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Monsoon Journal

A parfait media publication

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Icon, trailblazer, legend and KING of POP

Michael Jackson dies at the age of 50.

Krishni Loganathan, B.A (Hons)
Quotes:
Michael Jackson: In late 2007, Jackson said the following of his work and future influence, "Music has been my outlet, my gift to all of the lovers in this world. Through it, my music, I know I will live forever."
Quincy Jones: "For Michael to be taken away from us so suddenly at such a young age, I just don't have the words," said Quincy Jones, who produced "Thriller." "He was the consummate entertainer and his contributions and legacy will be felt upon the world forever. I've lost my little brother today, and part of my soul has gone with him."
Lisa Marie Presley

"I am so very sad and confused with every emotion possible," Lisa Marie Presley said in a statement. "I am heartbroken for his children who I know were everything to him and for his family. This is such a massive loss on so many levels, words fail me."
Arnold Schwarzenegger: We lost a great entertainer and a pop icon. My thoughts and prayers go out to Michael Jackson's family, friends and fans.
P. Diddy: Michael Jackson showed me that you can actually see the beat. He made the music come to life!! He made me believe in magic. I will miss him!

Complete story in page 25



Rights Coalition urges Obama to initiate Sri Lanka War Crime investigations

A Coalition of six US-based Human Rights Organizations in a letter to U.S. President Obama wrote: "to address abuses associated with the recent fighting [in Sri Lanka's north], there is an urgent need for an independent, international commission of inquiry into many credible allegations of laws of war violations, including possible war crimes, by both sides, as well as illegitimate detentions.

Mr. President, we urge you to publicly call for an international commission of inquiry and to take necessary steps to achieve it. We also urge you to take steps for

the full protection of internally displaced persons, including independent access to camps, former areas of conflict and to conflict-affected civilians by humanitarian and human rights organizations and the media."

The Coalition included the Carter Center, American Jewish Council through its Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), International League for Human Rights (ILHR), Freedom House (FH), and Amnesty International (AI) representatives signed the letter.

Notice to patients and visitors of The Scarborough Hospital:

On the morning of July 8, 2009, The Scarborough Hospital's brand new Emergency Department will open in our newly constructed West Wing. Walk-in patients will no longer access the department from McCowan Road. Access to the new, larger Emergency Department will be from the west entrance, opposite the parking garage. Vehicles may access the Emergency Department drop-off or the parking

THE SCARBOROUGH HOSPITAL

garage via the Lawrence Avenue driveway.

More details in Pg 5 and 25

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Anglican Archbishop bishop urges Canadian government action on Sri Lanka

The head of the Anglican Church of Canada has urged the Canadian prime minister to lead international efforts to protect the civil liberties of Sri Lankans following a government victory over the rebel Tamil Tigers.

In a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper dated June 23, Archbishop Fred Hiltz called on the Canadian government to respond generously to the humanitarian needs of Tamils in the island nation's Vanni district.

Full text of a letter by Archbishop Fred Hiltz, the Anglican Primate, to Prime Minister Stephen Harper:

23 June 2009

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister's Office
Langevin Block 80 Wellington Street

Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3
Canada

Dear Prime Minister Harper,
We, the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada, write to urge the Government of Canada to assume leadership roles in international efforts to guarantee and protect the civil liberties of Sri Lankans at this critical time.

Specifically:

We call upon the Government of Canada to respond generously to the continuing humanitarian needs of Vanni Tamils, long deprived of basic commodities and securities, and more recently, exposed daily to the dangerous crossfire of Government and rebel forces. Thousands of families have been affected. They need immediate relief and sustained support towards social and economic stability in local communities, and in the north and east regions of the country.

We also call upon the Government of Canada, in responding to the humanitarian needs of Vanni Tamils to seek assurance from the Government of Sri Lanka that they will take the necessary measures to guarantee and protect the civil rights, safety and wellbeing of Tamils throughout the country, especially in Jaffna, the Jaffna Peninsula and north east.

Sri Lankan church partners have provided this analysis to share with you:

An impartial political culture will restore civilian administration, rule of law, and trust. Freedom of movement, and a demonstration



of national confidence in the non-violent and peace loving majority within the Tamil community are essential, and long overdue. Tamil culture must be reflected in national events and as part of common Sri Lankan identity. Tamil leaders realistically acknowledge the reciprocation Tamils offer this process. Jaffna has a distinct role in dismantling its ethnic isolation and encouraging interaction with Sinhala and Muslim communities, especially amongst children and youth. The A Nine Road must be cleared and opened to the public as soon as possible.

A ray of hope already lies in the fine rapport between Major

General Mendaka Samarasinghe and Jaffna's Council for Peace and Goodwill. It is through such relationships that initial steps towards the integration of all Sri Lankans will come. Everything depends on our [Sri Lanka's] ability to create a climate of political and cultural trust and socio-economic opportunity that will visibly include and recognise the skills of Tamils.

We further call upon the Government of Canada to seek positions of influence in international structures and processes of reconciliation, aimed at addressing and dismantling the root causes of historic tensions between Sri Lanka's Sinhala and Tamil peoples. These tensions will resurface and flare and result in much more suffering without clear and continuing pressure by international leaders and states.

Last but not least, we call upon the Government of Canada to urge the Government of Sri Lanka to take all necessary steps to safeguard the democratic rights of journalists. The rights of all Sri Lankans to information must be protected so that Sri Lanka may strive towards a new era of freedom, development and long-term peace. The assault,



detainment, torture and murder of members of Sri Lanka's press are deeply disturbing, especially when Sri Lankan leaders are determined to liberate the people from all types of oppression. It is regrettable that Liberal Foreign Affairs Critic, Bob Rae was denied entry to Sri Lanka in May 2009, for supposedly supporting the defeated rebels. Thank you for formally registering the Canadian Government's dismay and displeasure at Mr. Rae's deportation. As distressing as this incident was, it clearly reveals the rigour and resilience required of the international community in dialogue for peace, justice and rule of law with President Rajapakse and his government.

Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister, for your attention to my requests. Be assured of our prayers for wisdom and guidance in all your work on behalf of the people of Canada, and our commitments to peace within and among all of the nations.

Archbishop Fred Hiltz,
Primate and Chair of The House of Bishops

Improving Access To Hospital Care In York Region

Markham Stouffville Hospital Expansion Will Create Construction Jobs

Ontario is providing \$35.5 million to support the expansion of the Markham Stouffville Hospital to improve access to care for people in York Region.

The funding will be used for the design and planning of the redevelopment project, which includes both renovations and new construction. During the construction phase, this project is expected to create hundreds of jobs.

The expanded hospital will include more than 300 beds, allow for more than 100,000 clinic visits and accommodate more than 67,000 emergency room visits per

year. It's estimated that construction on the redeveloped hospital will begin in late 2010.

QUOTES

"This hospital expansion means a boost to job creation in the short term, and a new foundation for economic growth with quality public services in the long term."

- Dalton McGuinty
Premier of Ontario

"Markham Stouffville Hospital touches lives throughout our community, and the expansion will help the hospital deliver faster

care, closer to home. I want to thank everyone, especially the dedicated staff of MSH, who have helped move this very important project forward."

- Helena Jaczek
Oak Ridges-Markham MPP

QUICK FACTS

Ontario is the national leader in reducing wait times.

There are 168 emergency rooms in the province, with 2.76 million people making 5 million visits each year.

Almost 3,000 babies are born each year at the Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Tim Hudak elected leader of Ontario's Progressive Conservatives

Though it took three ballots, Tim Hudak won the leadership of Ontario's Progressive Conservatives at the party convention in Markham on Saturday, beating Frank Klees, Randy Hillier and Christine Elliott, the wife of Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty.

Hudak, who has the backing of some high-profile federal Tories (John Baird, Tony Clement), will succeed John Tory, who resigned as leader in March after losing a key by-election. Though the party has moved to the political centre in recent years, many expect Hudak, a 41-year-old Niagara-area MPP, to swing the PCs firmly to the right.

Hudak will get his first shot at



the Premier's office during the provincial election scheduled for 2011.

Karygiannis celebrates Canada's diversity on Canada Day

The Honourable Jim Karygiannis, Member of Parliament for Scarborough-Agincourt, celebrated Canada Day with several multi-cultural communities in the Great Toronto Area.

"I began my Canada Day by helping GlobalMedic's Rapid Response Team volunteers prepare water purification units and medical supplies for shipment to Sri Lanka." said Mr. Karygiannis. "It was moving to see Canadians load supplies made in Russia, Indonesia and Pakistan to be sent to help hundreds of thousands of internally displaced Tamils in Sri

Lanka." Mr. Karygiannis joined hundreds of constituents at the Milliken Chinese Community Church and then at the Glendower/Steeles L'Amoreaux Parents' Group BBQ as they celebrated Canada's 142nd Birthday with games, music and family activities.

"Scarborough-Agincourt's strength is found in the rich cultural diversity of its many communities." Mr. Karygiannis commented. "On Canada Day, we joined together, as a proud Canadian family, to celebrate our great country and what it means to be

Canadian." Canada's many voices are found in the pages and on the airwaves of its ethnic press. Mr. Karygiannis attended a special Canada Day dinner with members of the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada.

"Whether you were born in this country or chose to make Canada your home - one thing is very clear - on July 1st, Canadians from every corner of the world and in every corner of the world, proudly celebrate Canada, the greatest country in the world." Mr. Karygiannis further commented.

Premier's Statement On Tim Hudak Winning Conservative Leadership

"I would like to offer my congratulations to Tim Hudak, the new leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, on his victory today.

In our parliamentary democracy, the role of Leader of the Opposition is an especially important one. The leader helps set the tone of debate in the Legislature, and the quality of decisions that affect all Ontarians.

On behalf of all Ontarians, I want to wish Tim Hudak well in

his new role as Leader of the Opposition. Tim won a hard-fought campaign and I have no doubt he will bring that same dedication and enthusiasm to his new role.

Ontarians expect their leaders to work together to strengthen Ontario during this global recession. I am confident that, if we each do our part, we can overcome the challenges we face and build a stronger Ontario for the future, together."

From the Publisher's Desk ...

Sanctions on tyrants necessary for the betterment of humanity

Tyrants are dangerous. They show no respect for humanity.

For several days in June it appeared that Iran might become a democracy and one that respects human rights and humanitarian norms. And when hundreds of thousands of Iranians protested, the tyrants sent their thugs to beat and shoot them.

The rigged outcome of Iran's June 12th 2009 Presidential election aftermath caught the world by 'surprise.' But the crisis in Iran was one unexpected 'bonanza' for one state though that wanted to see the plight of people recedes from international headlines - Sri Lanka.

Again there was no coordinated support from pro democracy advocates outside of Iran, many them in the midst of in countries with economic downturn are

unable to employ a coherent strategy to checkmate expanding sphere of the China - Russia axis; an influence that propels disregard for humanitarian norms and democracy.

Many supporters around the world for democracy in Iran are already asking why did Europe, the U. K., the United States and Canada, Australia and New Zealand not do more to "support" the protesters in Tehran? And they say U. S. President Barack Obama will bear the brunt of the finger pointing.

The latest uprising in Iran is described as the most significant challenge to its repressive rule since the 1979 revolution. The hardliners in the inner circle of the religious elite now seek to rule without and against its people.

Media reports say that even

before the elections, Iranians - likely the majority - were fed up with President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The people wanted improved economy with its fullest potential and less quarrel with the outside world. Many independent organizations point to rampant corruption and incompetence of the Iranian government. People are asking for more say in how they are governed. The regime's refusal to change course has now exposed deep fault lines in Iranian society. It is reported even some members of the clerical elite seemed to question the thuggery.

Many supporters of democracy in Iran around the world favour sanctions to bring about desired changes and openness in Iran. But there is concern that Russia and China and even some European nations would not fol-

low through with tougher sanctions if Iran made the wrong choice.

But they point out economic and diplomatic warfare works.

The Soviet Union collapsed as it couldn't cope up with the military build up of NATO, Apartheid ended in South Africa due to economic and diplomatic pressure from the rest of the world and Cuba today sees better relationship with United States is essential for improved economy for its people are few examples of this.

The Monsoon Journal urges organizations and nations that uphold humanitarian norms, freedom and democracy for active engagement and place sanctions on tyrannical powers for the betterment of the suffering people.

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

**I look behind and after
And find that all is right,
In my deepest sorrows
There is a soul of light.**
- Swami Vivekananda

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People take part in a protest, against the presidential election in Iran, in front of the European Commission headquarters in Brussels July 4, 2009. [Reuters]



Thousands participated 'Uyirthezhuvom' - 'Tamil Uprising' campaign held in Queens Park, Toronto on July 4, 2009. The Event, primarily organized by youth in coordination with members of the Tamil community.

"Now, amid the rubble of our lands, the spirit of our people must rise once more...United, we must defy this tyranny, define our history & fulfill our destiny" - From the Tamil Uprising campaign flyer [pic: pathivu.com]

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'Catastrophy for Sri Lanka to take triumphant position'

A noted historian has warned that it would be catastrophic for Sri Lanka to take a triumphant position on its victory over LTTE and it is time the country gave democracy and pluralism a chance.

"In the aftermath of defeat of Tamil Tigers, it would be catastrophic if the Sri Lankan Government were to take a triumphant position. I am told there is a proposal to build statues of a Sri Lankan King who died 2,000 years ago to commemorate the victory," Ramachandra Guha, the Bangalore-based historian and biographer said while delivering the fifth Nehru memorial Lecture 2009 on "Democracy and Violence in South Asia and Beyond" at the Nehru Centre in London, England on July 3, 2009.

Patrick French, a noted writer presided over the function, which was attended by the Indian High Commissioner to the UK, Shiv Shankar Mukherjee.

Drawing a parallel between the violence in Jammu and Kashmir and Northern Sri Lanka, Mr. Guha who has previously taught at the Universities of Yale and Stanford, said: "Just as Kashmir is a big blot on India's democracy, the treatment of Tamils is a signal failure of Sri Lankan democracy.

"As in Kashmir, the problem arose because of denial of democracy's software and hardware - elections were rigged both in Kashmir and Northern Sri Lanka," he said, adding "cultural pluralism in terms of language, in terms of dress, in terms of faith is a serious part of democracy."

The historian said "in northern Sri Lanka, apart from rigging the elections, there was discrimination on the basis of language and religion".

Mr. Guha said in 1956 Sinhala was made the sole official language of the island placing it on a position of superiority. This act of injustice was compounded in 1972 when Buddhism was made official religion of Sri Lanka - meaning Buddhists were superior to Tamils, Muslims, Christians and Hindus.

"Discrimination on the basis of religion and language was further intensified by the burning of the great Jaffna Library in 1981 when the Sri Lankan army in an act of petty and vicious vindictiveness put to flame the great repository of Tamil culture and two years later, there was a program against Tamils in the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo, orchestrated and directed by ruling politicians," he stressed.

Mr. Guha also noted that the LTTE supremo V Prabhakaran had assassinated every rival Tamil politician. Emphasising that the Tamils in Sri Lanka had also made "terrible mistakes", he said "Prabhakaran led the Tamil people down the road to disaster."

Answering a question, Mr. Guha said he wanted India to be a "more contented and less violent place."

He said "the greatness of modern Indian democracy is that every citizen is equal, regardless of language and religion. That is what Sri Lanka can learn from India."

[PTI]

www.monsoonjournal.com

PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER ANNOUNCES CANADA 'S NEWEST NATIONAL MUSEUM AT PIER 21



HALIFAX - Prime Minister Stephen Harper tours Pier 21, Canada's newest national museum, with guide Reza Avesta, a Canadian of Iranian origin. PMO Photo by Jason Ransom

Pier 21 to serve as monument to the role immigrants have played in Canadian history

Historic Halifax landmark Pier 21 will be the site of Canada's newest national museum, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced today. The new national museum will be dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the contributions of immigrants and new Canadians to Canada's culture, history and heritage.

"No country in the world has benefited more than Canada from free and open immigration," said the Prime Minister. "In every region and across all professions, new Canadians make major con-

tributions to our culture, economy and way of life. It takes a special kind of person to uproot and move to a new country to ensure a better future for your family. Anybody who makes the decision to live, work and build a life in our country represents the very best of what it means to be Canadian."

Currently a national historic site, Pier 21 served as a primary gateway for immigrants to Canada from 1928 to 1971. It was the point of entry for more than a million new Canadians over that period. It was also the point of departure for 500,000 troops who fought for Canada during the Second World War. As a result, one in five Canadians can now

trace a relationship to this historic site.

"The story of Pier 21 is intertwined with the story of Canada," said the Prime Minister. "Creating a national museum at Pier 21 is a fitting monument to Canada's values and the role immigrants play in our country's history."

The Government of Canada, Pier 21 Society, Pier 21 Foundation and Halifax Port Authority are partnering to support the new national museum at Pier 21. This will be just the sixth national museum in Canada and only the second national museum outside of Canada's National Capital Region.

Six projects in Scarborough - Guildwood will benefit from \$5,383,866 in joint federal and provincial funding to improve community recreational infrastructure, announced today under the Recreational Infrastructure Canada program in Ontario (RInC Ontario) and the Ontario Recreation Program (Ontario REC).

These projects will provide stimulus to the local economy through investments that will spur construction activity related to recreational infrastructure. Improving recreational facilities and services will also encourage higher levels of participation in physical activity and community building.

"We are helping communities build and improve facilities which will



can work together to help create strong communities and help the economy thrive."

These projects are six of 757 projects announced recently by Minister of State Science and Technology, Gary Goodyear, on behalf of the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Industry, and Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Leona Dombrowsky, on behalf of George Smitherman, Ontario Minister of

SCARBOROUGH-GUILDWOOD ORGANIZATIONS TO RECEIVE FUNDING FOR RECREATIONAL UPGRADES

Recipient	Project Title	Federal /Provincial Contribution each
City of Toronto: East Scarborough Boys and Girls Club	Addition that includes a new gymnasium.	\$ 1,000,000
City of Toronto: Scarborough Village Community Centre	Expansion project.	\$400,000
City of Toronto: Cedar Brook Community Centre	Health and safety upgrades	\$36,000
City of Toronto: East Scarborough Boys and Girls Club	Energy retrofits	\$222,933
Global Kingdom Ministries Inc.	New Gymnasium	\$1,000,000
City of Toronto: Peter Secor Park	Playground Enhancement	33,000
Total		\$2,691,933

provide access to sport and recreation and further enable residents of Scarborough-Guildwood to lead healthy, more active lives. Additionally these six projects will boost the local economy and create much needed jobs."

-Margarett Best, Minister of Health Promotion and MPP for Scarborough-Guildwood.

"Under the leadership of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, our Government is helping to create jobs for Ontarians and in the City of Toronto," said Paul Calandra, M.P. "Thanks to the strong relationship between our two governments, we

Energy and Infrastructure, worth a total joint federal and provincial investment of more than \$380 million.

Approved projects were selected on the basis of merit and construction readiness.

A list of approved projects will be available on July 6, 2009, at www.rinc.on.ca.

For more information, please contact:

Office of Paul Calandra, MP - Oak Ridges Markham - 905-294-0004

Jennifer Welshman, Office of the Honourable Margarett Best, MPP - Scarborough-Guildwood - 416-281-2787

New Emergency Department Opens July 8 at The Scarborough Hospital

The move takes place when Emergency volume is traditionally lower

Following decades of planning and three years of construction, The Scarborough Hospital's new Emergency Department at the General campus will open for business in the early hours of July 8, 2009.

The entire department will move from its old location on the east side of the hospital at the corner of McCowan Road and Lawrence Avenue to a new \$72 million Emergency and Critical Care Centre in the West Wing. Patients in the old Emergency Department who are deemed stable will begin to be moved to the Emergency Department starting around 3:00 a.m. on July 8.

At that time, the exterior Emergency Department sign at the old location will be switched off and the sign in the new loca-

tion will turn on. Entry to the old Emergency Department entrance will be closed.

Coordination between the hospital and EMS dispatch, the Toronto Police Service and the Toronto Fire Department will ensure that Emergency patients are transported to the new Emergency entrance on Lawrence Avenue where more space is allocated under the canopy for ambulance vehicles.

As of approximately 4:00 a.m., walk-in access to the Emergency Department will be through the West Wing entrance, opposite the parking garage on the hospital's west side. Vehicles may access the parking garage or the Emergency Department drop-off circle via the hospital's west driveway off Lawrence Avenue East.

Senior Emergency staff and physicians will be present to ensure a smooth transition, and extra nursing staff and porters are scheduled to assist in patient transfers between the old and new Emergency Departments.

The new Emergency Department space is roughly three times larger than the old location, and includes two triage stations, five separate care zones, new infection control and isolation protocols, state-of-the-art equipment and private examination rooms.

For more information: David Bourne, Manager, Corporate Communications, The Scarborough Hospital 416-438-2911 ext. 6836, dbourne@tsh.to

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Not a pretty sight: the row over Sri Lanka's camp toilets

by: Amjad Mohamed-Saleem

Ever since the final days of Sri Lanka's offensive against the Tamil Tigers sent hundreds of thousands of people fleeing, aid agencies have been struggling to cope with the needs of the displaced. Add to that the operational restrictions imposed by the authorities, and it has been a challenging environment to work in.

Not helping matters is a standoff between the government and the NGO community that is manifesting itself in the local media. Every day there seems to be an article in the newspapers with regards to what the agencies are not doing. The latest issue is the state of toilets - or lack of them - in the camps in Vavuniya. The government says it is the United Nations and its humanitarian agency partners who are responsible for building the toilets. It may come as no surprise to some that the government is not happy with the quali-

ty and design of the toilets, which can best be described as open pit latrines with some wooden supports to cover the area. Once the pit is filled, you dig a new one somewhere else.

For reasons I am grappling to understand, most standard post-emergency operating procedures follow a process in which the initial response to a disaster is to provide 'temporary shelters and toilets'. The next phase is the 'transitional' or 'semi-permanent shelters and toilets', and then you get to the 'permanent shelter and toilets'.

The argument is that by building 'temporary' structures, people's right to return to their homes - in itself a political issue - is reinforced. In the eyes of the agencies, anything that is built of a semi-permanent nature is tantamount to encouraging people not to return.

