,
Waits at the window, wearing the face that she
Keeps in a jar by the door, who is it for?
Eleanor Rigby died in the church and was
Buried along with her name.
Nobody came.

Fr. Mckenzie, wiping the dirt from his hands,
As he walks from the grave,
No one was saved."

(John Lennon and Paul McCartney)

It is with a sense of indignation mixed with sadness that I write this memorial note on the life and work of Fr. Michael Rodrigo, who was assassinated on 10th November 1987. I do this, not merely to sing the praises of a Catholic priest, but also to draw attention to the social commitment of a man who sacrificed his life in the process of reducing his own dimension to enhance the dimension of national life devoid of religious and ethnic divisions.

The life of a Christian priest, especially a Catholic one, is a damming of a stream of consciousness into segmented parts: one part, articulated with spiritual exercises and routines of discipline that control emotions and abjure participation in worldly activities, and the other part spent in ordering spiritual activities that deal with liturgical services and rites relating to the needs of the faithful. Unfortunately, in the routine run of life, when ordinary men and women toil hard to feed their children, and struggle to keep body and soul together in conditions of abject poverty, there are others, who because they are anaesthetized by wealth and political/social influence, function as 'sapient sutlers' (T.S. Eliot) of the lords. At this point they get disengaged from the throbbing mass of humanity, which they are expected to serve but to which they scarcely belong. Fr. Michael was a rare exception.

Family and Social Background

Fr. Michael was born of a middle class family that had no special claims to the fruits of the earth. The secret of his unusual character as a Catholic priest was perhaps that his father was a virtuous man of Methodist stock, while his mother held on to the austere values of the Magnificat – a woman, who could through her steadfastness, say that everything in creation had done great things to her. A large part of those great things was her beloved son.

He was educated at St. Peter's College, Colombo; the school I was privileged to attend. This school imparted a sound education to generations of students, among whom were those who belonged to less privileged families that lived beyond the boundaries of the South of Colombo. After being ordained as a priest, Fr. Michael continued with his theological studies; obtaining a doctorate from the Institut Catholique de Paris (ICP). On returning to Sri Lanka he was appointed a lecturer at the National Seminary. Soon thereafter, he received an offer from ICP to be a Professor of Theology. He declined

this offer in order to work with Bishop Leo Nanayakkara, in the Badulla Diocese.

His Mission and His Message

Fr. Michael was a rare exception in that he opted to exercise his priestly duties outside the limits of a parish, a school or other religious institution. He realised that Christianity as conventionally practised in Sri Lanka as well as other parts of the world, lacked the sublime Jesus-vitality that has a benign influence on humanity: this being his macro-interpretation of the second part of what Jesus called the greatest commandment "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:29-31, Luke 10: 25- 28, Matthew 22: 34-40).

If Christians constitute a very small percentage of Sri Lanka's population, he asked how one could explain the meaningful balance of God's creation. With the approval and assistance of Bishop Leo Nanayakkara, Fr. Michael established a Christian-Buddhist Dialogue Centre which he called Suba Seth Gedera, in Alukavila, Buttala in lower Uva. He maintained close contact with the people in the surrounding villages, engaging in ceaseless activity as their mentor, counsellor and companion in distress.

He also maintained a running dialogue with Buddhist monks in the area. At the start of his mission in Buttala, the villagers and Buddhist monks in the area were sceptical about his motives and those of his co-workers. In fact one monk is said to have remarked that it would not be long before he started pouring the waters of baptism on unsuspecting villagers. The sincerity of his motives and his carefully designed programme of work in the village finally convinced these monks, that in him they had found a loyal and sincere partner in pursuing the goal of moral regeneration and joint social validation of religion.