Critics say the problem is that agencies then end up spending almost double - by buying materials and paying labour costs to



Sahanagama IDP site, Pulmoddai 13th Mile Post - pic: Drs. Sarajevo

build a shelter, then paying to pull it down so that a permanent shelter can be built on the same piece of land. In the case of post-tsunami reconstruction, the cost of transitional shelters sometimes exceeded the repairs to people's damaged houses.

Politicised argument

The argument falls a little bit flat when it comes to toilets and sanitation. In displacements such

as this, which involve huge numbers of people, sanitation is often the weakest link and a vicious cycle of poor sanitation, hygiene and health is perpetuated. Whatever the nature or the duration of the emergency, one issue of utmost importance is the need to ensure basic human dignity with regards to sanitation.

The government wants slightly better designed toilets which

take into consideration local cultural values. However, the U.N. (and other humanitarian agencies) are concerned that by building anything deemed 'transitional or semi-permanent', this might 'encourage' the displaced to remain in the camps. This is where the confusion arises for me. Surely building a good toilet will ensure less disease? At the end of the day, I am certain that given the choice, people will not stay because their toilet facilities are better! These displaced deserve the best that they can get. This means that there should not be any compromise on the basic needs like their toilets.

The issues have become politicised. Most agencies are quietly saying that there should not be anything done of a semi-permanent nature because this would be feeding into the government's agenda of not resettling the people and keeping them in these camps. It is interesting to note that many of the agencies protesting the need for these recently displaced people to return, are the same ones that have not considered the many hundreds of thousands who have been uprooted over the last 20 years of this conflict.

[Alertnet.org]

Sri Lanka detains parliamentarian fearing eyewitness account

Sri Lanka has detained a parliamentarian belonging to the Tamil National Alliance, fearing his eyewitness account to the massacres during the escalated onslaught on Tamil areas will be damaging, independent analysts say.

Sri Lanka authorities are however saying the parliamentarian is being detained over alleged links to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Since the war ended, authorities have arrested scores of civilians and allege them to have had ties to the LTTE. Human Rights organizations have urged independent monitoring of Sri Lanka's interrogation process, but Sri Lanka government has refused to comply. Tamil doctors who spoke to reporters about

civilian casualties while treating the war wounded also continue to be detained.

Sri Lanka's Anti-terrorism investigators took Sathasivam Kanagaratnam before a magistrate on Monday, June 22nd to formalize the detention in accordance with the country's emergency law, said Suresh Premachandran MP, a colleague in the Tamil National Alliance.

The draconian law allows police to detain suspects for up to 18 months without charge.

Kanagaratnam was arrested by the military last month near the site of the "final" onslaught by the Sri Lankan forces. He was visiting his home electoral district in the Tamil territory as fighting raged.

According to the Associated Press, the lawmaker was among the few key witnesses to the bloody final months of the war, when human rights groups say both sides may have committed war crimes. With no independent observers present in the war zone, Kanagaratnam's account of the events could be important in future inquiries, the AP report added.

Sri Lanka government has brushed off calls for an international inquiry into possible wartime abuses saying it was an internal matter.

Human Rights organizations and media groups are barred from freely speaking to the displaced people.

A recent press release by

Tamils Against Genocide, a Human Rights Organization based in Maryland, USA says:

The government of Sri Lanka is intentionally preventing aid agencies and journalists from having free access to Tamil civilians-

o To cull any person consid-

ered even slightly suspicious away out of sight

o To prevent stories of atrocities committed by the armed forces from being told

o To weaken the Tamils so they cannot protest for their rights further.

www.tamilauthors.com: A website for Tamil authors

The development of this website is an attempt to compile details about Tamil writers spread out across the globe.

Based on their country of residence, the writers have been categorized into four groups - Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia and Singapore. A brief description about each author along with their photograph, address, their creative ability, writings, awards received etc are being presented in a concise manner. So far information about nearly 450 writers have been collected and in order to make it easy to contact them, their phone numbers and e-mail addresses are also provided.

Within the website, there are

various sections devoted to poetry, articles, short stories, literary events, magazines, video clippings, documentary films etc. The section detailing literary events is very useful since it gives advance information about forthcoming literary activities in various parts of the world. Documentary films produced by these artistes are listed under the section Documentaries. The sections about Videos include speeches by famous writers, book launching events etc.

Sambasivam Ahileswaran, known as Ahil in literary circles born in Northern Sri Lanka is a poet and an author a number of books. Ahil himself a recipient of

numerous literary awards and presently residing in Canada is the creator of this website. Ahil deserves to be praised for flawlessly developing this website.

All creators and writers may forward brief information about them and in addition they are also welcome to forward their creations to the e-mail editor@tamilauthors.com

This website undoubtedly would enable you to read about the quality writings of the writers residing in various countries. This website will also serve to document valuable literary information and will be very useful for those who wish to research about these writers.

Let us all join together and assist in the growth and development of this website.

Info By: Raymond Rajabalan

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EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

The mood in Jaffna is that of being tragically marooned

By D.B.S. Jeyaraj

A Christian clergyman who inspired many of us during our student days was the Anglican Bishop of Kurunegala Rt. Rev Lakshman Wickremasinghe.

This eminent theologian known popularly as Bishop Lakshman was a practical man of action when it came to the question of human rights violations and inter-ethnic justice and unity.

Bishop Lakshman was one of those who pioneered the Civil Rights Movement in Sri Lanka when the State unleashed massive repression during the time of the first Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) insurgency in 1971.

His balanced perspective on the Tamil national question was laudable. He was in Britain getting medical treatment during the 1983 July anti-Tamil pogrom but wrote a heartfelt Pastoral letter in which he addressed the issue eloquently.

Personally speaking, Bishop Lakshman's letter played an important role for me in the aftermath of the 1983 violence.

This was a time when I like most Tamils was thinking hard about the future of Tamils in a united Sri Lanka.

But Bishop Lakshman's letter was an important factor then in preserving my sanity and helping to reinforce my faith in a united Sri Lanka.

We were indeed shattered when Bishop Lakshman passed away within a few months after that inspiring letter.

Though Bishop Lakshman was a unique personality there are some other religious leaders in Sri Lanka who are playing commendable roles to foster justice, amity and harmony.

One of these is the present Anglican Bishop of Colombo Rt. Rev Duleep de Chickera.

He was for some years the Chaplain at S.T.C. Mt. Lavinia and nicknamed by Thomians as "Chickeye".

Unfortunately this was after I had left College. During my student days it was Rev. LJB Fernando and Fr. Daniel who were there.

Bishop Duleep as he is generally known tries in his own way to speak up for the oppressed and strives to promote inter-ethnic understanding, justice and equality.

Recently Bishop Duleep concluded a pastoral visit to Jaffna and issued a public statement afterwards.

Bishop Duleep has encapsulated the feelings and mood of Jaffna vividly.

His suggestions on fostering greater understanding and interaction between the ethnicities are worthy of consideration.

I think the statement provides pertinent insight into the Jaffna of today and am reproducing it here on this blog. [dbsjeyaraj.com]

I hope readers will find it interesting and thought-provoking.

The anxieties of the People of Jaffna-an opportunity for National growth and harmony

A statement by the Rt. Rev. Duleep de Chickera, Bishop of Colombo:

I recently returned from one of my regular Pastoral visits to our Congregations (Churches) and Schools in Jaffna. Such visits are always educative and humbling.

What was immediately noticeable was the pre-occupation with routine in the lives of the people; simply because there seems to be little else to look forward to.

People went about their daily business and fulfilled personal obligations with precision. Schools functioned smoothly and education as always continues to be taken very seriously. I even witnessed a very high standard of basket-ball in a game between Jaffna Hindu College and S. Johns College. One player from each team respectively, showed much potential and should catch the attention of our National talent scouts. Those responsible for sustaining interest and standards in sport amongst youth in Jaffna must be congratulated and encouraged.

The cost of living has come down in a welcome trend. The prices of some essential items like rice however are still very much higher than in the rest of the country, and continue to cause hardship particularly for the poor.

But hidden behind the routine is a suppressed mix of continuing anxiety and cynicism over the Jaffna context as well as deep sorrow over the experiences of the Vanni Tamils. In some instances one also sensed regret that not enough was said and done on behalf of the Vanni Tamils during LTTE suppression prior to the recent war.

Such concerns would have added credibility to the concerns expressed for the safety and well being of these civilians during and after the war. The predominant and recurring feeling amongst all

classes and ages however was that the Tamils are an isolated and constrained Community.

On the Peninsular, the people feel they are marooned; physically, psychologically and politically. The Youth in particular are restless and search for answers to difficult questions. Many will migrate if given the opportunity. Options for study and employment are few and restricted.

Yet only the desperate or daring will think of traveling to the south in search of better prospects. Stories of inconvenience and some ridicule and harassment experienced in travel, abound. In the south there is severe hardship in finding suitable lodging as even friends and relations are reluctant to take them in. State sponsored Youth hostels which will also provide an opportunity for the integration of our youth of all communities, are non-existent.

There was little enthusiasm for elections. A feeling prevails that change must come now; as a preparation for and prelude to elections.

Pre-election promises will centre too much on what individuals can do. What people want desperately is an impartial political culture that they can own and that will restore trust, civilian administration and normalcy.

The voice of the elders is articulate. It describes the core travails of the people without unnecessary digression into trivialities. But it is also a weary and sceptical voice. This combined wisdom and scepticism typically reflect long years of hardship. It calls for the freedom of movement and a demonstration of National confidence in the non-violent and peace loving majority within the Tamil community.

It desires the long overdue affirmation of the Tamil culture at National events and also as part of our common Sri Lankan identity. This voice also realistically acknowledges the reciprocation that Tamils will have to offer this process. In fact Jaffna has a distinct role to play in dismantling its ethnic isolation and encouraging the interaction of the Communities especially amongst

children and youth.

In response there is much that imaginative persons can do for a start. Exchanges are necessary in the field of Sport and Commerce. A recent cricket coaching camp was very highly appreciated. There is not even one swimming pool in the whole of Jaffna; devoid of Wewas and deprived of easy access to sea bathing ! A scheduled visit of the Chamber of Commerce over the next few days was most welcome. Trade and marketing opportunities need to be explored and developed. Small onions going for Rs 20/- per kilo at present is an indication of the state of the Jaffna economy as well as the frustrations of the struggling Jaffna farmer.

For most of this to happen the A Nine road must be cleared and opened to the public as soon as possible.

A ray of hope already lies in the fine rapport that Maj. Gen.



Mendaka Samarasinghe and Jaffna's Council for Peace and Goodwill have with each other. It is through such trust and dialogue that initial steps to ease the hardships of the Tamil people and the integration of the Communities will come.

But beyond this everything will depend on our ability to create a climate of political and cultural trust and socio-economic opportunity that will visibly include and recognise the skills of Tamils. If not Jaffna will continue to remain tragically marooned and all our children' children deprived of yet a better way towards a wider understanding of truth and fullness of life.


With Peace and Blessings to all.

Duleep de Chickera

Feelings of a Human

When Sri Lankan state unleashed its hate,
World failed to defend Tamils' fate.
When they killed without hesitation,
World stood still in hallucination.
When they sent us on boats to the North,
World looked at us as refugees of no worth.
When the Tsunami swallowed our families,
World treated us like we were anomalies.
When we saw murders with heart full of terror,
World looked in its rearview mirror.
When those devils did the slaughter,
World let Tamil lives become shorter.
When we stood-up peacefully against Racists,
World said we were Tamil Nationalists.
When we defended our dignity with vigor,
World said it was Tamil Terror.
When they burned our homes and shops,
When they raped our mothers and sisters,
When they imprisoned our fathers and sons,
World said Sri Lanka needs more bombs and guns.
When terrified screams came from blood streams,
World's inaction gave us horrible dreams.
When the civilized world lost its soul,
We saw Tamil bodies getting cold.
When slaughter started again in Sri Lanka,
When it turned into genocide like Rwanda,
When they destroyed our dignity with state terror,
World once again stood still, in silence - in error!
World's inaction to stop this genocide is dreadful,
When no one cares it is hard to stay cheerful.
We are convinced defending Tamils is Tamils' responsibility,
We will soon shine the light on world's irresponsibility.
We are strong believers in Tamils' freedom,
World can't stop our struggle against Sri Lankan serfdom.
We have been in the inferno in such realm,
We will rise again from the ashes like phoenix - in Eelam!

- a poem by Roy Ratnavel



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Sri Lanka: Journey of war-wounded man seeking care

Dipesh is a patient in the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) field hospital in the Vavuniya region of Sri Lanka, the closest referral hospital for the 220,000 displaced people living in Manik Farm camp. Since he was wounded over a month ago, Dipesh has been going from one medical structure to another looking for treatment.

Anxiety overcomes the 37-year-old man's face as he awakens after the surgery. "How did it go? What did the surgeon say?" he asks.

It's been one month since he has been unable to walk, and he cannot help his wife and two children as much as he would like.

Dipesh was injured on April 20 while escaping from the Vanni, the now former battle zone in Sri Lanka's north. With a large, deep wound on his right foot, he continued to walk and managed to cross the frontline. At the first

crossing point, the army bandaged his foot and told him to ask for medical care at the main crossing point in Omanthai. But the Omanthai crossing point was severely crowded, and he was sent straight to a camp without seeing a doctor. Once in the camp, Dipesh asked again to go to the hospital but no authorizations to leave for medical care were given before the registration process was completed. It took four days to be registered and only then was he referred to the hospital in the nearby city of Vavuniya.

A surgeon in Vavuniya hospital cleaned his wound for the first time, almost a week after Dipesh had reached the government-controlled area. But no follow up was possible as the hospital was too crowded and Dipesh had to go back to the camp. That same day, May 2, all the displaced people in his camp were moved to Manik

Farm camp.

Once in Manik Farm camp, it took him four days to see a doctor as the clinic in the camp was so crowded. The doctor was obliged to refer Dipesh to another hospital because the wound was too infected. For three weeks, Dipesh went every other day to a hospital in Cheddikulam for a dressing, with a special bus for patient transfer. On May 27, he was referred to the MSF field hospital outside Manik Farm camp, where surgical activity had begun.

"It's not that bad now, it's improving," notes the surgeon after opening Dipesh's bandage. It's the second time he proceeds to a wound debridement (removal of infected or dead tissue) for this patient. The wound is far from healed but the infection is under control.

(Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)/Doctors without Borders, Canada)

Wholesale attack on Jaffna newspapers



Newspapers burned in Jaffna

All the local newspapers of Jaffna that defied publishing an anonymous and defiling notice against the LTTE came under attack by an armed group in the early hours of Thursday, Jul 25th. The notice was brought out in the name of 'Tamil Front Protecting the Country' allegedly linked to a paramilitary group operating with Colombo. Thousands of copies of the local newspapers, Valampuri, Uthayan and Thinakkural (Jaffna edition), were burnt down wholesale in huge flames by the armed group allegedly operated by the Sri Lankan military intelligence at Aanaippanthi and Kannathiddi junctions at 5:00 a.m. Thursday, while the newspapers were being taken for distribution.

The distribution workers were also brutally attacked.

A distribution worker of Thinakkural, 26-year-old Anojan, who was physically attacked was also robbed of his belongings by the armed men.

Newspaper editors of Jaffna were intimidated to publish the notice and warned of dire conse-

quences the previous day through anonymous telephone calls. However, the editors sceptical of the contents of the notice decided not to publish it.

After the burning of the Eezhanaadu newspaper along with the public library in 1981 by the Sri Lankan forces, and again the burning of Eezhanaadu by the Indian military (IPKF), this is the third major burning of the newspapers of Jaffna by occupying forces.

In 1981, the burning of the public library and the newspaper office took place while two of Colombo's ministers were present in Jaffna and it is alleged they had a direct hand in orchestrating that. The present attack on newspapers took place when Sri Lanka's Education Minister and General Secretary of Mahinda Rajapaksa's ruling UPFA alliance, Susil Premajayantha and Social Welfare Minister Douglas Devandanda were camping in Jaffna.

[TN]

Sri Lanka: Surgery and aftercare for emotionally exhausted war-wounded

Ramachandra is 18 years old. She was wounded on Jan. 8 during the conflict in northern Sri Lanka, and underwent amputations at a hospital in the Vanni. She was evacuated by ambulance to the main hospital in the northern Sri Lankan town of Vavuniya eight days later. The young woman is missing her left hand and left leg, and half of her right foot. Without post-operative care and physiotherapy she could remain bed ridden for the rest of her life.

Ramachandra is currently hospitalized in the Pompaimadhu Ayurvedic Hospital close to Vavuniya. Unlike other hospitals in the area, which are flooded with patients, the Pompaimadhu Hospital appears like a small haven: no wounded patients lying on mats on the floor, no ambulance traffic jams at the hospital entrance. Lots of wheel chairs and crutches donated by Handicap International are placed alongside the beds. At least 30 patients in the hospital have one or more amputations, whilst another 25 people are paralyzed.

Up to 200 patients receive post-operative care here, including small surgery and physiotherapy.

"As the Vavuniya Hospital was overcrowded, the Ministry of Health established a post-operative care unit in the Ayurvedic Hospital, which MSF [Médecins Sans Frontières] has been supporting since the beginning of May," says a doctor who is part of the MSF emergency team in Sri Lanka. "It's a separate space where war wounded patients receive the complete medical care they need, from small surgery or daily dressings, up to rehabilitation."

The physiotherapist attaches Ramachandra's wrist to a crutch with bandages and she slowly stands up and begins to walk. MSF, Ministry of Health doctors and nurses and Red Cross Society volunteers quietly move from patient to patient housed under six temporary structures. Most of the patients have several dressings that need to be changed regularly. In a small room in the hospital, MSF surgeons and anesthesiologists carry out surgical proce-

dures such as skin grafts and wound closures.

An old woman tries to stand up with crutches by herself and falls down, breaking into tears. Emotionally exhausted, the patients have to mobilize enormous energy just to try to walk again. On the next bed, chatter has begun between teenage girls. Among them is Agantha, 17, who has had both legs amputated above the knee.

Another patient, a 14-year-old girl, smiles as the physiotherapist urges her to walk. "In one month she will walk," announces the physiotherapist, pushing on very frail girl's knees to help her get on her feet from a wheel chair. She keeps her smile throughout the exercise, but after the physiotherapist has gone she cries and complains about the pain, her distraught mother looking on.

"It's the first time she's standing up in five months," explains the physiotherapist. "There are thousands of patients like her, either in the hospitals or in the camps, who need post-operative care and physiotherapy."

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Happy Doctors' Day!

(July 1, 2009)

Doctors' Day is an opportunity to further good public relations for the medicos and gives patients a chance to express gratitude towards doctors. We pray god everyday for his blessings who gave us this life but the god we see are the doctors, so we have to show the gratitude and remember their service rendered to the human community sacrificing their personal preferences. So to honor them the First of July has been designated as Doctors' Day in India.

It is indeed important that both doctors and patients be made aware of the existence of this day and at the same time, of its relevance and significance in the larger context of healthcare in this country.

Now, coming closer home, how did first of July get to be designated Doctors' Day in India. First of July happens to be



the birthday of a very famous Physician of India, Dr B C Roy. Thus July 1st was considered an appropriate day to be designated as Doctors' Day- a tribute to Dr B C Roy and the entire medical profession.

There are reasons why we as doctors need to heighten interest in Doctors' Day. Firstly, Doctors' Day affords an excellent opportunity to further good public relations for the medical profession. **Courtesy:**

hinduonnet.com

Managing your Medication Portfolio

By Mithura Anandarajah, PT
Registered Physiotherapist



They can be fluorescent pink, baby blue, pure white or much more. They range from tiny round to thick capsules, of varying sizes and shapes. Take once a day, twice a day or three times a day. Is it before meals, after meals or before bedtime? Depending on the complexity and medical history, taking medications can be a momentous task. For some it is a process that requires precise coordination, organization and commitment. As we get older or as our medical history gets more complicated, the medications we consume increase. It could be as simple as an allergy pill or can eventually involve blood pressure pills, blood thinners, insulin and much more. As the numbers of medications increase, it becomes even more important to manage the process.

Did you know that the average time spent with a physician is shrinking and can now average between 7 to 10 minutes. At the same, the number of prescription medications being consumed is increasing. As our aging population lives longer, they can consume up to 20 different medications for chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart failure or lung disease. Given the shorter time spent with physicians, it becomes increasing important to be aware of your medication history. It is also important to develop a rela-

tionship with your pharmacist. While it is tempting these days to pick up medications wherever convenient or to use big box store pharmacy chains, the role of independent pharmacies can be invaluable. There you are more likely to deal with a consistent pharmacist who gets to know your medication history and can become a valuable health care resource. Ask your pharmacist about your medication history, possible side effects to watch out for and if medications will react with each other. Keep a medication list with you listing your conditions, medications and details about frequency and quantity. Give a copy of that list to a family member as well. Also be aware

that vitamins and supplements can often react with medications. Inform your pharmacist if you are taking other supplements. If you are starting a new medication regime, it may be helpful to jot down notes about symptoms and side effects that you may develop. Use a calendar to track down any changes. To try and stay organized about your medication routine, consider using a pill box where you can organize each day of the week.

When managing the medications in our household, it is important to consider the expiry dates. How many of us have remnants of prior prescriptions just tucked away in case we ever need it. Using a medication after the

expiry date could mean that your medication may not be as strong (do NOT try to increase the dose to make up for this), or it may change in its composition (this is very rare, but very dangerous as it could lead to serious side effects).

Where you keep your medication is also an important factor and will alter the expiry of the drug. Improper storage can shorten the expiry date of the medication. For most medications, storing in a cool, dry, dark place (nightstand drawer, bedroom closet) will maximize the lifespan of your medication. This means that the bathroom medicine cabinet may not be the best place to put your stash of drugs! Be careful that children or pets will not have access to your medication.

Having said all this, some medications can probably be used after the expiry date, but may not be supported by the manufacturer if anything goes wrong. Medications where the dose does



not need to be 100% of what is quoted on the label (pain relievers, laxatives) can probably be safely used for a few months after the expiry date if stored properly. But, given that these medications are often inexpensive, and easily obtained, it is recommended that you purchase a new product. However, with critical medications such as antibiotics, seizure medications, heart medications, the expiry date should definitely be heeded.

Remember that your physician and your pharmacist are your first points of contact for questions regarding your medical management. Ask the necessary questions and effectively manage your medication routine.



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Gauri Guha wins Musical Award

On Saturday, June 27, Gauri Guha was honoured by the Creations India with the Music Achievement Award which was handed to her by Pandit Ramesh Mishra, one of the greatest musicians. This organization organizes programs with highest ranking musicians. Last year, Gauri Guha performed with other major musicians from India. Gauri Guha's speech after accepting the award is given below.

Good Evening. First and foremost, I would like to thank Pandit Ramesh Mishra, one of the greatest musicians in our history, for honoring me with this award, of which I am not worthy. Thank you, Rameshda.

I would like to thank Creations India for acknowledging and recognizing my humble contributions to the field of music. I came to know about Creations India a few years ago. Ever since, I have noticed that they are trying their best to promote our authentic classical music through the highest ranking musicians. I am honored and privileged to share the stage last year and to receive the Creations India award this year. Thank you Basu and Runki.

Music is my life and I cannot think of my existence without it. I am thankful to my parents to introduce me to this art form at a very young age and to my husband and children for supporting me all the way through my efforts toward this unachievable pursuit.

Most importantly, I am indebted



to my Gurus, Late Pandit A. Kanan, Bidushi Malabika Kanan and Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty for their contributions in my life. The role of a Guru is to show the correct way and monitor the progress of the student. My situation is a bit different since I left India 32 years ago. But, the beauty is that I never felt their absence even though I've been physically located so far away. They provided me with guidance, support, and challenged me to do better every step of the way. I do not have enough words to express my gratitude towards them.

Indian classical music is not just scales, melodies, lyrics and rhythms. It is far beyond those musical elements. It is spiritual, meditative and stress reliever. One can only aspire to achieve a very small fraction of understanding and skill during one's life time through sheer dedication, tireless practice, endless learning, utmost humility and a burning desire to succeed. One life time is not enough. I am just beginning

I thank you all for your support, appreciation, encouragement and blessings. Thanks a lot for this great honor.

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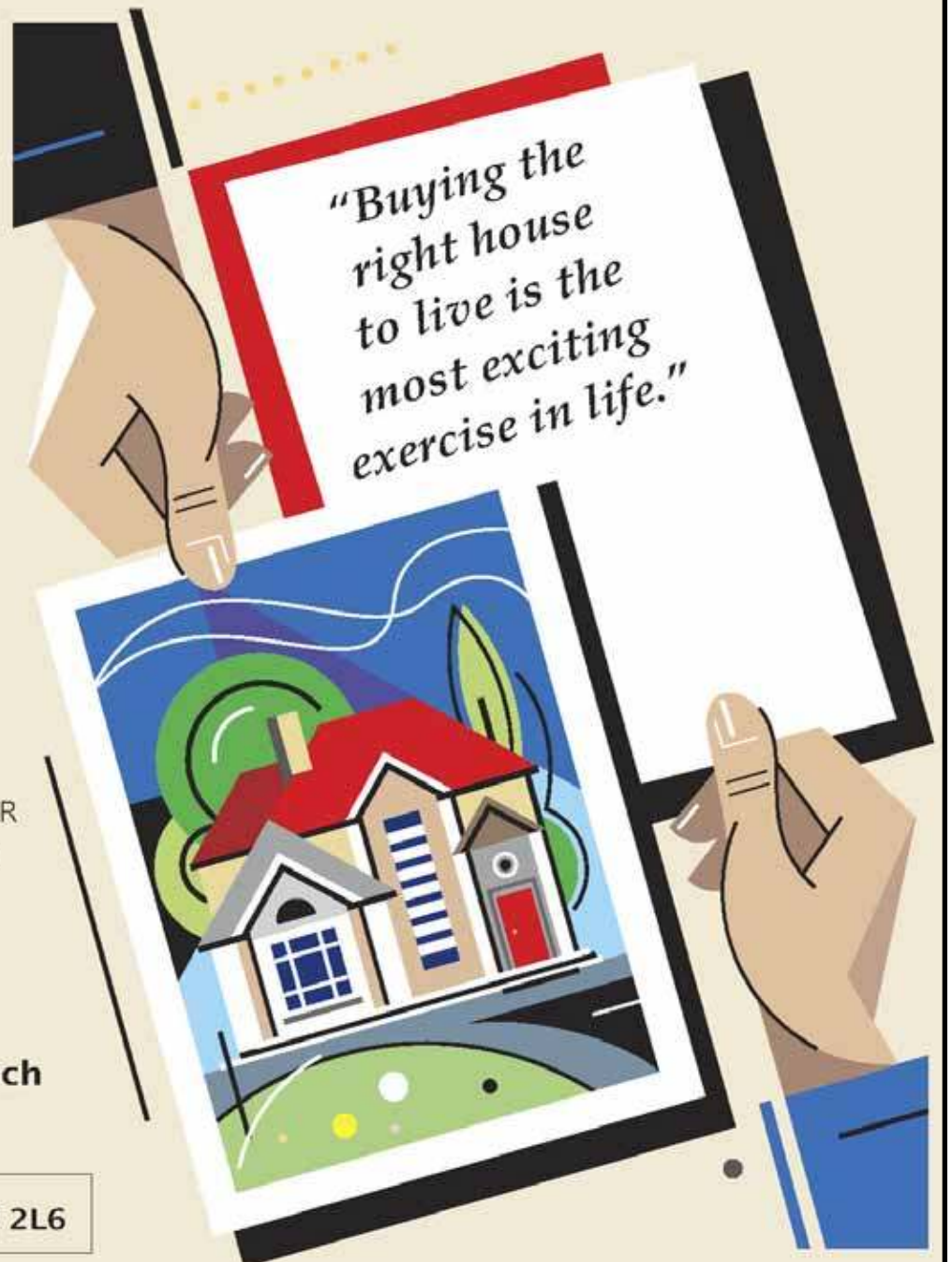
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By D.B.S. Jeyaraj

The conditions prevailing at the Internally displaced person (IDP) camps in Vavuniya and Chettykulam are far from satisfactory.

Many of those who serve or have served as volunteers in these camps are upset over the continuing humanitarian tragedy.

It is widely acknowledged that the authorities are making sincere efforts to improve conditions as far as possible.

It is also accepted that conditions are improving gradually. But there is a crying need for vast and

I.D.P Camps in Manik Farm: An eye-witness account

varies. Zone three camp is comparatively better of the camps. In Zone 03 the shelters at the front are in better condition but as you walk further and further towards the interior, the conditions are not the same. There is a conspicuous drop in quality

Even in Zone 03 the water is scarce and on the day we went the people had received rice and sugar but no vegetables nor any complementary items to cook along with the rice. Brigadier Weerakone who was in charge of the camp was requesting NGO's to provide veg-

water from a filthy muddy drain and take it to their tent. Small buckets, hundreds would be kept in a line near a water source waiting for the water to arrive. There was dirty water running on both sides of the road where drains have been freshly dug.

Flies are in abundance and hygiene is a life-threatening issue. The flies are so infinite we saw merchants sitting inside make shift nets and selling things.

Toilets were inadequate. In one camp we saw that some of the tents had been removed and this area

nourished beggar living in the IDP camp.

There is no registering of people in a transparent, systematic manner. Hence even if people disappear there is no way to trace them. It must be emphasised that the separation of family members is a very grave concern.

Access is not given to NGOs to talk to the IDPs. You go in, give the food and get out. You are not even supposed to take your mobiles in or give the IDPs the use of it. There is an epidemic of chickenpox and hepatitis and other diseases in the camps.

Three of our colleagues who wore open footwear while working in the camps were later infected with various foot diseases. One had to have both his toe nails removed. The other's soles were affected and is being treated. The third has a rash which makes him walk with a limp.

If this was the case with volunteers working in Manik farm one can just imagine the plight of the IDPs who don't even have a pair of bathroom slippers to wear. We saw a child wearing footwear made out of hardboard and elastic and another one covering his feet with plastic bags.

The other issue is the Militarisation of the camps. Camp management needs to be handed over to the civil administration. When trees are chopped down, or tents are re-located the soldiers are stand with their guns and compel the IDPs to do the manual labour. These tasks should be done voluntarily by the IDPs rather than being made to appear like bonded labour at gun point.

Other needs are clothes. IDPs are in desperate need for change cloths. People kept asking us especially the women for clothes. There has been distribution of clothes but these are hardly adequate. Children, pregnant mothers, lactating mothers, infants and the elderly need special care.

Daily people die some time more than 5-10 a day, mostly children and elderly. This is due to disease, malnourishment etc. The malnourishment is not necessarily due to current camp conditions. Even in the Vanni they had been near starvation and the arduous journey has made them weaker.

To bring a body to Vavuniya they are charged around Rs. 10,000. A few weeks back a pregnant lady committed suicide in one of the toilets.

The LTTE detainees are housed in different locations. There are separate camps for boys and girls. There are around 9000 plus boys and 2000 plus girls. Access to this camp can be obtained with defence ministry's approval only.

They are looked after quite well except when they protest or appear to get aggressive. The girls need a change of clothes, normal amenities such as soap, toothpaste, sanitary ware etc.

The problem is that they need regular supplies and that they idle the whole day. There are also many wounded girls in the camp. Some of them are disabled. They need special medical attention. This is true of the boys too.

Also all LTTE cadres are housed together. The hard core LTTE detainees, those who had gone for even two days training, conscripts who had run away from the LTTE, those who quit the LTTE and returned to their homes, those who got married etc. are all in one camp.

Those married have been separated from their spouses. There were 37 pregnant girls among the detainees. They had left the LTTE and got married but due to the rule that any one who underwent training needs to surrender they are all now kept as LTTE detainees.

The cry of both the boys and the girls were to see their parents, husbands and wives etc. Even for a few minutes they pleaded. The cry to connect socially to their kith and kin was heard every where. This was pathetic.

The boy's camp had an epidemic of chickenpox and typhoid. They asked for medicines stressing that they had trained doctors among themselves.

There 35,000 children in the camps and out of which around 1,800 are orphans.

We draw attention below to some of the pressing issues and concerns identified at a recent meeting on the IDPS:

1. Freedom of movement and host family options-i.e. many families have relatives, children they can go and stay with. Yet they are forcibly kept in the camp.

2. Systematic and transparent registration-names of IDPs are not registered presently.

3. Transparent screening procedures and information feedback to family.

4. Family Reunification: Families are separated (father and one child in one camp and mother and other children in another zone).

5. Civilian nature of administration-presently the camp is administered by military personnel.

6. Right to information

7. Ability for aid agencies/NGO s to talk to the displaced

These are some of the advocacy issues that should be looked at in the next several weeks and these camps should be revisited in order to ascertain what progress have been made on these issues. [dbsjeyaraj.com]



at Manik Farm, Vavuniya, Sri Lanka. / UNHCR / Z. Sinclair

quick improvement.

Recently a team of volunteers returned after a stint at IDP camps in Manik Farm.

This is a brief compilation of the team's first-hand experience. Some areas that need to be addressed immediately have also been identified.

This authentic eye-witness account is presented here to provide readers with an idea of the tragic plight of the IDPs.

The need of the hour is to do all that is possible to alleviate their current suffering and facilitate speedy re-settlement of the people in their original places of habitation.

Once again I ask readers not to engage in ethnic-oriented recrimination about the IDP plight.

Please see a humanitarian tragedy as human beings and not as ethnic beings.

I must also state that this account is not the conventional fact-finding report but more of a sincere attempt to describe first-hand impressions of existential reality.

Here then is this eye-witness account: I.D.P. CAMPS IN MANIK FARM: AN EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNT

Condition from camp to camp

etables as the inmates were not receiving them.

Another issue of concern was that there were families in Zone 3 who were separated (for example we met a mother and 2 daughters in Zone 3 and they said the father and the other daughter are in Zone 2. This separation is a serious issue and so far authorities have not taken any constructive steps to reunify the families.

Zone 2 was quite congested and they were making arrangements to move some of the IDPs to the newly created Zone 5. Here in Zone 2 the NGOs were providing food for community cooking.

There were serious allegations of corruption here as one of the Grama Sevakha's (a Tamil) was in the habit of misappropriating what comes to the IDPs for other purposes. Some of the community leaders among the IDPs who raised the issue were threatened that they would be the first to be separated and taken to Zone five. Corruption seems rampant in these camps. Sadly those responsible mainly are Tamil officials (GS's).

Water queue were seen everywhere. We saw a child scooping

was now being used as open defecating areas. On both sides of the road you could see human waste. We stopped the vehicle to take photographs but the stench was too overpowering for us to stay long. This was in close proximity to where people were staying but in vacant spaces.

Zone 4 was the area where the final batch of IDPs who came out are being housed. This is a high security area and inmates are those who were in the vanni in the last stages of the battle. Most of them are heavily traumatized. We saw a child almost enveloped in sand. Water again was a major problem here. Living conditions in all camps need to be definitely improved.

Unquestionably there is no freedom of movement at all to these IDPs. They are being kept like prisoners. Many of them have well to do children and relatives in other parts of the country with whom they can stay. We saw an official who works in Colombo who had come to see his mother. He drove a luxury vehicle and looked as if he was from the upper strata of Sri Lankan Tamil society. His mother looked like an impoverished, mal-

Sri Lanka: MSF providing medical care for the displaced amid restrictions

While Sri Lanka's Ministry of Health has set up a system to provide initial treatment to the wounded and sick people in camps in the Vavuniya region following the conflict in the north, the needs remain immense and require around-the-clock medical presence in the camps to respond to all emergencies. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has the capacity to scale up surgical and medical care for the displaced inside the camps if authorizations are provided.

An inflatable MSF field hospital is currently the closest referral hospital for the 220,000 displaced people living in Manik Farm camp in northern Sri Lanka. Along with six hospitalization tents, the hospital is equipped with two operating theatres and an intensive care room. The MSF medical team working in this hospital is currently treating war-wounded patients and patients suffering from pneumonia, other severe respiratory infections and dehydration caused primarily by diarrhea. The 100-bed facility received its first patients on May 22 and its first surgical cases on May 26.

Ambulances arrive from the five zones of Manik Farm camp bearing some of the displaced people in need of hospitalization. Around 70 patients, lie on their beds under the white tents in the MSF field hospital, just across the road from Manik Farm.

In the operating theatre, MSF surgeons are performing six to 10 minor surgical procedures everyday, on people suffering from injuries caused by shell blasts, gunshots or accidents. MSF surgeons remove dead and infected tissues from wounds - several times if necessary - to try to avoid amputations. "We have lots of infected war wounds that have been poorly treated," describes Mike Newman, MSF surgeon. "For some wounds the treatment is coming weeks later, for others it is months later."

In the tent full of patients, a woman with a bandage around her head waits to be examined. Selva (patient names changed) was injured in the Vanni, the former conflict zone, on May 19. Her husband and oldest

daughter were also wounded. They wrapped some clothes around their wounds to stop the bleeding. The next day, they managed to reach the Omanthai crossing point to escape the fighting, where the army told them to go to the onsite clinic. But Selva refused, afraid that in her absence her family would be loaded onto a bus and taken to the camps, effectively separating them. Two days later, once in the Manik Farm camp, she sought care in the overcrowded camp hospital. It took another two days for a doctor to treat her and refer her to the MSF field hospital, by which time her wounds were infected.

Next to Selva's bed, an 18-year-old boy has multiple injuries: three-month-old bullet wounds in his arm and shoulder and one-week-old shrapnel embedded in his knee. With a home-made bandage around his knee, Dilan walked for two days out of the battle zone before being sent to the Manik Farm camp with a dressing over his knee. Still in great pain, he went to the camp hospital, where his dressing was changed and he was given some medicine. But over the following three days he received no follow up care. Though the medicine eased the pain, an infection was spreading. Eight days after his injury, Dilan arrived at the MSF field hospital.

There are probably hundreds of people like Selva or Dilan who have not received the close medical follow up war-wounded patients require. Though Ministry of Health doctors working in the camps are doing their best to cope with the number of patients, there is a need to provide around-the-clock service which can identify, treat and refer war-wounded patients and medical emergencies to the field hospital as quickly as possible. MSF has the capacity to scale up these services in the camps and continues to pursue discussions with the authorities in Colombo.

(*Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Doctors without Borders, Canada*)

"Urge Sri Lankan Government to release the 4 Tamil doctors"

Medical college students and doctors in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu organised a human chain on Gandhiji Road on Wednesday, July 1st appealing to the Central Government to urge Sri Lankan Government to release four Tamil doctors arrested by the Lankan police "just because they gave treatment to wounded Sri Lankan Tamils during the recent war."

The doctors in custody are Thambimuthu Sathyamurthy, Durairaja

Vasantha Raja, Veerakathi Shanmugha Raja and Ilanchezhiya Pallavan.

R. Venkateswaran, students chairman, Vijay Pandiyan, secretary, Prathiba and Preethi led the agitation. S. R. Marududurai, Professor, Thanjavur Medical College, inaugurated the human chain. Thanjai Ramamurthy, senior advocate, D. Mathivanan, General secretary of Transport Corporation Employees Union, offered felicitations.

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BREAK THE SILENCE USA Chicago, IL

"Break the Silence" is a team of three students who are trekking from Chicago, IL to Washington, DC by foot in an effort to highlight what the UN has labelled a "bloodbath" in Sri Lanka.

They were at Bloomington, IL on Friday June 5th from 12:30 - 4:30 PM, spent approximately four hours in the city, interacting with Mayor Stephen F. Stockton and other public officials regarding situations in Sri Lanka. They asked Bloomington city members for assistance in urging the US government to help alleviate the bloodbath in Sri Lanka. After Bloomington, the group made their way towards Springfield, IL and on to Washington, DC via Indianapolis, IN.

The trek is expected to last about 70 days to complete by foot. Being one of the most neglected countries in the world, Sri Lanka has unfolded into a silent and steady bloodbath.

On May 12 2009, New York

based Human Rights Watch confirmed the Sri Lankan army's use of heavy weapons directed against Tamil civilians in the "safe zone" using images captured by Digital Globe's WorldView and QuickBird satellites, between May 6 and May 10, 2009.

Although the Sri Lankan government has claimed an end to the war, over 300,000 Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs) are continuously forced into internment camps without access to food, medicine and water. People are continuing to die as a result of starvation, reports of sexual harassment including the raping of countless women and young girls by the military personnel and child abduction by the paramilitaries continue to emerge daily. The Government has denied international observers, including the UN, access to set up monitoring missions while pursuing with their bloodshed agendas in different guises. NGO's have also been denied access to assist in the relief efforts.

"Break the Silence" is an

organization without any political affiliations or motivations and its sole objective is to speak with as many individuals, politicians and media outlets in an effort to bring much needed attention to the crisis. While we ask the Obama Administration to engage in immediate relief efforts for the continuous civilian suffering in Sri Lanka, we also urge our Government to lead an international probe into alleged War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and possible genocide committed on the citizens of Sri Lanka. We believe international probe into the situation can act as a potential deterrent on continuous abuse against the civilian population in the island.

For more info, Contact:

Kannan Sri, Hon. BA Political Science, Team Lead, Break the Silence USA- Chicago to Washington, DC on Foot, Phone: Not Available for Public View, Fax: 312. 275.7355

E-mail: kannan@BreakTheSilenceUSA.com, Website: www.BreakTheSilenceUSA.com.

Chennai based IT professionals confer plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka

Father Jagath Gasper Tamil Maiyam, speaking to a group of Chennai based IT professionals appealed the audience to campaign at the international level to make a strong case of genocide on Tamils in Sri Lanka. He further said the primary need is to call to account for the number of people who were inside the war zone and the number survived.

Father Jagath Gasper spoke to more than 500 Information Technology and other professionals along with college students at a conference Loyola College on the 'current situation of Tamils in Sri Lanka,' on Sunday, June 28th.

The conference included several prominent Tamil activists on the panel of speakers.

A report on the conference by news portal TamilNational.com said:

Father Jagath Gasper spoke about the people suffering at the hands of SL army in the camps; Arul George of human rights group Peoples Union of Civil Liberties, Chennai spoke on IDPs and war crimes; Viduthalai Rajendran delivered a speech supporting the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam; Professor Manivannan of Madras University spoke about the sovereignty of Eelam Tamils; writer JD Crews delivered a speech about the sufferings of Indian fishermen and Writer Poonguzhali delivered

a speech on the history of the Tamils struggle for self-determination.

Father Jagath Gasper speaking at the conference said the Eelam Tamil issue is not simply humanitarian issue as said by many in the international community, it is a genocidal problem.

Not only the international community but all the regional powers that supported Sri Lanka in the war against the Tamils share the blame of participating in the genocidal war, he said. He added that China experimented with its lethal weapons in the war against Tamils in Sri Lanka.

He also accused Tamil Nadu politicians as one of the cause for the defeat of Eelam Tamil freedom struggle, he said, "Fundamental indecency and immorality of Tamil Nadu politics also crushed the liberation struggle in Tamil Eelam."

Father Jagath Gasper blamed that the international community abetted the Tamil genocide by withholding the actual statistics of people inside the safe zone.

Father Jagath Gasper appreciated the honest and sincere effort of the group that organized the conference. He said the IT Professionals group is much focused unlike other political groups in taking the Eelam Tamil issue.

The conference was organized by 'savetamils' google group.

Elie Wiesel: Sri Lanka's victimization of Tamil people must stop

Holocaust survivor, Jewish icon, and Nobel laureate, Professor Elie Wiesel, in a message posted on his website said: "Wherever minorities are being persecuted we must raise our voices to protest. According to reliable sources, the Tamil people are being disenfranchised and victimized by the Sri Lanka authorities. This injustice must stop. The Tamil people must be allowed to live in peace and flourish in their homeland."

Nobel Peace Laureate, Prof. Elie Wiesel in 1986, Prof. Wiesel won the Nobel Prize for Peace, and soon after, Marion and Elie Wiesel established The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity.