The major feature of Fr. Michael's life and mission was that he tried hard to teach Christians the distinction between claiming to be Christian and trying to become Christian through finite, but unceasing attempts to practise Gospel values. A true Christian, as Fr. Michael so effectively demonstrated through his life and mission, is a person, who after an initial leap of faith, engages in the continuous process of becoming Christian and in doing so gets progressively closer to God. On the other hand, he endeavoured to teach non-Christians that being true to the values of their own religion was more rewarding than to switch religions for the sake of personal gain.

His Passover to Martyrdom

According to those who lived and worked with Fr. Michael, a businessman of area was shot at, by persons alleged to be insurgents, on 4th November 1987. This incident took place at the height of insurgent activity in the South. The same night at about 11.30 p.m. about 12 armed men are said to



Fr. Michael Rodrigo

have surrounded Fr. Michael's lowly quarters and called out to him, saying that they were the police. When he opened the door, the armed men had told him that they had information that he was hiding the businessman's assailants.

The armed men had then searched the quarters and looked through all documents, which included his theological treatises, poems and other writings, in the hope of finding evidence that would have incriminated him in insurgent activity. When they had failed to find such evidence they had left the premises.

The next morning (5th November) the armed men had turned up again and said that they were the ones who had come the previous night. They had told Fr. Michael that they had received several petitions against him. He had responded by requesting them to ask the people in the village about the type of activity he was engaged in. The armed men had replied saying that JVP indoctrination classes were being conducted in his house. Fr. Michael and his co-workers had explained to these men that the classes they conducted were literacy-enhancing and farmer-education programmes. This process of investigative visits and interrogation had continued for a few more days, with a final threat that he should abandon his mission.

Fr. Michael was more overwhelmed by the suffering, which poor villagers were forced to endure than by the threats made by the armed men. He made the abject poverty of the villagers a part of his own life. He was convinced that the type of market-economy of which the government of the day was enamoured, would in no way alleviate their suffering. He thought that their citizenry was being threatened to the point that they were expected to provide the grist for the market-mill that will grind them as supply-side fodder. Their suffering was made unendurable by the fact that they, especially the young boys, were under constant suspicion of being insurgents.

The brave NGOs whose hearts undergo spasms of conscience-flutter at the mention of the word 'refugee' were nowhere in sight to plead on their behalf. At this point of time Fr. Michael and his small community of helpers realised that they risked death if they continued with their work in the area. When

threats were directed at him on the grounds that he like his Master, was undermining the Pharisaic social establishment, he had sufficient warning and time, to run away to a well-manored religious house, where life as well as peace of mind would never be under threat and where spirituality would be confined to meditation, prayer and a constant vision of an idyllic after-life.

The community had to take a prompt decision whether to abandon their life's mission at Suba Seth Gedera or to carry on with their work. Before doing this they realised that their mission demanded discussion, meditation and prayer, as well as taking into consideration the wishes of the villagers, whom they had decided to serve. Fr. Michael told his co-workers that he would abide by their collective decision even though his personal preference was to stay on and face the consequences of his commitment.

The people of the village had also declared their wish that Fr. Michael and his community should remain. The final decision was to be taken after the celebration of the Eucharist by the members of the community on 10th November 1987. As though in the grip of a premonition of his fate, Fr. Michael had, with overpowering anguish, intoned Psalm 130; "Out of the depths I cry to you O Lord; Lord hear my voice"! While bringing the service to a close, he had exhorted the members of the community in the following words, "After all, the lasting things are love and relationship with people. These things will last even in eternity. Don't be afraid, we will commit ourselves to God. He added, "Into your hands O Lord I commit my spirit".

It was nearly 7.30 in the evening, when the sound of a gunshot at close range reverberated in the room. Fr. Michael's skull and brain lay shattered on the floor. His flesh was laid impasto on the walls of the room and his blood splashed on the vessels used for the celebration of the Eucharist. His Passover from a purposeful life to an avoidable death was accomplished. Meanwhile, the mitred ones had chosen the easy path of wiping the dirt from their hands, in the way that Fr. Mckenzie of the Beatle ballad did. Fr. Michael was buried alone with his name.