For his literary and human rights activities, Prof. Wiesel has received numerous awards including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal and the Medal of Liberty Award, and the rank of Grand-Croix in the French Legion of Honor.

Dr Elyn Shander, a Connecticut physician and a member of US-activist group,

Tamils Against Genocide, has been working with the Elie Wiesel Foundation, updating the organization on the ground situation in the NorthEast. The Elie Wiesel Foundation has been receiving regular updates of the condition of the 300,000 Tamil civilians in the internment camps., Dr Shander said.

"We are very grateful that he [Prof. Wiesel] has responded to our request to support the Tamil people. Now that it is official on his website, we are certain that other institutions that are involved in holocaust and war-crime research will take up Sri Lanka case," Dr Shander told TamilNet.

Shander is also the vice president of a new organization UST-PAC (United States Tamil Political Action Committee), an independent democratic organization dedicated to lawful means to restore Tamil Peoples right to self-determination and democratic self rule in their traditional homeland.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter appointed Elie Wiesel as Chairman of the President's



Commission on the Holocaust. In 1980, he became the Founding Chairman of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. He is also the Founding President of the Paris-based Universal Academy of Cultures and the Chairman of The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, an organization he and his wife created to fight indifference, intolerance and injustice. Elie Wiesel has received more than 100 honorary degrees from institutions of higher learning.

Courtesy: TamilNet

Tips on Diamonds

1. Diamond Colour & Clarity Grading Scale (see attached)
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2) Gemstones of the World by Walter Schumann.

3) Astrogems

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Comparison of colour-grading scale		Clarity grading scale	
Colourless	D	Pure	Flawless
	E		
Near Colourless	F	Very Very Small Inclusion	Internally Flawless
	G		
	H		
Slightly Tinted	I	Very Small Inclusion	VVS1
	J		
Very Light Yellow	K	Small Inclusion	VVS2
	L		
	M		
Light Yellow	N	Included	VS1
	O		
Yellow	P	Included	VS2
	Q		
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Abducted Tamil journalist tells of mother's anguish

Yet another Sri Lankan journalist was kidnapped on Jun 24th, near her home in the capital Colombo. She was held for a day by people claiming to be the police.

Krishni Ifham, a mother of two children is a Tamil reporter who works for media development NGO Internews. She said the kidnapers had warned her to give up journalism altogether, according to BBC.

Krishni's remarks about her ordeal, published in the Sunday Times of June 28th tell the anguish faced by many parents and others who fear for the safety of their loved ones:

Journalist was taken in van from Wattala to Kandy

Journalist and NGO employee Krishni Kandasamy, the most recent victim of media harassment, said she had worried about how her disappearance would affect her mother's health all the while she was being held by her abductors.

"My mother is in the habit of calling me at office several times a day," she said. "I knew how anxious she would be the moment she heard I had not turned up at the office. I begged my abductors to allow me to tell my mother that

I was okay."

Ms. Kandasamy, a resident of Wattala, Colombo, was abducted last week by three men in civilian clothes who claimed to be policemen. She was driven to an unknown destination and questioned. When she was finally dropped off, she found herself in Kandy, from where she had to find her way back to Colombo.

She said she had stepped into the street to head to work when she was stopped by three men in a van who told her she was required to give a statement to the police. When she insisted that she had to inform her mother first, she was forced into the van and driven away.

"It was then around 8.30 am. It was around 2.45 in the afternoon when I was taken to a room for questioning. During the long drive, I had no idea where I was being taken," Ms. Kandasamy said.

Because she kept saying she had to call her mother to say she was safe, she was finally allowed to make the call, just before she was led in for questioning.

"They let me make the call from my mobile phone. I told my mother I had been taken in by the police for questioning and that she need not worry. When she



Krishni Ifham

asked where the police station was, I said I did not know. I was about to tell her to inform my husband when the phone was taken away from me."

Her mother then called Mrs. Kandasamy's husband, Ifham Nisam, also a journalist, and a few others, who immediately started calling police stations in the Wattala area. None of the stations said that anyone by the name of Kandasamy was being detained.

After being questioned about her work, Ms. Kandasamy was led back to the van and driven for more than two hours before being finally dropped off in Kandy.

"I told the men I had no money to take a bus. They gave me Rs. 200 and asked me to go home. I got into a bus and called my husband and told him what had happened," she said.

Nirupama Menon Rao is India's new Foreign Secretary

Nirupama Rao, India's Ambassador to China, will be the next Foreign Secretary becoming the second woman to hold the post. The 1973-batch IFS officer will succeed Shivshankar Menon who will be retiring on July 31.

During her chequered career, the 58-year-old seasoned diplomat



Nirupama Rao, India's ambassador to China, speaks during the Global Business Forum in Macau June 12, 2009 [Reuters pic]

has served in various key positions, including India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and China and first woman spokesperson of the External Affairs Ministry.

During her tenure as High Commissioner in Colombo, SLFP minister Anura Bandaranayake in a parliamentary speech accused her of interfering in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. However, President Mahinda Rajapaksa later conveyed his regrets over the minister's



MONSOON NEWSLINES

remarks.

On the new Foreign Secretary's appointment, The Hindu reported that at a time when the Ministry of External Affairs is headed by new and relatively inexperienced ministers, the incoming Foreign Secretary will have to interact with a Prime Minister's Office that is playing an even larger role in strategic and diplomatic affairs than it did a decade ago.

The current Foreign Minister SM Krishna was a successful Chief Minister of Karnataka and the ministers of state, Dr Shashi Tharoor, a former UN Under Secretary General, and Smt. Preneet Kaur, wife of a former Chief Minister, come from Kerala and Punjab respectively.

Daughter of an Indian army officer and a postgraduate in English literature, Nirupama Menon Rao is married to Sudhakar Rao who is currently the Chief Secretary of the Karnataka State.

As a poet and author she is credited with a publication, Rain Rising Poems (2004).

"We watch a sensitive poet grapple with her physical universe as also with ancestry and roots and the search for roots", says a review to her book.

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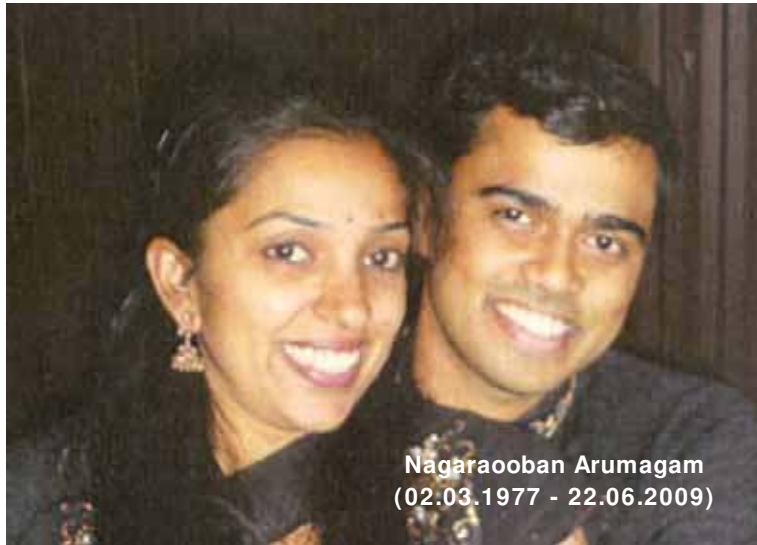
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Tributes flow for Australian Tamil doctor killed in car crash



Nagaraoban Arumagam
(02.03.1977 - 22.06.2009)

Hundreds of Australians have paid tribute to Dr Nagarebun "Ruban" Arumagam, a Tamil paediatrician tragically killed last week in a tragic road accident in Australia on 22 June. The 32-year-old Paediatrician was commemorated Monday at a moving funeral as tributes from politicians, colleagues, former patients and members of the community marked a week of mourning.

Arumagam, described in the Daily Telegraph as a "genuine life saver", was killed whilst returning from a gruelling weekend shift where he had saved the life of a child at Dubbo Base Hospital, 5 hours away from his home in Sydney.

Politicians from all sides of Australian politics expressed their condolences, with National MP Mark Coulton highlighting the contribution that Dr Arumagam to the people of western New South Wales in parliament days after his death.

"I would like to acknowledge my sadness for his wife (...) parents, and his brother" Coulton added, describing in detail Ruban's efforts in saving a premature baby and diagnosing a child with leukaemia only hours before his car veered off the road in the rural town of Mudgee.

Doctor Rubans death has

ignited national debate over the long hours faced by medical practitioners, with Parliamentary Secretary for Health Mark Butler saying the tragedy highlighted the long hours, intense travel and dangers doctors faced in "helping others maintain their health and well being".

"He was extremely busy at Dubbo Hospital but despite the business and stress of the jobs, he was always a kind and humane person to his colleagues and his patients", said colleague Dr Nadanachandran at the funeral, sentiments echoed by dozens of former patients who called up the hospital and voiced their despair after hearing the news.

A champion for the rights of Tamils in Sri Lanka's North East, Ruban was described as an "inspirational figure" by the members of the youth Diaspora, who have labelled him a "role model of dedication and humanity".

Arriving from Sri Lanka in the early nineties, Arumagam graduated from the University of New South Wales in 2002, before completing his Paediatric residence at Westmead Children's Hospital in 2008. Ruban was on the last week of his secondment at Dubbo, and was known for his exceptional skills, compassion and modesty.

[TamilNet]

Bishop Malcolm Ranjith is New Archbishop of Colombo

Pope Benedict XVI has appointed Archbishop Dr. Malcolm Ranjith as the New Archbishop of Colombo on June 16th, reported a communiqué of the Apostolic Nunciature in Sri Lanka.

Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith who was Bishop of Ratnapura from 1995-2001 was also Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo. He was the Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (2005-2009), Apostolic Nuncio to Indonesia and East Timor (2004-2005), Adjunct Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (2001-2004) and head of the Vatican's Congregation of the Liturgy.

This appointment follows Archbishop Oswald Gomis tendering his resignation upon reaching retirement age.



Former Governor General of Canada passes away

The Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc became Governor General of Canada on February 8, 1995, following a long and distinguished career of public service. An Acadian born in Memramcook, New Brunswick in 1927, he was the first Governor General from the Maritimes.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education at 'Université St-Joseph, Memramcook and studied French Civilization at l'Université de Paris. He also holds a number of honorary degrees.

Mr. LeBlanc spent nine years as a teacher. He quickly developed strong beliefs about the important role educators play in our society, which he continues to hold today.

In 1960, he turned to journal-

ism, working as a correspondent for Radio-Canada. This led to Mr. LeBlanc serving as Press Secretary to Prime Ministers Lester B. Pearson and Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

Mr. LeBlanc was elected to the House of Commons in 1972, representing the riding of Westmorland-Kent in New Brunswick. He was a cabinet minister from 1974 to 1979 and 1980 to 1984.

As Canada's longest-serving fisheries minister, Mr. LeBlanc won a lasting reputation as a friend of the fishermen. He helped to establish Canada's 200-mile fishing limit and to shape the International Law of the Sea. Under his leadership, conservation and resource management



encouraged strong growth in the fishing industry during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Mr. LeBlanc became a Senator in 1984 and was appointed Speaker of the Senate in 1993.

The Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc passed away on June 24, 2009.

Sri Lanka gives China first exclusive investment zone

By Shihar Aneez

Sri Lanka has granted China an exclusive economic zone in its first post-war effort to attract more investment from Asia's largest economy, the country's investment promotion agency said on Jul 1st.

Hong Kong-based conglomerate Huichen Investment Holdings Ltd. will invest \$28 million to develop the zone located in Mirigama, which is 55 km (34 miles) from the main port in the capital Colombo and 40 km from the international airport.

"The Chinese company will establish, develop, and market the new special economic zone," A.M.C. Kulasekera, BOI deputy director general, said in a statement.

China has long had ties with Sri Lanka and was a steadfast ally in the last stage of a 25-year war with the Tamil Tigers, using diplomatic heft at the United Nations to keep a Western-led move to impose a truce off the Security Council agenda.

It also sold weapons to the government as it built up its armed forces to defeat the separatist rebels.

China's deepening ties with Colombo have stoked concern in the island's giant neighbour India which fears it is part of Beijing's policy of strategic encirclement by building close relations with all its neighbours.

Sri Lanka declared total victory on May 18 in a war that has been a drag on its \$40 billion economy for decades. It is expecting foreign direct investment this year to surpass the record \$889 million seen in 2008.

Already, Chinese firms have built or are building similar turnkey investment zones in African countries, including Ethiopia and Zambia, to house manufacturing and other businesses, besides their mainstay mineral and resource extraction firms.

Huichen has interests in coal, metal and gem mining mostly in Mongolia and Africa, and also in manufacturing of agricultural machinery,

buses, cars and motorcycles, according to its English-language web site.

It also sells finished gemstones, and is preparing to add Sri Lankan sapphire and opal to its offerings, the web site said.

Already, China's government and Chinese firms are taking part in two major projects, building the Hambantota port in southern Sri Lanka and the financing of a coal-fired electricity plant.

To build the second and third phases of the 900 megawatt coal-fired Norochcholai power plant, China offered an \$891 million loan with a tenure of 20 years at 2 percent, state media reported this week.

China's Exim bank also gave \$360 million to finance the first phase of the Hambantota port, in which Chinese firms are building the harbour and fuel oil bunkering terminals to service ships plying the busy sea lanes at the Indian Ocean island's south.

[Reuters]

Canadians Launches CCSL to help the IDPs in Sri Lanka

Canadians Concerned about Sri Lanka (CCSL) was launched on June 30, 2009 at the Toronto-based Canadian Center for Victims of Torture. CCSL is a coalition of faith groups, labour groups, community groups, academics, students and individuals.

"We formed CCSL because of the overwhelming response over concern for Tamil neighbours" said John Cartwright, President of Toronto and York Region Labour Council and one of the convenors of the Coalition.

One of the major concerns of CCSL spokespersons was the fate of over 300,000 Tamil Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who are being detained in overcrowded, internment camps with no freedom of movement, and with little or no access to food, water, shelter, medical aid and other necessities.

Their plight was highlighted by Manjula Selvarajah, Media Coordinator for the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC), who spoke of the concern felt by Tamil Canadians for the IDPs in the internment camps, some of whom have deeply concerned family members in Canada. Jehan Ahamed, a member of the Muslim Sri Lankan community pointed out that detention of IDPs was not solely a Tamil problem and that other minority groups have also been persecuted. "We must find a

way to go forward" he said.

Mulugeta Abai, Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) noted that while the Centre has provided services to individuals from 136 different countries from around the world, torture survivors from Sri Lanka have consistently been among the largest client population served. He spoke of a recent incident in which Canadian Parliamentarian Bob Rae was barred from entering Sri Lanka, and wondered if the Sri Lankan government has something to hide. He asked that international observers and humanitarian aid workers should be allowed immediate access to the war-affected region in the country.

Sharryn Aiken, a member of the Canadian Academics for Tamil Rights said "there is no hope for lasting, sustainable peace without justice" and that impunity will only further the divide between the Sinhalese and the minority groups. She called for the investigation and prosecution of crimes against humanity and war crimes in Sri Lanka.

CCSL introduced Coalition goals, including pressing the Canadian government and international bodies to pressure the Sri Lankan government to provide aid workers and the media full access to IDP camps; create expedited immigration processes for the

IDPs; call for prosecution of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by any parties during the war; and advocate for Sri Lanka to put in place a long-term political solution that incorporates the genuine aspirations of all minority groups.

CCSL acknowledged Canadian government efforts to push the Sri Lankan government for a resolution of the short term and long term issues in Sri Lanka, and called for further definitive action. Francisco Rico Martinez, Co-Director of the FCJ Refugee Centre and former President of the Canadian Council for Refugees pointed out that the Canadian Government's recently announced expedited family reunification process was completely inadequate. He called on the Canadian government to instead introduce a process similar to the one arranged for Kosovo refugees where Canada took direct action to immediately bring war-affected individuals to Canada for safety.

CCSL will be working to build and strengthen the coalition over the next few months, and work collaboratively to urge the Canadian government and international players to address the urgent humanitarian situation, as well as continue to work on a lasting, peaceful solution.

Opinion Survey Finds Kashmiris say They are Being Used by India and Pakistan

By Ravi Khanna

Two US based research institutes (the Program on International Policy Attitudes and the WorldPublicOpinion.Org) have conducted a survey in Indian and Pakistani Kashmir regions on what Kashmiris want. The survey, which the groups say is the first of its kind on both sides of the de facto border, shows that Kashmiris feel they are being used by rivals India and Pakistan to advance those countries' agendas. For both India and Pakistan, Kashmir is strategic and has become a matter of prestige over the years.

Differences unresolved

Clashes between angry protesters and police are frequent in Indian Kashmir.

The latest was on June 19. Kashmiris were protesting an alleged rape of two women by Indian troops deployed to quell a 20-year-old Muslim separatist bid. India says the campaign is aided by Pakistan, but Islamabad denies the charge.

India controls two-thirds of Kashmir and Pakistan the rest. The UN line that divides the region is called the Line of Control or LOC.

Both sides claim the entire region, and several Muslim separatist groups in Indian Kashmir, are fighting for either independence or a merger with Pakistan.

Public opinion survey

A recent public opinion survey on both sides of the LOC shows that Kashmiris feel they are being used by India and Pakistan.

"The people there think that India and Pakistan are using Kashmir to advance their own political agendas, their own political interests whatever they may be," said Colin Irwin, a senior fellow at the University of Liverpool and the survey's chief investigator. He did similar work for peace builders in Northern Ireland.

He says it is crucial to ask the Kashmiris what they want. "In Northern Ireland we got to a solution by actually asking people what they wanted, and what they would accept and what they would put up with," Irwin said.

India and Pakistan began a peace process about five years ago but the dialogue was stalled by last year's terror attacks in Mumbai. India blamed the attacks on militants of the Pakistan-based terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba and wants Islamabad to bring them to justice.

Yashwant Deshmukh of the New Delhi-based Center for Voting Opinion also took part in the survey.

He says the most acceptable solution to Kashmiris is a confederation with open borders and local control in all regions. "Something which Pakistani Kashmiris would be really keen to talk on,"



Soldier patrolling the Line of Control



Line of Control - barb wire across the border

Deshmukh said. "Indian Kashmiris probably would not be that keen but they can do with that."

He says an autonomous Kashmir is also acceptable to both. "A majority of them are actually leaning into the direction that this might be a probable solution of that entire state being autonomous," Deshmukh adds.

But, he says there is a disconnect between what the two governments think Kashmiris want and what the populations really desire.

He says as the neighbors try to reach a solution, they should realize how the conflict is affecting the day-to-day lives of the Kashmiris, and provide better governance.

"Giving them more opportunity to talk to each other, interact with each other across the Line of Control, having more economic ties, having more cultural ties," Deshmukh said.

He says more people-to-people exchange across the LOC should be encouraged if the two neighbors are to reach a solution.

[voa news/

Greenland's peaceful passage to independence



Denmark's Queen Margrethe (C) and Prince Consort Henrik (R) arrive at the cathedral of Nuuk, Annaasissitta Oqaluffia, June 21, 2009 to celebrate the start of the Greenland Self-government.

The following editorial appeared first in the Boston Globe:

"If it bleeds, it leads," goes the old motto of the news business.

If this rule explains coverage of local crime stories and traffic accidents, it's even more applicable to global conflicts with their origins in old colonial conquests.

Those sad legacies have included bloodbaths in Vietnam, Cambodia, East Timor, Sri Lanka, India-Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran-Iraq, Iraq-Kuwait, Israel-Palestine, Chechnya, Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, and all too many more.

A saner way to escape history's nightmare could be glimpsed in Greenland's peaceful accession to independence from Denmark, an event celebrated Sunday on the world's largest island in a ceremony attended by the Danish queen.

Greenlanders, 90 per cent of whom are indigenous Inuits, voted overwhelmingly in a referendum last November to exercise self-rule and eventually to be independent.

Denmark, which has ruled that Arctic land since 1721, accepted the will of the people graciously.

Ironically, this rare version of decolonization was aided by

the effects of global warming. With the ice cap over Greenland melting progressively, it has become possible to begin mining long-inaccessible gold, diamonds, coal, and zinc. And seismological analyzes project oil reserves of more than 110 billion tons. The revenue from these newly available resources will allow its 57,000 residents to reduce, and eventually eliminate, their reliance on a subsidy from Denmark of \$550 million a year.

Other post-colonial conflict zones have had no such windfalls. But many of them could nevertheless learn something from the pacific way that Greenlanders pursued self-determination -- and the reasonable way that Denmark relinquished its hold over another people.



Picture shows a fjord behind the town of Ilulissat in Greenland in this photo taken August 16, 2007. New York, Boston and other cities on North America's northeast coast could face a rise in sea level this century that would exceed forecasts for the rest of the planet if Greenland's ice sheet keeps melting as fast as it is now, researchers said May 27, 2009. Sea levels off the northeast coast of North America could rise by 12 to 20 inches more than other coastal areas if the Greenland glacier-melt continues to accelerate at its present pace, the researchers reported

World Bank Internet, Mobile Phones Key to Growth

By VOA News

A World Bank report said access to affordable high-speed Internet and mobile phone services are key to economic growth in developing countries.

The report released Tuesday found that for every 10 percent increase in high speed Internet connections, there is a 1.3 percent increase in economic growth.

The study said mobile phones are the single most powerful way to reach and deliver public and private services to people in remote and rural areas in developing countries.

It also said broadband Internet is the foundation for local information technology (IT) services. The World Bank said these services create youth employment, increase productivity and exports and promote social inclusion.

The report said evidence from Brazil, Ghana and India shows that governments using modern Internet technology can become more efficient, transparent and responsive.





Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario elects new Board & moves into New Office

By Siva Sivapragasam

"Aging is not 'lost youth' but a new stage of Opportunity and Strength"
(Betty Friedan)

Completing more than 20 years of caring and sharing among their members, the Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario has recently moved into a new office and also elected a new Board of Directors at its Annual General meeting held on the May 7th.

The new office is situated at 5200 Finch Avenue East in Scarborough, an easily accessible location for its senior citizens.

Among the aims and objects of the Centre are to plan, direct and carry out cultural, social and recreational activities for the senior citizens of the Tamil community in particular and others in general. The Centre also works with



Board of Directors: Seated: Left to Right: Mrs. Nages.Thuraijasingham (Director), Mrs.Ira Balasubramaniam (Director), Mr. Maya Kandiah (Past President), Mr. K.Vigneswaran (Treasurer), Mr.S. Sri Jeyanathan (President), Mrs.K. Vivegananthan (Secretary), Mr.S. Rasanayagam (Vice President), Mrs. Pathma Krishnamoorthy (Director)
Standing: Left to Right: Mr.K. Saravanabhavan (Asst.Secretary), Mr. A. Shanmugarajah (Asst.Treasurer), Mr.S.Arunasalam (Director), Mr.C. Santhirasekari (Editor), Mr.T. Paramanathan (Director), Mr.T. Ponnambalam (Director), Mr.K. Kamalanathan (Director)

other groups/agencies in co-ordinating activities which promote and assist in the integration and adaptation to Canadian life. The Centre helps to assess the immediate and long-term needs of the Senior Tamils and explores ways

of meeting such needs. A long cherished dream of the Centre is to establish and maintain a recreation cum cultural centre and community home. The Centre celebrates religious and cultural festivals, conducts wellness pro-



Opening ceremony by Senior Tamils Members and invited guests

grams, tours and trips, and also provides opportunities to its members to meet, greet and share information.

Over the past twenty years, The Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario has played an integral part in the well-being of the Tamil community and is an impressive piece to the mosaic of the great

multi-cultural, vibrant province of Ontario.

The activities of the Centre make their members believe that the longer they live, the more beautiful life becomes.

Seen here are some pictures taken at the recently held AGM and the Opening of the new office.

Senior Tamils' Centre celebrated their annual "Canada Day"

Senior Tamils' Centre celebrated their annual "Canada Day" celebrations with two prominent Members of Parliament as guests of honour. Member of Parliament for Oak Ridges-Markham Mr. Paul Calandra and Member of Parliament for Don Valley West Mr. Robert Oliphant were the guests of honour. Other special guests were Mr. Kanagasabapathy and Mr. Sripathy from the Tamil community. Both the special guests spoke in Tamil and gave good information about Canada and how governments helped the communities in various ways.

The celebration was held on

the 27th June, 2009 at Atlanta party hall and there were about 400 seniors attended the event. The event was opened by hoisting the Canadian flag by Mr. Robert Oliphant, lighting the oil lamp by former president of STC and his wife Mr. and Mrs. Sivaramalingam. Cake cutting was done by Mr.and Mrs.Christy Moses.

In the photograph, you can see both the Members of Parliament, Mr. Harry Jeganathan, president of the riding association of Markham-Unionville of Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario and some members of STC.



Hary Jeganathan, Robert Oliphant, MP-Don Valley West, Paul Calandra, MP-Markham-Oak Ridges, P. Kanagasabapathy, Former Principal of Mahajana College, Sri Lanka



Senior Tamils members and invited guests

Newly formed organization holds fundraiser for Tamil children

United Tamil Council of Canada (UTCC), a newly formed group consisting members of Tamil community say they have the ability and contacts to work with the Government of Canada, Sri Lanka and India towards an amicable solution in Sri Lanka.

The organization's recent fundraiser to support UNHCR through the Canadian High commission in Sri Lanka is the first of many planned events.

United Tamil Council of Canada (UTCC) hosted a cocktail reception to raise funds in support

of Tamil children affected by the conflict in Sri Lanka on June 25, 2009.

"We are very happy with the support we have received from the Canadian public to help Tamil children in Sri Lanka" says Dr. Pon Sivaji, chair of the fundraiser.

Kula Sellathurai, president of UTCC added "The project will be executed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), recommended by the Canadian High Commission in Sri Lanka. This is a zero overheads

event, with 100% of the funds donated going directly to the project with full public accountability and transparency"

The event also had many political luminaries attending a Tamil event after a long time. Some of the MPP's were Gerry Phillips, Margaret Best, Amrti Mangat (Liberals) and Michael Prue (NDP). MP's were Maria Minna, John McCallum, Andrew Kania, John McKay, Derek Lee, Yasmin Ratansi and Michelle Simpson.

Photo Courtesy: Ken Photo



Board Members



Liberal MPs

'Camp system is all too clearly the latest stage of genocide'

By Martin Shaw

Sri Lanka - camps, media ...genocide?

What kind of violence has the Sri Lankan state been committing against its Tamil civilian population as the island's civil war ended; on what scale and with what intentions? Martin Shaw explores the difficult terrain where war, atrocity and genocide meet.

The civil war in Sri Lanka is receding from the international headlines, as crises in Iran and celebrity deaths occupy the media's limited space and attention-span. A very large number of its Tamil victims are still, more than six weeks after the fighting ended, confined in government forces in a complex of forty camps in the north east of the country. An estimated 280,000 civilians - originally displaced from their homes by the fighting between the Sri Lankan military and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (TamilTigers / LTTE), and in some cases fleeing from the brutal regime in the LTTE's former "liberated" zone - are being held, generally against their will.



Jewish children behind Barbed wires 1945

President Mahinda Rajapaksa, in his "victory speech", told Sri Lanka's parliament that "our heroic forces have sacrificed their lives to protect Tamil civilians", and he took "personal responsibility" for protecting Tamils. Yet his government is now scandalously confining this huge population - who have already suffered not only from the LTTE but from Sri Lankan bombardments which caused probably tens of thousands of deaths and injuries - in squalid conditions. The government has officially backtracked, under international pressure, on plans to hold the displaced, while screening them for potential "terrorists", for up to three years; it now says that 80% will be resettled by the end of 2009.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) comments: "The government's history of restricting the rights of displaced persons through rigid pass systems and strict restrictions on leaving the camps heightens concerns that they will be confined in camps much longer, possibly for years."

In the shadows

The eruption in Iran has in a

twisted way done the Sri Lankan government a service. In any case, Colombo has been ruthless in restricting international journalists and rights organisations: in May 2009 even the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was barred from Menik Farm, the largest camp, and Channel 4's Nick Paton Walsh was deported. Sinhala nationalism remains oppressively dominant within the majority population, and critics of the government face an atmosphere of intimidation and even terror: Sri Lankan journalists have frequently been murdered, assaulted and detained.

Although human-rights organisations and western governments have continued to protest at the situation, the Sri Lankan government has found friends in the United Nations's new Human Rights Council; it was able to pass a resolution there on 27 May 2009 praising its own commitment to human rights (endorsed by such notable bastions of freedom as China, Cuba, Russia, Pakistan and Egypt). The vigorous campaigns by members of the Tamil diasporas have ensured that the situation has not been entirely forgot-

ten, but the interned Tamils don't have the mobile-phone access that (in the early post-election stages at least) so embarrassed the Iranian regime. There are some pictures of the camps on the internet, but no iconic images of Tamil suffering have entered the commercial, established media in the manner of Iran's Neda Sultan - or indeed of Fikret Alic, the emaciated prisoner pictured behind barbed-wire in the Trnopolje camp in Bosnia in summer 1992.

Adire predicament

It is often said that pictures tell their own story. However what is important is the media narrative and the momentum behind the issue: in both the Iranian and Bosnian cases the crises were much more strongly established in the dominant media (and the exposure of the experiences of Neda Sultan and Fikret Alic) fed this. In the case of Sri Lanka, sadly, the level and intensity of coverage - despite the impressive Tamil campaigns - has not matched these.

Moreover, what was important in Bosnia was that Trnopolje was



Tamil children behind Barbed wires 2009

described as a "concentration" camp - so the image facilitated the connection between the atrocious treatment of Bosnian Muslim prisoners and the murderous history of concentration camps in Europe under Nazism. The Bosnian-Serbian government that was responsible for Trnopolje naturally disputed this appellation, describing it merely as a holding centre for "refugees"; today the lowest-common-denominator descriptor seems to be a "detention" camp.

The Sri Lankan government also prefers its camps to be seen as "refugee" camps. However once people are detained, camps are clearly more than that; and where there is a sustained policy of concentrating detainees then the term "concentration camp" applies. In war, these camps - invented at the beginning of the 20th century to describe the enclosures in which the Spanish detained Cubans and the British detained Boerfarmers and their families during the South African wars - are usually designed to corral a civilian population seen as potentially sympathetic to a guerrilla enemy (as Tamils evidently are still seen despite the LTTE's defeat).

Totalitarian regimes, including Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany, have also used camps to concentrate other civilian groups - actual and potential political opponents, trade unionists, and ethnic "enemies" such as Jews. The complication in using the "concentration camp" category is that such regimes went on to develop their camps into something more - in the Soviet case, labour camps, in the Nazi case, extermination camps. Clearly, not all concentration camps are "death" camps in the Nazi sense; but all concentration camps tend to produce death, as well as widespread physical and mental harm. Since their premise is enmity towards the interned civilians, the history of concentration-camps has been marked, from the Boerwar onwards, by callous disregard for their welfare, and often worse.

As Human Rights Watch remarked of the Sri Lankan situation on 11 June 2009:

"Virtually all camps are overcrowded, some holding twice the number recommended by the

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Food distribution is chaotic, there are shortages of water, and sanitation facilities are inadequate. Camp residents do not have access to proper medical services and communicable diseases have broken out in the camps."

What is more, "the military camp administration has imposed numerous restrictions on humanitarian organizations working in the camps, such as limiting the number of vehicles and staff members that can enter the camps, which has delayed the provision of much-needed aid. The military does not allow organizations into the camps to conduct protection activities, and a ban on talking to the camp residents leaves them further isolated."

If reports of violence and disappearances are added to this, the situation of the interned Tamils appears dire.

A "rolling" genocide?

The western fixation with the Nazi holocaust means that there is an obvious political temptation to link all anti-civilian violence with the Nazi model. The pro-Tamil United States-based academic Francis Boyle, in his posts, sees a sixty-year "rolling" genocide in which Sinhalese governments of Ceylon (the country's name at independence in 1948) and Sri Lanka have sought "to annihilate the Tamils and to steal their lands and natural resources. This is what Hitler and the Nazis called lebensraum - "living space" for the Sinhala at the expense of the Tamils." In this perspective, the camp system is all too clearly the latest stage of genocide - although other Tamil advocates date genocide back to the anti-Tamil pogroms in 1983 in response to which the LTTE campaign began.

The idea of "rolling" genocide, first developed (I think) by Madeleine Albright to distinguish the Sudanese campaign in Darfur from the "volcanic" genocide in Rwanda, suggests discontinuity in a history of genocide - albeit, in the Darfur case, within two or three years rather than six decades. However in many cases, there may be genocidal "moments" (as the genocide historian, Dirk Moses, has suggested of colonialism) in stories of oppression - decades or even



centuries long - which do not, taken as a whole, constitute processes of genocide (see A Dirk Moses ed., *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* [Berghahn, 2008]).

There may be sporadic genocidal massacres, rapes and expulsions, or even sustained campaigns, at particular points in these histories. Something like this seems to be true in the Sri Lankan case: no one doubts the long history of Sinhalese nationalist oppression against the Tamil community since independence, which includes moments like 1983 which can be plausibly seen as genocidal outbursts. But the history as a whole is not simply one of genocide.

Indeed the dedication of the LTTE to armed struggle against the Sri Lankan state helped turn a history of oppression and resistance into one of brutal insurgency and counterinsurgency (see *The trouble with guns: Sri Lanka, South Africa, Ireland*", 10 June 2009). We know however that counterinsurgency is one of the most common contexts of genocidal violence. It remains to be seen - since most of the survivors are locked away from the world's media and the Sri Lankan government is blocking all attempts at independent investigation of the recent violence - how far the Sri Lankan army went in the direction of deliberate atrocity as opposed to brutal disregard for civilians. Here, indiscriminate allegations of a long-running Sri Lankan genocide paradoxically blunt the real questions: what kind of violence did the Sri Lankan state commit against its Tamil civilian population, on what scale and with what intentions?

The continuing concentration of over 250,000 people in the camps both blocks the search for answers to these questions, and itself constitutes a most serious crime. If the doors are not opened quickly, this will raise questions of whether the government seriously intends a restoration of Tamil society in the conquered zone. This would indeed pose a question of genocide, in the sense of the deliberate destruction of a population group in its home territory.

Martin Shaw is a historical sociologist of war and global politics, and professor of international relations and politics at the University of Sussex. His books include *War and Genocide* (Polity, 2003), *The New Western Way of War* (Polity, 2005), and *What is Genocide?* (Polity, 2007). His website <http://www.martinshaw.org/>



By Lisa Schlein

The Inter-Parliamentary Union is calling on the government of Sri Lanka to mount a thorough investigation of the murders of three Members of Parliament, two of them Tamils. The IPU's Human Rights Committee, which has wrapped up its latest session, has examined cases of abuse of some 300 MPs in 29 countries.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union says the Sri Lankan government no longer has any reason for not investigating the murders of the Parliamentarians now that its long-running civil war with the Tamil Tiger rebels is over.

Chair of the IPU's Human Rights Committee, Canadian Senator, Sharon Carstairs, says the government has always maintained it was unable to investigate the murders because they occurred in rebel-held territory. She says that excuse no longer exists.

She tells VOA, Tamil Parliamentarians are subject to arbitrary arrest, harassment and intimidation. She says her Committee is concerned about the situation of 12 Tamil Parliamentarians. She says they essentially have been stripped of their rights of freedom of move-

Inter-Parliamentary Union urges Sri Lanka to Probe the Murder of Tamil MPs

ment and of their ability to perform their legislative duties.

-She says the Tamil Parliamentarians are reluctant to leave the capital, Colombo, because their security is not guaranteed.

-"So, there is great fear among the Tamil Parliamentarians," Carstairs said. "So, what we hope from Sri Lanka at this point is to get a new signal from them that Tamil Parliamentarians will have freedom of movement, they will have adequate security, they will be full participants of the government of Sri Lanka because they are duly elected Parliamentarians."

-The IPU Committee is also very concerned about the cases of two Parliamentarians in Iraq. Hareth Al-Obaidi, who was the Vice-Chair of Iraq's Human Rights Committee, was murdered on June 12. His colleague, Mohammed Al-Dainy, who also was a member of the Committee, disappeared on February 5th.

-Carstairs says Al-Dainy eventually surfaced in another country. But, she says 19 of his family members and staff were arrested and some were tortured.

-"Now both these men, and this is what I think is important, had both called for the creation of



Canadian Senator Sharon Carstairs

a Commission of Inquiry in cases of torture, rape and death in Iraqi prisons," Carstairs said. "And, so, they essentially were working on the same file together... The concerns were that these were not American-run prisons that these two men were concerned about. They were Iraqi-run prisons."

-The IPU Committee is calling for the reinstatement of a female MP in Afghanistan. She was suspended from her duties two years ago for publicly criticizing some warlords on television. Carstairs says the male-dominated Parliament described her remarks as un-Islamic.

-"If you are a Parliamentarian and you are a woman in Afghanistan, it is better to be

seen and not heard," Carstairs said.

-In a rare bit of good news, the IPU welcomes Israel's decision to release three Palestinian Parliamentarians who were duly elected in Gaza in 2006. It calls

on the Israeli government to also release 40 other Palestinian Members of Parliament who the IPU charges were kidnapped and imprisoned in Israel after the election.

[voa news]

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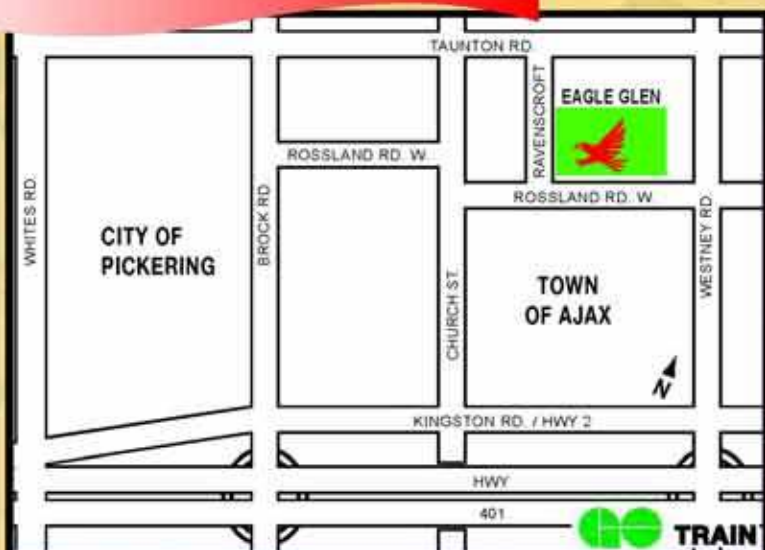
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MONSOON FEATURE

EAGLE GLEN

A FAMILY COMMUNITY BY JOHN BODDY HOMES

John Boddy Homes has won the Diamond Award for 'Best Builder' for the twelfth year in a row in this year's Readers' Choice Awards and has now opened its newest phase in their Eagle Glen community in Ajax. Located just minutes east of Toronto, the Eagle Glen Community 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, bungalows, and future town-homes. Homes start at 1,800 square feet and range up to a spacious 3,858 square feet, some with triple car garages. John Boddy Homes offers traditional size lots with a minimum of 105 feet in depth and a limited selection of wide shallow lots and pond lots. With such a broad range of house sizes and styles Eagle Glen has the ideal home to suit every preference. From the unique



which allows for interior custom colours with a maintenance free



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 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

exterior. Other features include arched entryways, custom millwork, window mullions on all front and rear facades and decorative garage doors featuring appealing window lites. Custom landscaping packages and paved driveways are also included in all homes providing the renowned curb appeal that enhances the entire Eagle Glen community.

Innovative floorplan designs combined with an extensive array of standard features included with every new home have become a corporate trademark of John Boddy Homes and 'Eagle Glen'. Not only does a John Boddy Home offer such striking standard features, there are also a wealth of opportunities to upgrade, making their homes as unique as each individual homeowner. The 'Eagle Glen' Sales Office features a Décor Centre that contains various upgrade items to select from in order to customize your home. Their high-tech electrical and décor consultants allow homebuyer's to make upgrade selections on site, enabling them to conveniently personalize their home.

For a limited time they are now offering a select few

model inventory specials that include over \$20,000 in savings. Features such as, granite counter tops, oak staircases, octagonal skylights and so much more are offered at huge reductions. Drop by their sales office and their sales representatives will gladly take you on a personal tour.

For a limited time only John Boddy Homes is currently offering a number of special incentive packages. An upgrade master ensuite with a separate shower and upgrade tub, a granite kitchen countertop, oak staircase and \$5,000 in free upgrades are now included with every home. They are also currently offering one year of Rogers services 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.

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.

The Eagle Glen community offers many important neighbourhood amenities such as a brand new public elementary school opening in September 2009, 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 is 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 6:00 p.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 by John Boddy Homes. For more information, please call (905) 619-1777 or visit the website at www.johnboddyhomes.com.

Rendering of Model
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Icon, trailblazer, legend and KING of POP

Michael Jackson dies at the age of 50

By: Krishni Loganathan, BA (Hons.)

The world is left in shock and mourns as Michael Jackson dies on Thursday June 25, 2009, leaving behind three children Michael Joseph Jackson, Jr. (also known as "Prince"), daughter, Paris-Michael Katherine Jackson and the youngest son Prince Michael Jackson II (also known as Blanket). Jackson died at the UCLA Medical Center after paramedics tried to resuscitate him at his L.A. home for nearly three-quarters of an hour, then rushed him to the hospital where doctors continued to work on him. "It is believed he suffered cardiac arrest in his home. However, the cause of his death is unknown until results of the autopsy are known," his brother Jermaine said.

Cardiac arrest is an abnormal heart rhythm that stops the heart from pumping blood to the body. It can occur after a heart attack or be caused by other heart problems

Thousands gathered outside the L.A. hospital and around Jackson's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame to pay their respects to the king of pop.

Millions around the world treasured his performances, his dancing but most of all his music. His music moved from generations to generations and truly left an impact across the globe. His music broke racial barriers as countless ethnicities and cultures could identify precisely who Michael Jackson was as he transformed the art of the music video and paved the way for modern pop music. Often imitated but never duplicated, Michael Jackson was known for his infamous moon walk, white glove but most importantly his chart topping music. From number one hits such as "Thriller", "Beat it", "Bad", "Black and White" to the countless other smash hits that he recorded, there was no surpassing the musical versatility that he contained. His iconic album "Thriller" won an outstanding 8 Grammys in 1982.

This musical prodigy began his career with his brothers under the group Jackson 5 and sang number one singles such as "ABC" and "I'll be there". After leaving to become a solo artist, Jackson came out with albums that could be incomparable to anything of its time. Concerts were sold out and fans were anticipation of what was next for the pop sensation. Recently Jackson was preparing for his come-back tour in August 2009, with 50 shows in London that sold out within a few hours. It is no wonder why people were flocking to obtain tickets for a chance to witness the icon on stage.

Many tributes have occurred including a memorial held at the Apollo Theatre, which gave the public an opportunity to watch a 45-minute tribute concert to the icon. The Black Entertainment Awards which celebrates the exceptional work of Black Entertainers

from musicians to athletes was aired on Sunday June 28, 2009. With their last minute preparation, three days before the Awards on the recent passing of Michael Jackson the show was swiftly modified to include an excellent tribute to Jackson. Many musicians came together last minute to praise and honour Jackson, including Jamie Foxx and Ne-yo. His father, Joseph Jackson, and former confidant, Reverend Al Sharpton were present as audience members throughout the show. Janet Jackson, Michael Jackson's sister made an appearance at the finale of the show, and spoke briefly on behalf of The Jackson Family. Even in Toronto, at Yonge- Dundas Square a Michael Jackson tribute was held on Canada's Day from 8-11 PM. Thousands gathered and joined together from young and old to listen and enjoy the wonderful music that Jackson possessed.

As Jackson leaves his three children behind, their care is being determined. Custody of the children has now temporarily been given to Jackson's mother, Katherine Jackson, 79. Hearings have been scheduled for July 6th and August 3rd 2009, to consider Katherine Jackson's requests to be appointed the children's permanent guardian and to take charge of Jackson's estate.