His Sublime Theology – God in the Midst of His People

Fr. Michael sacrificed his life, not for stubbornly defending dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church, but for living Christ in the intimacy of unshakeable faith: by motivating, energising, showing concern for and defending every human being irrespective of his faith. As far as I am aware, the officialdom of the Church to which he belonged and loved so much, did not appear to have been moved by his death. Perhaps it may have been a little relieved in the subconscious depths of its much-vaunted magisterium that an un-Roman source of embarrassment to its illusions of grandeur, had been struck off the roll.



Fr. Michael was in the habit of making notes of the intimate thoughts that found their way into his mind as he engaged himself in dialogue with the peasants with whom he associated. The language he used was quaint but simple. It was as he himself said in many of his writings, dislocated into meaning. He favoured the metaphor of the Passover: moving imperceptibly from the revelation of lamb-blood sprinkled on door-posts as a sign of protection, to human blood, shed to protect and sustain truth.

His own precious blood, splattered on the altar on which he celebrated the Eucharist, proclaimed the final chapter of a Passover, which the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka has failed to celebrate as the noblest and finest Jesus-entrenching event in the history of that institution, in 20th Century Sri Lanka. When going through these notes, one experiences the exhilarating shock that God had decided to journey downwards to savour roots and enjoy the fragrance of soil that that has been turned over with human hands to produce bread that is also the work of human hands. Fr. Michael's concern for the environment was enchantingly bucolic rather than pretentiously technical. It reminds one of what a Latin poet once said: "Vitaque mancipio nulli datur" (Nature does no more than lend). He spoke to people about living and sharing what they imagined as being their exclusive possession.

Now let me dwell on the relevance of the Beatles ballad, which is quoted as an introduction to this essay of appreciation. It describes the routine time-table of the average priest, who in compliance with commands from the top is expected to defend territory rather than to serve his people with sense of anguish for their needs, hopes and fears. The lovely but lonely people, who take their faces out of a jar on Sundays, days of obligation, feast days, put them back on other days when Jesus Christ is not in focus and is therefore ecclesially dead.

Where do all these lovely people come from and where do they all go? Their lives, their loves, their hunger and their thirst are not Fr. McKenzie's business. Being always vigilant, alert and ready for vertical take-off, he must through no fault of his own, only talk about God. He too is lonely because he is curbed by the trivial unctious and the exaggerated sense of pomp and propriety to which he must subscribe.

Yes, Fr. McKenzie cannot shepherd his flock together; he cannot lead them to pastures green. In their pilgrimage from the sublime to the ridiculous, they move from 'pastures green' where sheep may safely graze' to laity-mowed lawns, at which holy cows may safely gaze to enjoy a pleasing prospect in the midst of an asphalt jungle.

(November 10th is the 23rd anniversary of Fr. Michael Rodrigo's assassination. This article first appeared in "The Island")



Christmas Strengthens Family Relations

RELATIONS - 5

Festival Celebration is primarily a family affair. May it be a New Year celebration, Thanksgiving Day or Christmas festival, meeting and greeting friends and families is an essential part of the celebration. Eating together and exchanging gifts helps warming up and strengthening the relations in an effective manner.

When we talk of the festivals, Christmas is the first name that comes in mind. Christmas is one of the biggest festival celebrated the world over. Not only the Christians but the followers of other religions also celebrate this festival with the same enthusiasms as the Christians do. It is quite surprising that this festival is celebrated in all parts of the world. How this festival became so popular! In fact there is a history of more than 4000 years behind it.

The word 'Christmas' is associated with Christ's birth. It literally means "Christ's mass" which is derived from the middle English term Christemasse. Hence the word "Christmas" translates to "Mass of Christ". The story of Christmas begins with the birth of a babe in Bethlehem. In general understanding, in the early Greek versions of the New Testament, the letter Chi, symbolizes the first letter of Christ. Since the mid-16th century the Roman letter X has been used as an abbreviation for Christ. Hence, Xmas is often used as an abbreviation for Christmas.