His music, performances and dance moves were often imitated as Jackson was truly a trailblazer of his time. Michael Jackson will dearly be missed as his music left a mark in many people's hearts as he was an icon, trailblazer, legend and the KING OF POP. Many of the greats pass on early, and Michael Jackson was no exception. Gone but never forgotten, Michael Jackson may you rest in peace as your music will live on forever.

Quotes:

Michael Jackson:

In late 2007, Jackson said the following of his work and future influence, "Music has been my outlet, my gift to all of the lovers in this world. Through it, my music, I know I will live forever."

Quincy Jones:

"For Michael to be taken away from us so suddenly at such a young age, I just don't have the words," said Quincy Jones, who produced "Thriller." "He was the consummate entertainer and his contributions and legacy will be felt upon the world forever. I've lost my little brother today, and part of my soul has gone with him."

Lisa Marie Presley

"I am so very sad and confused with every emotion possible," Lisa Marie Presley said in a statement. "I am

heartbroken for his children who I know were everything to him and for his family. This is such a massive loss on so many levels, words fail me."

Arnold Schwarzenegger: We lost a great entertainer and a pop icon. My thoughts and prayers go out to Michael Jackson's family, friends and fans.

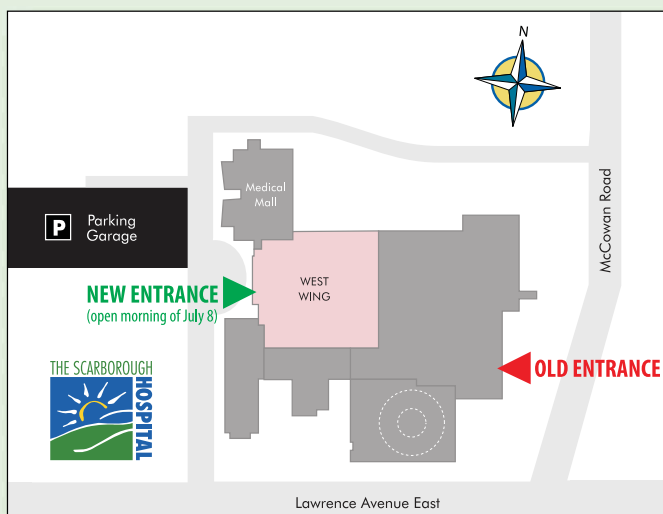
P. Diddy: Michael Jackson showed me that you can actually see the beat. He made the music come to life!! He made me believe in magic. I will miss him!



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India's Youngest Cabinet Ministers Look to Future

By Steve Herman

Despite the election of younger heads of government in such countries as Britain, France, Germany, Japan and the United States, the face of politics in India is still one of relative seniority. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who has heart trouble, is 76. The head of the largest opposition party is 81. A much younger generation is beginning to enter the electoral stage in the world's largest democracy, but that is also raising questions about dynastic politics.

As India's new Cabinet was sworn-in in May, all eyes were on one of its youngest members, 28-year-old Agatha Sangma. She was among a few young faces brought into government by the Congress Party to inject a sense of youth and energy after its resounding poll victory.

Thirty-one-year-old Sachin Pilot is the newly appointed junior minister for communications and technology. His late father, Rajesh, was also a Cabinet minister.

And, 39-year-old Rahul Gandhi, who declined a Cabinet position to concentrate on strengthening the party at the grassroots, is being groomed, according to analysts, to become prime minister one day.

What all three have in common is each belongs to political families. Political dynasties appear to be a trend that is not abating, but spreading beyond the influential Nehru-Gandhi clan to a handful of families across India.

Sangma, India's youngest national lawmaker

and minister of state of rural development, has been around politics all her life. Her father, P.A. Sangma, is a career politician who rose to become speaker of the more powerful lower house of Parliament. His daughter admits being perplexed about how to address elders in the ministry who are now her underlings.

"I have grown up with some people who are now still part of this ministry and many a times I am confused," she said. "Should I call them 'uncle' or should I call them 'Mr. So and So?'"

Sangma, trained as a lawyer, acknowledges an experienced political father as a mentor gives her an advantage, but only in the short term.

"It is very difficult for really young people to suddenly come up in politics unless they have a political background. But I would not say that one should judge the young political leaders only on this basis because, yes, we have a name, but name is not the only thing on which will be able to survive," she said.

Being a member of a recognized political family, she explains, sets the bar even higher as such lawmakers are expected to get much more done than their peers without a legacy.

The second-youngest member of the Singh Cabinet, Sachin Pilot, agrees family legacy only gets a candidate so far.

"Coming from a family of politicians or having a background in politics ought not to be a disqualification for an individual," he said. "An individual



India's cabinet ministers Farooq Abdullah (R), Sachin Pilot (C) and Chief Minister of Kashmir Omar Abdullah pose before the oath-taking ceremony inside the presidential palace in New Delhi May 28, 2009.

contests an election and there about two-million people who elect that individual back to Parliament, we respect that collective wisdom of that electorate which is two-million strong."

Pilot believes Rahul Gandhi's performance in this year's national election elevated his stature. But he cautions there are no guarantees of the youthful Congress Party figure becoming prime minister.

"I think the abilities are there," he said. "He has the potential [to become prime minister]. And it is very clear that he has been the star campaigner for the Congress Party in translating that effort into victory."

Rahul's mother, the Italian-born Sonia Gandhi, widow of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, remains the Congress Party kingmaker.

Rahul is now focusing on building the party's

China Delays Rule on Internet Filtering Software



Customers use computers at an internet cafe in Yingtan, Jiangxi province June 30, 2009. China's latest Internet controls have been assailed by rights advocates and Washington, and yet the real challenge to its "Green Dam" plan may be the nation's own computer market, an anarchic digital bazaar.

The Chinese government has postponed implementation of a controversial rule requiring all new personal computers sold in the country come with Internet filtering software.

China's official Xinhua news agency released a brief report Tuesday citing the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

The report provided no details on the reasons for the ministry's decision, which comes one day before the rule was to go into effect.

Chinese Internet users had called for a boycott of online activities on July 1 to express their opposition to the new rule.

Critics in China say the program, called Green Dam Youth Escort, could be used to spy on Internet users. They have also voiced concerns it could expose computers to security threats and be used to block sites China feels are politi-

cally offensive.

China's Ministry of Industry and Information has said the software is needed to protect children from pornographic and violent images. China says that use of the software will be voluntary, and that owners will be able to un-install the program.

There has also been international concern over the government's plan. The United States raised its concerns with Beijing about the software's impact during a recent meeting with Chinese officials.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke and Trade Representative Ron Kirk said the software may violate World Trade Organization rules. They say it also appears to have "broad-based censorship implications" and network security issues.

[VOA News]

grassroots and trying to lure additional young activists into the political mainstream, including those from disparate backgrounds.

The Pilot family is from the Hindu Gujar clan, traditionally shepherds and considered a disadvantaged community.

The Sangmas, who are Catholics, hail from a tribal village in the state of Meghalaya, part of the distant and underdeveloped Northeast region.

"We feel neglected. We feel that we are not accepted in the country as part of mainstream India. And this is not something that is only the responsibility of the political leaders. The entire society has to evolve and understand that, we, at the end of the day are very integrally part of the same country," said Sangma.

That is a refrain uttered frequently by many disenfranchised minorities here in the world's largest democracy. But India's two youngest government ministers are optimistic more of their peers, in terms of age and background, will find greater inclusion in the Indian political mainstream.

[voa news]

Clinton Vows to Usher New Era in US-India Relations

By Ravi Khanna

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton says she wants to take U.S.-Indian relations to a higher level. The secretary's comments come as Clinton prepares to visit New Delhi next month. There is concern in India that President Obama's administration is focusing its South Asia policy too heavily on Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Pakistani jets streak overhead in the continuing battle to uproot Taliban and al Qaida. The fight against militants, here in South Waziristan, continues at the urging of the new U.S. administration.

But with this battle now a top priority in U.S.-South Asian policy, some political analysts in India have expressed concern their country is of diminished importance.

Weeks before her first visit to New Delhi, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton addressed the relationship at the U.S. India Business Council. She vowed to usher in a new era.

"We see India as one of a few key partners worldwide who will help us shape the 21st century," Clinton said. "We want India to succeed as an anchor for regional and global security, and we want India to succeed so that the world's two largest democracies can work together as strong partners."

The secretary of state said she is focused on taking the bi-lateral relationship to a higher level - compared to the administrations of former President Bush and former President Clinton.

"Four platforms of cooperation - global security, human development, economic activity, science and technology - can support us in launching this third phase of the US-India relationship," she states.



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton delivers closing remarks during the 39th Washington Conference of the Council of the Americas held at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, DC May 13, 2009. [State Department photo by Michael Gross]

But in New Delhi, some Indian media analysts say they fear President Obama's focus on Pakistan and Afghanistan will mean less attention on its partnership with India, particularly on global security matters.

Former U.S. ambassador to New Delhi, Richard Celeste does not agree.

"Because we [the U.S.] and India share so much of a common threat of terrorism that emanates from those two countries in that region, we are going to find ourselves working closer and closer together there even when we have some political differences," Celeste said.

On June 29, India's ambassador to Washington, Meera Shankar, said that India shares the U.S. objectives in Pakistan and Afghanistan. But she told a gathering, India is concerned about the nature of the U.S. military aid to Pakistan. Kashmir remains tense as the two nation's militaries face each other across the Line of Control.

"Security assistance, we feel, should be focused more specifically on building counter-insurgency capabilities rather than conventional defense," Shankar said.

And the ambassador urges the Obama administration to give India priority on its own merits.

"The secretary of state is due to visit India in July and we hope that visit will provide the basis for both countries announcing a road map to take the India-U.S. relations to the next level," Shankar added.

Many analysts in Washington agree with Secretary Clinton that trade and business relationships have developed so fast, that that the two governments must catch up.

[VOA News]



Michael Dignam, Branch Manager at 111 Grangeway proudly introduced the Executive Director of SAFSS and invited him to accept the gift of \$10,000 to help benefit by their services for the New Canadians. Michael went onto say South Asian Community is a growing strong force and need to be recognized for their contribution to the economy. RBC is very proud to celebrate the Community Week. The cheque presentation was held on Tuesday, June 23rd, 2009.

Dr. Hoque who accepted the donation and while thanking RBC for their generosity, said this week alone, RBC has contributed about \$135,000 for various organizations.

Dr. Kazi Hoque serves the South Asian Family Support Services (SAFSS) as its Executive Director since August 2002. Dr.

RBC celebrates Community Week by extending its support to South Asian Family Support Services (SAFSS)

Hoque supports the Board in its strategic management role and provides leadership in a variety of areas as the agency evolves to meet the growing needs of the community it serves. Dr. Hoque joined with Chairman of Board, Asad Ashraf and Program Director Rabintra Sabat for the celebration organized by RBC Grange Branch.

Several staff from RBC Grangeway Branch and customers joined the celebration including Lisa Gallacher, Regional Vice President, Toronto East and Imtiaz Seyid, Vice President, South Asian Markets of RBC.

At the end of the program, RBC Branch Manager Michael Dignam invited all by quoting, that this fall, you could help carry the Olympic Flame across Canada as it makes its way to the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games. Thousands of lucky Canadians will be chosen at random to take part in this once in a

lifetime opportunity. All Canadians over the age of 13 are eligible, regardless of their physical abilities. It's just a short 300 metres for each torchbearer.

The Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch Relay is proudly co-presented by RBC and Coca-Cola in partnership with the Vancouver 2010 Organizing Committee.

The 2010 Olympic Torch Relay begins its journey to Vancouver with a traditional lighting ceremony in Olympia, Greece. The Olympic Flame will then travel 45,000 kilometres across Canada, passing through every province and territory. Twelve thousand Canadians will have the privilege of carrying the Olympic Flame over the course of 100 days.

The relay will culminate at BC Place on February 12, 2010, with the lighting of the Olympic Cauldron, signaling the start of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games.



Michael Dignam, Branch Manager-RBC handing over cheque to SAFSS Reps, Dr. Kazi Hoque and Asad Ashraf



Asad Ashraf, Chair of Board-SAFSS, Lisa Gallacher, Regional Vice President-RBC, Michael Dignam, Branch Manager-RBC, Kazi Hoque, Executive Director-SAFSS and Imtiaz Seyid, Vice President, South Asian Markets of RBC

RBC Donations History to Toronto Zoo Foundation : \$341,005.00 since 1983

Since the Toronto Zoo first opened it has become Canada's premier zoo, known for its interactive education and conservation activities. With 1.35 million visitors annually, the Toronto Zoo is a "natural" leader in conservation, species and habitat protection and the perfect place to share lessons of caring about our natural world.

Since 1991, the Toronto Zoo's Adopt-a-Pond Wetland Conservation Program has participated in recovery, stewardship and field conservation programs for Ontario turtles and other amphibian species at risk. Culturally diverse approaches to conservation from the basis of this program's community outreach component.

The Ways of knowing partnership, Turtle Island Conservation Initiative (TIC) is a recent development growing out of the program's work with First Nations community partners. The ultimate goal is to cultivate core capacity with First Nations com-

munities so that they can build upon conservation initiatives to self-govern best management practices in dealing with Species at Risk and conservation and recovery strategies.

The TIC Initiative is expected to have direct impact on First Nations' youth by providing community resources, youth mentoring and employment opportunities. First Nations youth, especially those in urban centers, will heighten their appreciation of turtles and other wetland species through mentoring partnerships with Elders, thereby becoming more aware of threats to water resources within their urban environments and in their communities.

TIC will provide Leadership Training Programs for urban First Nations' youth. The program will include overnight camp experiences and utilizes traditional knowledge as shared by Elders. A National Aboriginal Day Event, featuring oral presentations and story-telling delivered by youths

and elders, will highlight the diversity of First Nations cultures for both aboriginals and non-aboriginals.

TIC will also provide employment opportunities for First Nation youth. Given the nature of the program, Aboriginal candidates will receive hiring priority for the position of Program Coordinator and staff.

It is the First Nation urban youth component that the Toronto Zoo believes will be of particular interest to RBC. Funding from RBC would allow the Ways of Knowing Partnership, Turtle Island Conservation Initiative to include the Leadership Training Program, an Art and Cultural Mentorship, a National Aboriginal Day event, and employment opportunities as vital components.

A \$30,000 donation has been provided as this property brings together two key pillars of our strategy - environment and diversity - specifically Aboriginal.



Lisa Gallacher, Regional Vice President-RBC (far right) presenting a cheque for \$30,000 to Marion Zimmer, Senior Development Officer-Toronto Zoo Foundation (2nd from left), Kim Wheatley, Aboriginal Programme Coordinator (left), Bob Johnson, Curator, Reptiles and Amphibians (centre), Mohan Sundaramohan, Branch Manager-RBC Morningside & Milner Branch (2nd from right)



Jeganathan Mylvaganam, President of Eastown Banquet, Kim Wheatley, Aboriginal Programme Coordinator, Gary Anandasangaree, Lawyer & President of Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce, Lisa Gallacher, Regional Vice President - RBC, Marion Zimmer, Senior Development Officer-Toronto Zoo, Bob Johnson, Curator, Reptiles and Amphibians, Tam Sivathan, Broker of Record-Veedu Realty and Mohan Sundaramohan, Branch Manager-RBC Morningside & Milner Branch



Kim Wheatley, Aboriginal Programme Coordinator making a performance as Tamil One TV is filming

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WORDS OF PEACE

Balance This Existence

"Peace doesn't begin with countries, nations, or governments," says Maharaji, who has traveled throughout the world every year since he was in his early teens to personally deliver his message of peace.

Although he has addressed many government bodies and social organizations, groups of university students and mixed gatherings, Maharaji emphasizes that what he has to say is for individuals, not groups.

"There are so many people out there saying, 'Peace, peace, peace,' but every day there is war, war, war," he says, "This is the wrong kind of peace. The true peace is always inside of you. This is the real peace, and when you can experience this peace, that's when peace will happen in your world. People say there needs to be peace in this world. I say, no, there needs to be peace in your world, because if there isn't peace in your life, there isn't going to be peace in this world."

If that sounds familiar, Maharaji says, it's because it's something people already know.

"You won't hear anything new from me," he says, "because I don't have anything new to say. That's the funny thing. Your heart--your being, your self--has again and again been saying to you what I say to you: be in peace, be content. You have known what I say since you were a little child, but you forgot. You forgot it because as you grew up, everything else became more important to you.

"What your heart has been saying to you, I say it to you from the outside. I am here telling you what you know, because it is beautiful. To be in peace is beautiful. To be in contentment is beautiful."

Maharaji often answers questions from those interested in his message.

Q: If I already have peace,



there was a rim, so the boy turned the cup upside down and said, "Right here."

He walked home proudly. The space formed by the rim was full of oil. His mother said, "Is that all the oil you got for one penny?"

"No, mother," he said. He turned the cup right side up. "The rest is right here."

In your life, if you have no focus, what do you end up with? You end up neither here nor there, wondering what happened.

Identify your real need. What is it that you want? If peace is what you want, learn how to keep your focus on the peace that's within. Then all will be well.

Q: How can I learn to have that focus?



then why don't I feel it all the time?

A: Right now, your focus is changing from here to there and there to here. Every time your focus changes, you bounce around. First that's important; then this is important. Then that's important again.

There's story about a child whose mother gives him a cup and one penny and sends him to get some oil. He goes to the oil merchant and asks for one penny's worth of oil.

When the cup the child brought with him was full, the merchant explained that he had a little more oil coming.

"Where would you like it?" he asked.

On the bottom of the cup

What I talk about is not just words. Is peace what you want? If so, look me up. I don't tell people that I'm the only one who can show them how to find the peace within. I speak to remind people what is important, which is to balance this existence.

I say, find peace. Enjoy peace. Look wherever you need to look. Search the whole world for it. If you can't find it, I can help. It's as simple as that.

To learn more about Maharaji, visit:

www.tprf.org
www.mspeaks.com
www.wordsofpeace.ca
1 877 707 3221 Toll Free
416 431 5000 Tamil



you. If you carry the past with you, then you will also smell like anybody else. The whole world stinks with personalities. Everybody has his own strong smell or personality. These are the various stench in the world, and they keep clashing all the time. When one does not carry this odor, one can cross over this

Shedding the personality



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 416 300 3010 or email Toronto@ishafoundation.org

This moment is not important. As long as the personality is important, it simply means the previous moment is important. This present moment is not important, because the personality belongs to the past.

In this moment you really have no personality, do understand this. The personality that you carry is a dead thing. When you're carrying a dead body over your shoulders, you can't walk very far. With a dead body, which way can you head? Only to the burial ground, isn't it? If you carry a dead body for too long, you will have to bear with terrible smells. Your personality, the stronger it is, the more odoriferous it is. You can go far in life only when you can leave your past. This is like a snake shedding its skin. Do you know how a snake sheds its skin? One moment it is a part of its body, the next moment it sheds its skin and just goes on without turning back. If every moment, one is like a snake leaving the skin behind, only then there is growth.

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

Only a person who does not carry the previous moment to this moment, only that person is free from everything, and that quality will be felt everywhere -


Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

existence. One not only passes through this world effortlessly, one will pass through the very process of life and death effortlessly. This person crosses the ocean of samsara without any effort. What looks like a great effort for somebody else will be happening for this person without any effort. Everything just simply happens.


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

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By Sivanandini Duraiswamy

"The war is over! Is the conflict?" - a million dollar question.

As important as ending the war in the battle fields of the north is finding a negotiated settlement to the conflict and making the transition from war to peace less costly in terms of human life and human suffering. This goes hand in hand with helping the displaced people with immediate relief to ease their physical sufferings and help heal their tormented minds and more importantly help solve their deep



Satellite image of Menik Farm-by Amnesty's Science for Human Rights project

yearning - "Send us back to our own homes."

On the last day of our recent visit to the Vanni, as we stood in Chettikulam where some of the displaced people live), the task before us seemed unending! The people are living under extreme conditions in heavily congested camps. The rows and rows of tents and huts spanning across large camp areas told us the story of congestion and that we need to work unceasingly to help out in this national crisis. We need to evacuate the sick and wounded, help those in the camps to find their kith and kin and provide relief aid to all those from the war torn areas completely broken and bruised. The over powering needs of the people have to be met without any delays.

The Hindu Council of Sri Lanka and the Saiva Mangaiyar Kalagam (Hindu Women's Society) are working together to alleviate the suffering of the displaced and sick persons in Vavuniya. The peripheral Unit of the Council in Vavuniya is actively working with financial support from the Centre, to help the refugees who have come from afar trekking in from the battle fields.

The members of the peripheral Unit of the Council work closely with the doctors of the hospitals in Vavuniya namely, the General Hospital, the Poovarasam Kulam Hospital and the Ayurvedic

Vanni laid waste - the Internally Displaced People

Hospital and also in Poonthottam Camp, Mahavidyalaya Camp, Pambaimadu Camp, and the Ramanathan and Arunachalam camps in Chettikulam.

The Unit reported at the beginning of February this year that the scenes of the people coming were harrowing and unbelievable! And when some of us visited the place we realized that this was an understatement. The tragedy is colossal! The people are broken physically and mentally scarred in every sense of the word. We were able to detect white spots on the faces and hands of several people, more so in the girls - 'were chemical weapons used?'

Our work began in early February 2009, when the

clothes, bed sheets, towels, soap, several packets of biscuits and a toy each for the children.

We continue to visit Lady Ridgeway Hospital regularly and help in various ways - talking to the children and mothers, counselling them and being with them and distributing necessities to the new arrivals together with a toy for each child in wards 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10 and 11.

The story of a little girl of eight who was brought by the Red Cross Ambulance to Lady Ridgeway was indeed gruesome. Her leg had to be amputated being torn by a bullet and her mother who accompanied her died on reaching Colombo. The mother had lost her sight when a stray shell hit her face and her father had died in the cross-fire. One could imagine the predicament of this little child now an orphan in a completely strange set up! Through the hospital authorities, a good-samaritan, a Sinhala lady came to the rescue and offered to sponsor the child's future.

An announcement in the Tamil Daily papers, brought us large amounts of new and nearly new clothes for children and women. Several such consignments have been and are being continuously sent as and when we collect material. Friends and relations in the diaspora contribute generously towards this grave cause.

The children, teachers and principal of Hindu Ladies College rallied round to collect relief material to be sent to Vavuniya. And this resulted in huge consignments of new clothes together with large amounts of milk food, biscuits and bottles of water. These were packed neatly in bags and dispatched to Vavuniya in early May 2009. Large amounts of funds were also given liberally by the parents, teachers and well wishers. The Kalagam also contributed generously.

While we were in the Maternity Ward in the Vavuniya General Hospital, the doctor in charge was telling us that most of these young mothers and would be mothers are war widows and feel lost and lonely not knowing what their future would be. It was pathetic to see them lying on the ground with a vacant look feeding the baby. To these women we distributed mats, sheets and baskets of relief material.

The doctors were concerned about these women who seemed helpless and lonely with no future to look forward to. "One needs to talk to them professionally and bring them out of their traumatic state and give them a new approach to life. These women are traumatized and feel insecure having lost their homes and their belongings. We need to promote peace and help in the healing process," was the medical opinion.

Earlier while working with the people in the camps, our group has been looking into the spiritual

needs of the people, talking to them and trying to help calm their traumatized minds by singing bhajans and religions hymns and helping to create an atmosphere of peace and quiet in an otherwise torn world. They also organized and continue to organize pujas in the makeshift shrines and offer prasadam of thiruneeru and chandanam to the displaced people.

However, after our discussions with the doctors we now realize that the Counseling services have to be expanded. The Hindu Council with the Kalagam has now started working with the Sivan Temple authorities in Vavuniya to

who was herself a displaced person. We distributed relief material to the displaced teachers and children in Chettikulam Units 1, 2, 3 and 4. We also pledged to give water filters for the several schools that are functioning with the help of these teachers and said that we would collect saree outfits for the teachers to wear during school hours and not be in dressing gowns!

It is indeed a time to heal; for all Sri Lankans to unite and bring about lasting peace - we in the south cannot live in peace until and unless those tormented minds are set free.

As we were travelling back to



A child at a displaced persons site in Vavuniya, northern Sri Lanka-pic: IRIN

train the teachers in the camps who would be able to go round helping those who need such services.

Trauma is written on the faces of the people - that they had to trek long distances with bombing and shelling taking place all around, carrying their belongings and young children with them were etched on their faces. Crossing the Nandikadal to enter the safe zones was a very difficult and frightening experience for all.

The story we gleaned about a young mother was a terrible tragedy. The couple was fleeing Mullaitivu with whatever they could carry and she was also carrying their one month old baby. Thinking that the spate of heavy shelling and firing had stopped, many started to across the Nandikadal to reach the safe area but the firing and shelling had resumed. A shell hit her husband and he fell dead dropping all that he was carrying into the water. She too must have fainted and when she became aware of what was happening she realized that her child had slipped out of her hands. In searching for her baby she was told that there were over 300 dead babies in the Nandikadal. One could imagine her fear and anxiety. Many more must have died since then!

The Kalagam being an educational Institution, was interested in the teachers who were caught up in the cross fire and subsequently sought refuge in the camps. The Council was able to meet the Zonal Director of Education of the Omanthai zone

Colombo, I was reminded of Khalil Gibran's words which I am adapting to explain the situation - He speaks of -

"Pity the Nation that wears a cloth it does not weave; eats a bread it does not harvest and drinks a wine (water) that flows not from its own wine-press (that flows not through its territory)."

The north has been a battle field for over the past two and half decades and has been laid waste beyond imagination! Where is the cotton to weave cloth? Where is the grain to prepare bread? And where is water to drink?

It is our bounden duty to help fulfill the one wish of these displaced persons -

"Please let us go back to our homes from where we fled; give us whatever you could and we would go back gladly and build up our future."

Saiva Mangaiyar Kalagam:
Tel: 0094 11 2588891 ~ E mail - yogendra@sltnet.lk

(We need funds to continue with this humanitarian work both in Vavuniya and Lady Ridgeway hospital. Our thrust is to serve the pregnant mothers, women and children who are coming in large numbers from the Vanni.

The Hindu Council Bank Account number is 1990767 - Bank of Ceylon, Milagiriya Branch. The Kalagam Relief Account number is 1100022560 - Commercial Bank - Wellawatte Branch)

Exchange Students from Waterloo to Madurai, India

Sharing their experience with the members of the Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region

Waterloo: It feels like yesterday I landed at the small city of Madurai, (and by small I mean 2.5 million people in the Madurai area). I remember looking out the window from the airplane seeing some sections of the city brightly lit, while others covered in darkness. Soon, I would discover and experience that each section of the city would take its turn with a power cut each day to try and conserve electricity. I recall getting off the plane and a burst of heat hitting my body. My ears were filled with a new language, which my new classmates would soon be teaching me some key phrases like eh pla and coudime. My ears were also polluted with a constant honking of cars, trucks, buses, auto-rickshaws, motorcycles, and bikes, some of the honks were even in the tune to a little jingle. I reminisce being greeted by my new professor, Anita, and two of my new friends Sharon and Mona. Around my neck they hung a huge lay of jasmine flowers, the beautiful scent filled nose, although more smells were still to come my way, and some not so beautiful.



Bronwyn in Madurai, India

My first memory of my new home and school, Lady Doak College, was of a huge brick wall surrounding the campus. The wall would stand its purpose of keeping out intruders, and keeping in the students, as the ladies living in residence were not allowed off campus. Bronwyn and I were enrolled in two classes, one being NGO management (non-government organizations). During our lectures we learned about management, administration, policies, project proposals, and planning within NGO's. During our teachings and discussions we realized how important NGO's are as a catalyst to social change in India. Many successful NGO have proven to the people of India that they are more reliable and capable, than the government, of helping and moving forward with social change. Being in a NGO management class was also really

neat because we were both doing our field placement at an NGO getting first hand experiences. Being in this classroom also promoted development of respect for differences. I realized that one was not better than another they were just different. I also realized in order for me to respect those differences I had to confront some of my own biases and change my thought schema.

I feel that being in a classroom, with 18 other students, is what really made my Indian trip so special. The class as a whole was a really strong circle of friendship and Bronwyn and myself were so lucky to be apart of that circle. I think that building those friendships really speaks miles about our understanding of our common humanity. In class and during breaks we would laugh, exchange stories, and play games. My fellow peers were always looking after us, making sure we had enough food to eat, enough sleep, and liking our new environment. Our friendships further developed, when our class attended a four day and night PRA workshop in a rural village outside of Madurai.

Our experience started by taking an over crowded bus a couple hours outside of Madurai to a village. Once we arrived at the vil-

lage our journey was definitely not over. We flagged down some auto-rickshaws and piled in. These auto-rickshaws were a bit bigger then the average one comfortably fitting 4 people. However, we did not stop at four people, four more of us climbed in, sitting on each others lap. I climbed up onto Bronwyn's lap. Did I tell you these things don't have doors? I was so thankful Bronwyn wrapped her arms around my midsection as we started to travel down a pothole filled path through farmers fields. One bumpy ride later we arrived at our destination. We were surrounded by peaceful mountains, fields, and nature, a change from the hustle and bustle of the city. Here we learned and practiced Participatory Rural Appraisal. This is a form of community work that incorporates the knowledge and opinions of rural people in the



Tiffany and Bronwyn in Madurai, India

planning and management of development projects and programs. This lets people examine their own realities. We were taught different techniques during the day such as transit walks, locality mapping, interviewing techniques and different questions we should ask. During the night we talked as a class, including our two teachers, about our happiness and pain. We deepened our friendship as a class by laying out our vulnerabilities and supporting each other through our discussion.

After a couple intensive days of training we got to explore our new found skills. My group of six went to a village of 600 people to explore our research question on "how woman contribute to the economic burden in the household". I was in aw when the village people drew a map for us of every 101 houses in the village, noting what each house was made of. They also were able to draw important features of the town such as temples, water facilities, and trees. I was also amazed at how when we told some people from the community that we were students from Lady Doak College doing a school project and we were wanting to speak to the woman of the community, how woman actually showed up and we were able to have two focus groups, one with the higher caste ladies and one with the lower caste ladies. I think what I got out of this training was in order to know what and how to change, there needs to be a rapport build with the community, and discussions with the community to understand their needs and wants. I feel that this is a key component of social work and exhibits the knowledge and skills to contribute to building a world that fosters the well-being off all people.

I also had the opportunity to complete my field work at an NGO called RUSS foundation, which worked for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. There were two main components to my placement which was APAC Care and

Support and the second part TAI project. APAC care and support was the section that did home base care for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. I got to visit five different villages and go to the homes of people living with HIV/AIDS. During each visit we (a social worker and a community nurse) would check their diary, which contained their CD4 level, doctor notes, and suggestions. A doctor might suggest for the individual to have nutritional counselling or family counselling. We also travelled with a kit of medication and protection if the individual was in need. The RUSS team provided individual counselling, family counselling, and helped eliminate some stigmas in the community about people living with HIV/AIDS. I also visited the government hospital. I was able to converse with some nurses and a lawyer. At the hospital a lawyer would give free legal advice and help. I learned a common legality issue was over the right of people living with HIV/AIDS owning a house. The other section of my field placement was TAI, which was a clinic for female sex workers. Onsite there was a counsellor, a doctor, a nurse, and many peer educators. Women were free to come and receive medical care and treatment. The main focus of TAI was on prevention of HIV/AIDS. So there was also a room where woman could come and learn about condoms and how to prevent HIV/AIDS and any other STI. These women also formed a support group where they were safe to talk about anything and help each other through daily life. The women were also able to learn new skills such as cosmetology to give them the skills and empower the woman to realize their potential of a new job. However, this was only an option; the women were not forced into anything. I spent my days at the clinic talking to the woman, learning how to dance, watching movies on condom negotiation and even practicing with new members how to properly use a condom.



I think the moment that stands out for me the most in TAI project is when I first arrived at the clinic the women would want me to sit on a chair, because I was a guest and because they thought I would be more use to and more comfortable on a chair. However, all the other women would sit on the floor. When I sat in the chair the woman would call me "ma'am". I would always try and sit on the floor with all the other woman but they would keep on bringing back the chair. Finally after a couple of days of being there I said I was more comfortable on the floor and I did not want to sit in the chair. This is when I saw the transition from being called "Ma'am" to being called sister. I am also really fortunate to have the experience working with female sex workers because it gave me the chance to challenge some stereotypes and biases. This further let me explore our oneness of humanity. I realized that these women were just like any other woman, they had families, and they wanted their children to grow up strong, healthy, and smart. I started to forget their title as female sex workers, and realize they were woman just like me, looking for hope for their future.

Questions that I often get asked is how were woman treated in India? I cannot deny that woman definitely get treated differently, even in Canada. My experience as being a woman in India as well as many of the women I was with was positive. In my work place I was fortunate enough to have two woman project managers, one at TAI project and one at APAC. Both of these women were so strong and intelligent and all the workers and clients really admired and looked up to them. I think that also being at an entire school full of women made me realize that while there are many girls and woman being denied education, there are many girls and woman furthering their education to ensure that the future generation of girls have equal opportunities.

I truly had an amazing opportunity. Being in India opened my eyes to a World of opportunity and possibilities. I can not wait to go back...

Tiffany McCabe is a student of Renison's School of Social Work, Waterloo, Ontario.

Tiffany McCabe & Bronwyn Naylor of Waterloo, Ontario participated in the student exchange program between Renison University College, University of Waterloo and Lady Doak College, Madurai, Tamilnadu, South India. Their field trip was in Jan, Feb & March 2009.



Young, old embrace heritage at festival

Johanna Weidner
RECORD STAFF

KITCHENER: Andrea Misquadis kept dancing, even as the rain poured down and the ground under her moccasins turned to mud. Her feet moved to the beating drum, her brightly coloured regalia glowing under the grey sky. Misquadis danced to celebrate and share her culture on Saturday afternoon on Victoria Park Island at the National Aboriginal Day Celebration.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Festival filled the rest of the downtown Kitchener Park, with both events continuing yesterday. Yesterday brought better weather and bigger crowds. Alongside Misquadis danced her niece and great niece, while her

nephew drummed. "I dance with three generations," said the 56-year-old. When she moved to Kitchener more than 30 years ago from the Saugeen First Nation in the Georgian Bay area, there were few Aboriginals. "Now there's a lot of us. It's beautiful to see all these people come out, even in this rain," Misquadis said. She came to the festival for her people "to be known and recognized here in this community." And to "be part of my family, to see my sisters and brothers," Misquadis said. "We're all family."

Young and old danced together on the island -- an inspiring sight for Misquadis to see the children embracing their heritage. "They've got such high spirits, the little ones," she said. "We tell our children never be ashamed. We're

all equal." Misquadis said there are many wrong perceptions of Aboriginals. "We're not alcoholics. We've tried to adapt to the mainstream life. It's not easy to find acceptance," she said.

Misquadis is making her own traditional regalia, a process that's taking years. She wore her handmade dress and skirt, but is still toiling on her breast plate, hairpiece and boots. An eagle feather -- a gift from her nephew -- adorned her beaded hairpiece given to her by a friend.

Jan Mazur asked Misquadis to pose for a picture with him. Mazur came to Canada from Poland two decades ago and is eager to know his adopted country's history and people. "You have to know them because they lived before us," he said. "We have to respect them."

Over at the multicultural festival, Karen Cloutier huddled under an umbrella with her six-year-old granddaughter Hailey to watch the Polish song and dance ensemble. The Kitchener woman comes to the festival every year, usually both days. The pair were going to have a look at all the food tents to pick out lunch, but, Cloutier said, "we got sidetracked by the dancing." Performances of traditional music and dance continued through both days on the main stage. Hailey wasn't quite sure what to make of the Polish dancing. "It was kind of weird," she said. But Hailey definitely likes the festival: "It's fun here. There's activities and food."

South Indian classical dance, Bharatha Natyam was performed by the Tamil community artists

and "Passage to India" by Toronto Indian community. 8 year old Vaishnavi Paramasweran was delighted to see her heritage being showcased to the public.

Nearby May Wu also took in the spectacle of the Polish dancing with her family, her two-year-old daughter smiling as she watched the twirling multi-coloured costumes. "She likes it very much," Wu said. They've only been in Canada for half a year after moving to Waterloo from China. After hearing about the festival, they were eager to come and see the "food, dance -- everything." Canada has many cultures, Wu said, and "we are part of Canada now."



Exchange of Tamil and Canadian Culture, A worthy experience

An interview with Bronwyn by the Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region

The objective of this interview is to show how this exchange promoted the development of respect for differences, understanding of our common humanity, and knowledge and skills to contribute to building a world that fosters the wellbeing of all people.

We were fortunate to have a lot of interaction with the students at the college and we formed close bonds of friendship with all the women in our class. The knowledge and skills that we gained from Lady Doak College in our social development and community organization class were twofold in nature. The first was that the professors gave us a foundation in various theories and methods that will be

imperative for our future as social work practitioners. The second was that they gave us a breadth of knowledge in the political, economic, social and environmental conditions in India. Our experiences in these classrooms and with the students allowed us to become more familiar with the many traditions and cultural customs of India.

We had a first hand experience at a weekend rural camp where we learned traditional parai drumming and dancing. I would share with you what we learned but I think I will spare you from my drumming abilities. When we were asked to pick up the drums at the beginning of the session a number of the girls were hesitant and did not want to touch the drums. I later learned from my profes-

or that the drums were only used by the lower Dalit castes and many of the girls had preconceived notions that the drums were dirty and they should not touch the belongings of the lower caste. A group of women from an NGO taught us these dances and songs and really taught myself and students at the school to respect and embrace differences by recognizing our common oneness through the music.

Another exciting experience we had was an intercollegiate day in Combitorre where social work students from different school came together to participate in events such as a presentation, street plays, case studies, quiz, etc to share in their mutual academic experiences.



Bronwyn in India

Contd. in Next Page

Fusion of Rhythm, A blend of Tamil Arts and Irish Culture for Spotlight festival



Kitchener: Connect with the artists in your community was the theme of Spotlight 2009, a week-end long festival of free activities and events that give the public a chance to meet and engage directly with local artists and arts organisations. Produced by the Ontario Arts Council and the Province of Ontario, Spotlight 2009 features artists in Kitchener, Cambridge, Waterloo, Guelph and Stratford.

The Tamil community of Waterloo Region and City of Guelph in conjunction with Tamil cultural association of Waterloo Region (TCAWR) has been promoting Indian and Sri Lankan Arts and Culture, successfully for the past 15 years through KW Multicultural festival, Spotlight and Tapestry festival.

The second annual "Fusion of Rhythm" was held on June 7th at the Rotunda Hall, City of Kitchener. Mr. Prakash Venkataraman, the president of the association welcomed the audience and gave a brief speech of the achievements the Tamil community has been making in this region. He explained the association's proactive engagement in Tamil issues, nurturing the language and culture in this region. For the past 20 years TCAWR has been vocal and only voice for the Tamil community and would do so to preserve the unity and diversity in this region.

This year's highlight was the South Indian classical dance, Bharatha Natyam, Irish dance and South Indian drum recital. The Indian classical dance and work-

shop was conducted by Laya Lasya dance studio of Cambridge. Mrs. Suneetha Prakash, the artistic director and students gave a splendid performance in front of a large audience. The colourful costumes and movement by young artists showed that Bharatha Natyam is still thriving in this small Tamil community. Ms. Suneetha explained in detail of the history of the dance, a facial expression and movements associated with it in the workshop. It was an educational experience for the large number of Canadian audience.

The Tamil cultural association has always encouraged other culture and arts to be part of it cultural events. It is part of "Learn from each other" arts policy. This year, the local Irish community

was invited to show case traditional dance to local Tamil Arts community. Irish performance dancing is traditionally referred to as step dance popularized by the world-famous show "Riverdance" is notable for its rapid leg movements, body and arms being kept largely stationary. Most competitive stepdances are solo dances, which is generally characterized by a controlled but not rigid upper body, straight arms, and quick, precise movements of the feet. The solo dances can either be in "soft shoe" or hard shoe". Rachel and Sarah Lewis performed the stepdance and thrilled the audience. Their workshop explained the history of the dance, movements and audience participation.

"Miruthanga Sheshthiram" group performance by the stu-

dents of Mr. Vasuthevan Rajalingam of Toronto was one of the highlight of the event. The students combined western drums with that of Miruthangam. The blend of west and eastern music gave a melody the audience will never forget. TCAWR, sincerely thanked Mr. Vasan and students for helping Tamil Arts spread its wings outside of Toronto.

The festival was supported by Ontario Arts Council, Government of Ontario, Tapestry festival-City of Kitchener, CTV Network, 570 News and 98.5 the Beat. Admission was free to public.



Contd. from previous page

While I was at the event I noticed that the Lady Doak College students were among the small number of females represented. I felt very proud of the many sacrifices that my fellow classmates had made to attain a higher education. I also felt honoured to be a member of an institution that empowers women to be intelligent members of society that are contributing the equality of men and women and the development of a nation.

I would like to share a quote from the Promise for World Peace Document from the Universal House of Justice, which is the supreme governing body of the baha'i world, which reinforces this concept, "The emancipation of women, the achievement of full equality between the sexes, is one of the most important, though less acknowledged prerequisites of peace. The denial of such equality perpetrates an injustice against one half of the world's population and

promotes in men harmful attitudes and habits that are carried from the family to the workplace, to political life, and ultimately to international relations. There are no grounds, moral, practical, or biological, upon which such denial can be justified. Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavour will the moral and psychological climate be created in which international peace can emerge."

During my exchange I did my placement at People's Watch, which is an NGO that works for the human rights of victims of torture. For my work I compiled a number of cases on corporal punishment in schools. One case was a four year old girl who was beaten so badly by her teacher in front of her classmates for not answering a question properly. After being beaten unconscious she was left laying on the ground until the teacher realized she had died. Two teachers disposed of her body in a water well. A second example is when a young

girl came to school without her hair braided because it had not fully dried, her teacher became so angry that she cut the students hair off.

These cases on corporal punishment in schools examine the incident and intervention taken by the victim's themselves or People's Watch and the response or lack thereof from the various institutions. The cases I compiled were sent to the National Commission on Human Child Rights and the National Commission on Human Rights to bring awareness to the prevalence of school's harsh punishment to children and neglect from institutions to prevent, respond and provide compensation to the victims.

My second role was to complete the final report for a project undertaken by people's watch to bring awareness to human rights violations of torture through education and gathering cases and initiating litigation for victims. I had a wonderful experience at my placement and learned a lot about the need to

abolish corruption within India and to set up a system that is conducive to the wellbeing and justice of individuals rather than a fragmented one that harms them and deters their progress.

Finally, I would like to share with you one short story that happened during the Participatory Rural Appraisal workshop while I was in a village with my other group members. A lady came up to Priya and I and pointed her finger at me in an angry face and yelled something in Tamil that I didn't understand. After the fact, Priya explained that the women had said that she shouldn't be associating with white people because they make promises and never fulfill them. I naturally felt upset by this comment and by instinct decided to avoid her so that she wouldn't yell at me again. After I got over my hurt ego I decided to talk to her and asked her questions to understand her better. I discovered that a group of foreigners had come to their village, built a school but had not left any structures in

place to sustain it and it sat empty. I told her I was sorry and tried to empathize with her situation. After I simply listened to her, she invited me for dinner and held my hand. She wanted to be listened to and appreciated. From this experience I realized our interconnectedness with one another and the importance of sharing understanding.

This project is an example of the East and the West learning from each other and making collective efforts to make a difference in the world. A Baha'i sacred writing states, "so powerful is the light of unity that it can illumine the whole earth."

Bronwyn Naylor is a student of Renison's School of Social Work, Waterloo, Ontario.

Tiffany McCabe & Bronwyn Naylor of Waterloo, Ontario participated in the student exchange program between Renison University College, University of Waterloo and Lady Doak College, Madurai, Tamilnadu, South India. Their field trip was in Jan, Feb & March 2009.