The history of Christmas dates back over 4000 years. It is believed that many of Christmas traditions like exchanging gifts, decorating trees, and burning of the Yule log were all winter traditions and began even before Christ was born, but were eventually incorporated into the holiday that became known as Christmas, and became part of Christmas history. Christmas, as we know is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, which happened over 2000 years ago. However, the celebration of the Christmas holiday did not start right away.

Christmas History goes way back to middle of winters. It is believed that Christ was born on the 25th, although the exact month is considered to be unknown. December was likely chosen so that the Catholic Church could compete with rival pagan rituals held at that time of the year. Because of its closeness with the winter solstice in the Northern hemisphere, it was considered to be a traditional time of celebration among many ancient cultures.

Also over 4000 years ago, the Mesopotamians used to celebrate each new year with a 12-day festival, called Zagmuth. The Mesopotamians believed in many gods. They held this festival in support of their chief God, Marduk. They believed that Marduk used to battle with the monsters of chaos at the beginning of each winter. It is from this festival that the 12 days of Christmas is believed to have originated.

The ancient Romans held a celebration each year in honor of their God Saturn. The Romans called this festival – Saturnalia. Saturnalia used to begin in the middle of December and last until the first of January. The

Romans used to decorate their homes with garlands and trees upon which they hung candles. During the festival the citizens of Rome used to visit each other's homes and hold great feasts. One of the theories of how the tradition of the giving of Christmas gifts came about was from the Roman practice of exchanging gifts between family and neighbors during the festival of Saturnalia to promote good luck.

During the winter in ancient Scandinavia for some days the sun would not shine. Upon the return of the first sunlight, the Scandinavians used to hold a festival called the Yuletide. A Yule log was burned in a special fire, and everyone gathered around the fire and held a great feast. To remind themselves that the spring and summer would surely return again, people in some areas of Scandinavia would tie apples to tree branches. Perhaps the proverb – 'If winter comes, can spring be far behind', is a byproduct of this system.

The tradition of the Christmas tree is believed to have come into existence from this and from the Roman ritual of decorating trees with candles. During the festival of Christmas, entrance of trees began in 16th-century in Germany where fir trees were decorated with apples, roses, gilded candies, and colored paper. In the middle ages, a popular religious play depicted the story of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden which also somewhere relates to Christmas celebrations.

The Christmas Tree was brought to England by Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert from his native Germany. The famous Illustrated News etching in 1848, featuring the Royal Family of Victoria, Albert and their children gathered around a Christmas tree in Windsor Castle, that popularized the tree throughout Victorian England.

There is also a belief that the tradition of singing carols began when people in Scandinavia sang celebration songs on the Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year, which happened around December 22nd.

One another theory about the evolution of the winter celebrations connected to the celebration of the birth of Jesus is that the Roman emperor Constantine, who converted to Christianity, wanted to incorporate the pagan winter rituals together with the celebration of Jesus' birth. In this way, Constantine hoped to help both pagans and Christians celebrate together. Many believe that this is the reason for celebrating the birth of Christ on December 25th. There is another theory which indicates that Jesus was not actually born on, or even close to, December 25th. Eventually, the Roman church became almost completely successful in making the December celebration only about the birth of Christ, replacing any celebrations that were in honor of pagan gods.

Though the celebration of Christmas is basically based on the same belief today, it is not celebrated in exactly the same way in every country. In Great Britain, one tradition they observe during the Christmas

season is "Boxing Day". On Boxing Day, the boxes containing alms for the poor are opened at every church and the alms are distributed to the poor. An alternate theory to the origin of carols is that they originated in Great Britain and not Scandinavia. Whether or not this is true, many of the Christmas songs that we sing and Christmas music that we hear in modern times were written in 19th century England.

It is believed that British painter John Callcott Horsley designed the first Christmas card in 1843. Horsley designed the card for his friend Sir Henry Cole, who was the first director of the Victoria and Albert museum. The card showed a family celebrating Christmas, and read "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to You". The tradition caught on quickly in England, and it was not long before the first Christmas cards began showing up in the United States and other countries as well.

History of Christmas can not be completed without mentioning Santa Claus. Bishop Nicholas of Smyrna, who lived in the 4th century A.D. in what is now known as Turkey, was a very wealthy and generous man, who especially loved children. He was known to throw gifts into the houses of poor children in order to brighten their spirits. He was later titled Saint Nicholas, and became the patron saint of children and seafarers. From his story evolved the legend of Santa Claus – the jolly man who brings gifts to children all over the world on Christmas Eve. St. Nicholas became the patron saint of Russia, where he was known by his red cap, big white beard.

After his death thousands of churches across Europe were dedicated to him and some time around the 12th century an official church holiday was created in his honor. The Feast of St. Nicholas was celebrated December 6 and the day was marked by gift-giving and charity. In England he came to be known as Father Christmas and in China he is known as Dun Che Lao Ren, which means "Christmas Old Man". Many believe that the giving of gifts originates from the deeds of Bishop Nicholas, and not the Roman

tradition of giving gifts during the festival of Saturnalia. More likely, the tradition evolved from both practices.

After the Reformation, European followers of St. Nicholas dwindled, but the legend was kept alive in Holland where the Dutch spelling of his name Sint Nikolaas was eventually transformed to Sinterklaas. Dutch children would leave their wooden shoes by the fireplace, and Sinterklaas would reward good children by placing treats in their shoes. Dutch colonists brought this tradition with them to America in the 17th century and here the Anglican name of Santa Claus emerged.

With all these great incidents, today we celebrate the festival of love, peace & unity. That is the way how celebrations become traditions and traditions becomes systems. These systems become part of the family rituals and that gives birth to festivals. When these festivals are joined with religion, they become a community affair. When communities celebrate a festival together, people accept them as part of their social life.

Celebrating festivals together, exchanging gifts and sweets, sending good wishes to known and unknown people, holding social get-togethers brings people of the world closer. The same thing can be associated with families. On festivals the families get closer. They meet, greet, eat and exchange gifts. That is the way they warm up and strengthen their relations.

Many people consider Christmas a date most suitable for their marriage.



By Prof. Saran Ghai

If you too are planning to marry on this Christmas, accept our good wishes and if still looking for a suitable life partner, don't shy, call me. May be I know the person who could be your best life partner.

- Prof. Saran Ghai

If you or anyone you know is in the marriageable age 18 plus, and needs help in finding a suitable life partner, contact me. Similarly, if you or anyone known to you is of older age, I mean within approx 45-65 years age group, is alone and is looking for a suitable life partner should contact me. I would like to say to the older age people 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?"

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Tamil Arts and Culture celebrates its 10th anniversary in the Waterloo region



Waterloo: Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo region's annual Tamil performing Arts festival had a gala opening at the Humanities Theatre, University of Waterloo on the 23rd of October. The festival opened with a tribute song for Tamil culture and to Canada by the local Tamil school children. Next was a clarinet thavil music recital. Visiting South Indian musicians lead by "Clarinet Everest" Dr.A.K.C Natarajan, Kalaimamani Mannargudi Vasudevan, Swamimali Gurunathan and Mr. A.Murugathas of

Nathaswara Thavil International of Toronto. Mr. Murugathas is the son of Nagaswara vidwan Yalpanam P.S. Arumugam Pillai. It was followed by a Baratha Natyam dance performance from Laya Lasya Dance studio of Cambridge. Mr. Prakash Venkataraman, the president of the association welcomed the guests and stressed the importance of preserving our language, arts and culture. He went further the need to unite as Tamils to build bonds in this multicultural society.

Students of Sri Abiramy Dance

academy of Waterloo performed the classical dance program. The chief guest was Hon. Gary Goodyear, Minister of State for Science and Technology and special guest was Kavinayagar Kanthavanam. South Indian musical program was performed by "Miruthanga Saistharam" of Toronto. Kitchener teacher, Mrs. Shyamala Ramachandran's students performed classical music followed by a Fusion dance.

The event was supported by City of kitchener, City of Waterloo, City of Cambridge and other com-

mercial establishments. Sri Lankan and South Indian food was provided by courtesy of Datta Food Mfg of Toronto. Close to 500-600 guests from the waterloo region, City of Guelph and Toronto the event. Miss. Vanchchitha Sujanthan was the master of ceremony.

The association was established in 1989 and the cultural nite festival commenced in the year 2001. The membership represents the community of kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge and Guelph.



"HOPE" DURING FESTIVE SEASON MEANS A LOT TO TAMIL VOLUNTEERS

Waterloo: Festive season brings hope and joy to children around the world. Operation Christmas Child is a way for Canadians to share the joy of Christmas with children living in countries that have been ravaged by war, famine, extreme poverty, disease, or natural disaster.

The volunteers from the Waterloo region collect shoe boxes filled with toys, books and

other items and repack for shipment overseas. Tamil cultural association of waterloo region has been part of this project for over 10 years and volunteers have donated their time and money for this worthy cause.

A first time volunteer, Mrs. Rathy Abraham was thrilled to be part of the project. Self satisfaction and smile from a child is worth a lot for this volunteer. A

long time volunteer, Mrs. Nalinee Ramachandran of kitchener recalled the days she helped children during sports festival in Chennai, South India. Hope is all they had when competing in sports such as Table tennis and she was happy the small contribution she made. A close to 40 volunteers from the Tamil community were in action at the Waterloo centre.





TSH Foundation host Season of Giving on Nov 17

The Foundation's Season of Giving campaign aims to educate the community that the hospital has its own charity, and that strong communities build strong hospitals. But it isn't just a fundraising effort; the campaign gives patients and families the opportunity to give thanks to their hospital caregivers—physicians, nurses and other frontline staff, and volunteers—by filling in gift tags that are then posted in departments throughout the hospital. The Hospital and Foundation also gives thanks to its volunteers, who give of them-

selves throughout the year.

Many of the volunteers won prizes during the event participated by around 100 volunteers. Seen here are some of the winners and short speeches of appreciation by Michael Mazza, President & CEO, TSH Foundation and Ann Marie Males, Vice President, Patient Experience, TSH.

A small brief about Mr. Shanmugarajah - A Volunteer at TSH Foundation

K. Shanmugarajah is a retired Electronics Engineer from Sri Lanka who has also worked as a

Telecommunications Engineer in the United Arab Emirates. Now living in Canada, he is a member of the volunteer support team at Scarborough General Hospital, Birchmount campus. The volunteer services support the mission of the Scarborough Hospital by providing volunteer support to patients, families and staff in effort to achieve excellent patient care. Volunteers also take part in additional initiatives to raise funds and run many fund raising ventures for the hospital. Funds are also used to procure modern equipment, replace obsolete

equipment etc.

As part of his volunteer work, he has worked in the emergency room, helping patients reporting for emergency treatment. He says that he enjoyed meeting and greeting patients and found it rewarding to support them during their time of need by helping to direct their inquiries and, at times, translate requests. He is at present stationed in the outpatients department where he feels he is fulfilling an important role in helping in the OPD.

He has found volunteer work to be rewarding and is committed

to helping the Scarborough Hospital in their mission to achieve excellent patient care. He believes that with all the opportunities provided to new immigrants, South Asians in Canada have a responsibility to give back to their communities. He also recommends this type of volunteer work for students who wish to pursue a career, as it builds character, teaches valuable skills, and helps demonstrate humanitarian values. This will give students an advantage in their future studies and careers.



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