An Educational Experience in Ecuador - Part 1

By: Winthya Varatheswaran

¡Hola! A few weeks ago, I came back from an amazing, 3 month, adventure-filled program called International Co-operative Education (ICE) in Ecuador. In those 3 months, 13 other students and I experienced and were immersed in the language of Spanish, the culture of Ecuadorians and the challenges of adapting to a whole new life. As we developed our Spanish fluency, adapted to our host communities and work placements, travelled to different places around the country and challenged our instincts, our naïve eyes were opened up to the world around us.

Although the program in Ecuador was for three months, our adventure started in March of 2008, where we applied, went through interviews and selection processes and finally signed documents to be a part of the program. The first time I met my co-participants in June, we were all quiet and probably still wondering what we had gotten ourselves into. However, as months passed and we all spent a weekend together at Jackson's Point Conference centre, we developed a group bond through fun activities, information meetings and sharing stories. For sure, we all



The beautiful mountains surrounding us in Quito, Ecuador

had one thing in common; we wanted to get on a plane and go to Ecuador! Conversely, that wasn't the case, we still had to finish first semester of high school and then go through intensive February. Intensive February was filled with leadership assignments, Spanish lessons, food preparations, swimming classes, fundraising events and field trips. Even though February was hectic and challenging because we had to prepare to leave our friends and family for three months, pack, overcome financial problems and complete many assignments, it prepared us to become confident, knowledgeable and

strong enough to experience the three months by ourselves. With one month to go, we were filled with mixed emotions of sadness, excitement and nervousness, but most of all, we were anticipating the day of our departure.

March 4, 2009, was the day! We packed our last minute items, said goodbye to our families, took our passports and left Canada to become global citizens. For some of us, it was the first time on a plane, so we worked together to solve typical airport problems, comfort each other and make sure that everyone made it on to the plane alive. Since we didn't have a teacher or any supervisor to guide us on our flight to Ecuador, the fourteen of us used our teamwork and independence skills that we learned from Intensive February to get past the transfer in Miami and immigration in Ecuador. As we were landing into Quito, Ecuador, we saw many lights and winding roads up colossal mountains and as we stepped out of the airport, we were greeted by our friendly Ecuadorian program supervisors. Although we were out of breath from carrying our hiking bags at a drastic altitude of 3016 m, our excitement kept us fresh and alive. As our bags were safely secured on a back of a pick-up truck strapped down by ropes, we enjoyed our

ride to the hostel, taking in the new smells, atmosphere, culture, architecture and life in Ecuador. The first week in Ecuador was our honey moon stage; we loved Ecuador, we had tour guides, we explored the old city of Quito on our own, discovered amazing cathedrals, shopped and learned many things. We learned that the Ecuadorian society is very machismo, 70% of the people in Ecuador live under the poverty line, and we learned a little bit about the history, politics, and social realities in Ecuador. This first week of the orientation camp helped us realize the realities we were about to face and prepared us to live on our own. The first

learned that we took a lot of things for granted in Canada and that we were all lucky to have parents to support us during our childhood years. After 4 days of getting used to the Ecuadorian city life, it was time to leave our comfortable and homely hostel to go to our host families. Our group split into two and headed into two different valleys. My valley was called Valle de Los Chillos and we had 6 students live in different cities within this valley. As each person was dropped off with their host family, we were all very excited and nervous to meet our new Ecuadorian families. I was the last person to be dropped off and the sky was beginning to



The ICE group with the two shoe shiner boys in Plaza Grande, Quito



Scenery during my drive to my host family Amaguaña, Quito, Ecuador

reality we encountered was poverty. While we were exploring the old city of Quito, our group met two shoe shiner boys that were 10 and 12 years old and just came back from school. They had their backpacks on and their shoe shining materials ready in hand to serve their next customer. As we talked to the little boys, we learned about their hard lives and how they had to work afterschool to provide money to support their family. To help them, we gave the two kids pencils and books and some money and put a huge smile on their faces. We all

darken. I was a bit nervous because of the dirt roads and mud houses and began to wonder where I was going to be living. I had butterflies in my stomach and after being in the car for 1 hour, without any of my friends from the program, I also felt a little uneasy. With the limited Spanish knowledge I had, I asked the driver if we were almost there and he told me that we were lost! This was the start of my Ecuadorian adventure and this is where the story just begins...

To be continued on next issue...

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Balmoral Marketing celebrated their 20th Anniversary in grand style at Ruby Chinese Restaurant on June 19th with a sumptuous dinner. The function was attended by their staff, consultants and several ethnic media members.

Established since 1989, Balmoral Marketing is a full-fledged advertising agency and an acknowledged leader and specialist in marketing to Canada's diverse ethnic communities.

"Conquering New Territories... We Make It Happen." Our

strength is the breadth and depth of our experience: our principals have a cumulation of over 100 years of multi-cultural marketing experience and expertise, President Sharifa Khan quoted.

President Sharifa Khan welcomed guests and spoke about her experiences during the last 20 years. She went on to say that ethnic marketing is the vehicle, one has to choose. Balmoral made it to happen by making it comfortable for them to use the ethnic media. Compared to 20 years ago things are changing but not as much as we wanted.

She introduced her staff including her experienced senior

advisors.

Since 1989, Balmoral has guided many corporations both in public and private sectors conquer Canada's many ethnic communities: relating to the cultural values; understanding psychographics and purchasing behaviour; communicating in in-language and idioms; and leveraging home influence and lifestyle dispositions.

We assist our clients develop and deploy effective marketing strategies and realize their business goals - gain brand awareness, deepen relationships, expand offerings...we make it happen, President said.



Sharifa Khan, President and CEO making her speech



Balmoral Team with celebration cake: From left, Yuli Wang, Media Director, Lorna Leung, Account Director, Andrew Siu, Executive Vice President, Dr. Bikram Lamba, Senior Consultant, Sharifa Khan, President and CEO, Thomas S. Saras, Senior Consultant, President of the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada, a position he has held for the past six years., Asha Rajak, Vice President, Chair-Radio Membership, (Back row) Johnson Chang, Corporate Development and IT Manager and Nicholas Chan, Creative Director



Balmoral Team and Ethnic Media Members

Drinking and Driving is not only for the road

By: Krishni Loganathan, BA (Hons.)

The McGuinty Government reinforces the importance of not drinking and driving. With the summer of long weekends ahead of us it is important to recognize the impacts and consequences of drinking and driving. The implications that could arise from one's actions to drive after drinking could result in severe penalties including an automatic 90-day suspension of one's license and once convicted a 1 year suspension of one's license and even jail time if necessary.

As many of us relate to drinking and driving solely for the road, there are also rules designed for the water. Drinking and driving a boat is no different then driving an automobile as it is also a serious offence and can result in the same harsh consequences as driving a car. The automatic suspension of one's licence also applies to driving a boat and the repercussions are just as severe.

Several people have poor judgement and still consider driving their vehicle after drinking. RIDE (Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere) program is a provincial spot-check enforcement campaign started in 1977. RIDE checks become more prominent as the summer season hits us, and it would be advantageous and perhaps even life saving to not consume any alcohol at all before driving a vehicle. RIDE checks

are common for long weekends as there are an increased number of people that celebrate their long weekend with BBQ's, cottage vacations and parties that usually result in alcohol consumption.

The key message that is being conveyed is DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE. The limits are continuously being reduced in an attempt to ensure people do not drink and drive. The point of the new legislation is to suggest that even one glass is too much. As of May 1, 2009, Ontario has targeted measures to help take more drinking drivers off the roads. Drivers who register a BAC (Blood Alcohol Level) from 0.05 to 0.08 (known as the "warn range") lose their licence at roadside for 3, 7 or 30 days. Consequences also get tougher for repeat occurrences. If however your BAC is over 0.08 or you fail or refuse to comply with alcohol or drug testing, you can be convicted under the Criminal Code. Individuals convicted for impaired driving offences face penalties under the Canada's Criminal Code and Ontario's Highway Traffic Act. Upon conviction, consequences include additional suspension period, alcohol education and treatment programs, Ignition Interlock Program and fines.

If you know you will be drinking at an event it is vital that you do not drive. Many tragedies have occurred which sparked various organizations from forming including the most prominent one Mothers



Against Drunk Driving or MADD, which educates the public of the consequences of drunk driving and also the alternatives.

Injury that may result in drinking and driving will not only be fatal to others on the road but also to oneself. To live with the guilt of knowing that you caused an injury or worse while intoxicated will be very difficult and a feeling that no one should go through.

The notion is that people believe they are capable of driving after consuming alcohol but the effects that alcohol places

on one's body cannot be repaired in time for the ride home.

Be safe, don't drink and drive. There are many substitutes that one can use in place of driving, which include taking a taxi, public transportation, calling a friend or family member, or to have a designated driver for the event. There are always alternatives and there are no excuses for drinking and driving. Planning ahead is crucial and can even save someone's life.

Arrive alive. Don't drink and drive!

King of Pop's death mourned by musicians

By M. Bharat Kumar

Michael Jackson (50), the 'King of Pop' passed away in Los Angeles on Jun 26 due to cardiac arrest.

The death of the legendary pop singer, who held sway over music-lovers across the world for more than three decades, has needless to say, shocked and stunned his fans.

News Today caught up with some music directors in Tamil cinema, who have been inspired by Michael Jackson and looked up to him as their role model. Expressing dismay at his death, they couldn't but agree that his passing away has left a void in the world of music.

Bharadwaj

Michael Jackson has inspired many musicians across the world. I grew up listening to his music. He was articulate and ahead of his times. He was always an innovative musician, a showman and tech-savvy. This combination took him to great heights. His fans across the globe will miss him badly.



Vidyasagar

Michael Jackson, who had been an youth icon for over three decades, deserves a special place in history. He mesmerised the audience with his music. His demise has robbed us of a great musician and a noble human being.

Dhina

Jackson's demise is a great loss to the music fraternity. He was the one to introduce Western music to India. I consider him as my role model. He was a great composer, lyricist, singer and a choreographer. Above all he had a caring heart. Michael Jackson's demise has left a vacuum in the international music scene.

Ramesh Vinayakam

Michael Jackson brought a sea change in terms of music and dance. He was a rare phenomenon. He touched hearts with his music. Elvis Presley is considered the best in rock 'n' roll, but Michael Jackson deserves a place even above him as he brought many things together. His albums Dangerous and Save the World meant a lot to me as the songs were off-beat and had motivational messages.

Lekha Ratnakumar

When I had been to Universal Studio at Los Angeles in 1990, I had the good fortune of watching a dance - drama produced by Jackson himself. I was stunned by his electrifying performance. A great trend-setter, Michael Jackson was good at spotting talents. He has introduced so many musicians who have made it big. [newstodaynet]



FRIENDSHIP FRESHNESS FINESSE

(NADODIGAL)

By M. Bharatkumar

If Tamil cinema is marching towards realism, director Samuthirakani's Nadodigal is one more step in that direction.

The movie is off-beat, often coming close to real life largely because it has kept out mushy melodrama when speaking of human relationships.

With director Sasikumar in the thick of things, the movie is gripping from the word go. A friend in need is a friend indeed. This is the premise which Samuthirakani builds his movie on. The narration is simple and straightforward.

Tamil cinema has dealt with friendship in a myriad ways. Nadodigal takes a realistic, closer look at it. The movie revolves around three friends Karunakaran (Sasikumar), Pandi (Bharani) and Chandran

(Vijay) who have their individual ambitions to fulfil. Karunakaran is in love with his uncle's daughter Nallama (Ananya). He is madly on the look out for a government job as his uncle has agreed for their wedding on the condition that he gets one.

Everything seems hunky-dory until Saravanan (Ranga), a childhood friend of Karunakaran, enters the picture. Son of a former MP, Ranga is in love with Prabha (Shanthini Devi), the daughter of a bigwig in Namakkal. Shocked by Saravanan's suicide attempt after his love failure, his three friends promise to help him out and unite him with his lover. They go to Namakkal where with the help of their old friend 'Ganja' Karuppu, they manage to help the couple get married and settle down in a safer place. In the process however,

Chandran loses his leg, Pandi becomes hearing impaired and Karunakaran suffers a personal loss. But they realise that their sacrifices have served no purpose as the couple has a difference of opinion and splits within a week. The losses the three friends have suffered for their sake were in vain. What they do then to make the couple realise their folly forms the climax.

It's Sasikumar all the way. He plays the role to his strength as he lives up to the challenges of a subtle portrayal. Equally impressive are Bharani and Vijay. Ananya



as the talkative rural belle is a treat to watch. Newcomer Abhinaya chips in with her best. Sundar C Babu's theme music is brisk but the background score could have been less louder. Samuthirakani-Sasikumar duo deserves a pat for their clarion declaration that all is not yet lost for Tamil cinema. [newstodaynet]

By T.S. Subramanian

A largely intact piece of pottery with a significant inscription in Tamil-Brahmi and the symbol of a gem or bead was found during the last week of June from a burial site at Porunthal village on the foothills of the Western Ghats.

Epigraphists have deciphered the three Tamil-Brahmi letters on the ring-stand as "vayra," which means diamond. The deep-set cist-burial, which has two compartments made of granite slabs, was found to have skeletal remains. A pair of stirrups lay next to the ring-stand.

K. Rajan, Head of the Department of History, Pondicherry University, who directed the excavation, about 12 km from Palani in Tamil Nadu, called the discovery of Tamil-Brahmi script "very important" because it had been found in a remote village and goes to show that literacy had spread to even far-flung villages during the early Christian era. On palaeographical grounds, the script could be dated between the first century B.C. and the first century A.D., he said.

The cist-burial also yielded thousands of tiny, beautiful beads of different varieties such as carnelian, steatite, quartz and agate, four-legged jars, vases, bowls, plates, iron arrow-heads and so on.

Tamil-Brahmi script found in village

Excavation at a site 2 km away yielded thousands of beads and the remnants of the furnace where the beads were possibly made. Terracotta figurines of a humped bull and a man, and a square copper coin of the Tamil Sangam Age, were also found.

Trade route link

Iravatham Mahadevan, a scholar in the Tamil-Brahmi and Indus scripts, described it as "a great discovery" because it established that writing followed commerce. Porunthal lay close to a major, ancient trade route from Madurai, capital of the Pandya country, to Chera country in present-day Kerala. He said the script could be read as "vayra."

The symbol that followed the three Tamil-Brahmi letters showed an etched gem and bead, with a thread coming out of the bead. According to Mr. Mahadevan, the script could be dated to the first century A.D. The grave belonged to a royal personage. Mr. Mahadevan said the site called for greater exploration and more allocation of funds from the Central Institute of Classical Tamil.

Graffiti marks?

Opinion is, however, divided on

whether the three letters are in Tamil-Brahmi or they are graffiti marks. Dr. Rajan quoted Y. Subbarayalu, Head of the Department of Indology, the French Institute of Pondicherry, and epigraphist S. Rajagopal as saying they were graffiti marks. However, V. Vedachalam, retired senior epigraphist, Tamil

Nadu Archaeology Department, and S. Rajavelu, senior epigraphist, Archaeological Survey of India, agreed with Mr. Mahadevan that it was Tamil-Brahmi. Dr. Vedachalam said the symbol of the bead had been found on every pot found in the cist-burial.

The cist is at the centre of a circle of



FINDS: The cist-burial with two chambers, port-hole, ring-stand, a four-legged jar and pots at Porunthal; the ring-stand with Tamil-Brahmi inscription; decorated carnelian beads.

boulders. It has two chambers, one in the northern direction and the other in the southern direction. The dividing slab has a port-hole. Both chambers yielded four-legged jars and pottery. The ring-stand, with the carved script on its surface, was placed at the centre of the northern chamber. Around the ring-stand were 22 beautiful, etched carnelian beads; inside were five more beads. This grave alone yielded 7,500 beads made of steatite, carnelian, quartz and agate. "These are the largest number of beads collected from any grave in Tamil Nadu," Dr. Rajan said. Porunthal was an important bead-making centre. Another important find was 2 kg of well-preserved paddy inside a four-legged jar.

Dr. Rajan added: "The occurrence of paddy in a 2000-year old grave reflects the agricultural potential of the period. The richness of the grave goods, the size of the chamber, the high level of rituals performed, the finding of the script, paddy and the stirrups point to the importance of the man who was buried there." Students from four universities including Mangalore, Sri Venkateswara (Tirupati), Tamil (Thanjavur) and Pondicherry conducted the excavations in both places.

[courtesy: Hindu.com]



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What is subsidized housing, different types of subsidized housing, eligibility and how to apply.

Location: Morningside Library

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For registration, please call

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Date: August 21 & 22

Time: 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Place: **Miracle Family Temple**

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Cost: \$125 includes camp materials, meals and refreshments for 3 days

For further details contact Mr Baskaran (Camp Director) at (905) 858 3449 or Mr Ananth at (416) 993-2255 or email: SVBFYouthLeadershipCamp@gmail.com

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11:30 Rosary

12:00 Holy Mass

3:30 Benediction

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- Follow 400 Extension to Hwy 93 North (Midland/ Penetanguishene)
- Follow Hwy 93 to Hwy 12 Eastbound
- Keep an eye to your left past Midland
- Alternatively, you could Follow 400 Extension past Hwy 93 up to Hwy 12 West (Midland/Penetanguishene)
- In this case keep an eye to your right just before you enter Midland

*** For those using a GPS the Shrine's street address is 16163 Highway 12 West.

Bus pick up points Scarborough, Downtown & Mississauga

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Jaffna educated Professor Sabaratnam Arulkumaran knighted in Queen's Birthday Honours List

Jaffna educated Professor Sabaratnam Arulkumaran knighted in Queen's Birthday Honours List

St George's Professor Sabaratnam Arulkumaran, renowned for his work advancing women's health and maternity care, was honoured in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List announced on Saturday 12 June 2009.

Professor Arulkumaran, Head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at St George's, University of London and clinician at St George's Hospital has been appointed a Knights Bachelor for services to medicine.

Professor Arulkumaran was "delighted" at the knighthood, which recognises his work in maternity care. He says: "I was completely overwhelmed when I received the letter informing me that I would be receiving such an honour.

"The area of medicine I work in brings huge rewards of its own. I began working in obstetrics and gynaecology (which comprises the care of the pregnant woman, her unborn child and the management of diseases specific to women) because I was fascinated by the 'magic of birth' and the happy ending in the vast majority of cases for the couple, their family and the staff. After so many years in the same field, I continue to be passionate about this great service and making a difference to patient care and women's health.

"I am lucky enough to come across inspiring obstetricians and gynaecologists from all around the world and every one of them enjoy what they do and are also the champions of sexual and reproductive health and rights of women."

Professor Arulkumaran's career in obstetrics and gynaecology clinical practice stretches almost four decades - over 25 years of which have included academic research and teaching.

His key achievements include the development of a "clinical dashboard" to provide clinicians with the relevant and timely information they need to inform decisions that improve the quality of patient care.

He has been Head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at St George's, University of London and a clinician at St George's NHS Healthcare Trust since 2001. Previous to this he held posts at a number of high profile institutions including the National University of Singapore, the University of Nottingham, the Asia & Oceanic Federation, and the International Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Principal of St George's, University of London, Peter Kopelman, congratulated Professor Arulkumaran on his award: "I am immensely proud of the work

Sabaratanam does at St George's and within his other professional roles. He is a truly inspirational clinician and a true professor to the students at this University."

Professor Arulkumaran's research interests are fetal monitoring, intrapartum care, high risk pregnancy, obstetric litigation and safety in maternity care. Throughout his career he has published 24 books as author or editor and 240 indexed articles and over 150 book chapters. He has also been Editor in Chief of Best Practice & Research in Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology since 1998.

David Astley, Chief Executive of St George's Healthcare NHS Trust, said: "This award is deserved recognition of the immense contribution that Professor Arulkumaran has made to maternity care both in his clinical work and through research."

Professor Arulkumaran has been President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) since 2007. The RCOG aims to improve women's health by encouraging the study and advancement of the science and practice of obstetrics and gynaecology. The RCOG International Office works with other international organisations to help lower maternal morbidity and mortality in under-resourced countries.

In Her Majesty's birthday Honours, HM The Queen confers Knighthood on Jaffna educated, Sri Lankan, Professor Sabaratnam Arulkumaran

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, conferred a Knighthood on Professor Sabaratnam Arulkumaran, professor and head of obstetrics and gynaecology at the University of London and president of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. He is one of the most forward-thinking medical leaders in the country.

Sir Arulkumaran, 61, was educated at Jaffna Central College and Mahajana College, Telippalai, in Sri Lanka's Northern province, entered the University of Ceylon and took his MBBS degree in 1972 with honours.

The following interview with Professor Arulkumaran was conducted and published by the leading publisher of science and health information, Elsevier:

What aspect of being an editor do you find most rewarding?

Making sure that the practitioners have good knowledge about the subject as it evolves, so they can further increase care for their patients. With the Best Practice series, where we select a topic to focus on, people write to me after and tell me how it has helped them to change their practice.

What would you change about your role as editor or



the scientific journal publishing industry if you could?

The only thing would be to see how accessible journals are for various people. For instance, the Best Practice series is produced in English and there are a lot of practitioners, in countries like Japan, that don't speak English. Accessibility of the materials is really important. In certain areas like Africa and India, they can't afford to buy the literature. How do we get the knowledge there without cost or language restrictions?

How do you balance your role as editor with your other roles?

It takes extra time; you need to spend the weekends and evenings working. I travel a lot, so I take the transcripts with me and, instead of watching the movie, I'm reading papers.

When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I had what I call evolving ambitions. Initially I wanted to be a pilot, then a doctor, then a GP and, ultimately, an obstetrician. Children are attracted to jobs with uniforms. As you approach university, you realize there are more jobs and things to do.

Why did you choose medicine as your field of study?

I got to know some students who went to medical school. Hearing about their work really interested me, the science aspect, but also the need to be a good communicator. I was attracted to the idea of spending my time with

patients and trying to figure out what could be done. An important part of being a good physician is being a good listener.

Tell me about collaboration. What is the secret to success?

I had a lot of collaboration in my early days with doctors from Sweden. They would come to Singapore, where I used to work, and we would bring our ideas to the table to see how we could work together. To collaborate well, you need to be prepared to travel and meet people.

What gets you up in the morning?

I just get up on my own at 5:15, there seems to be a clock in my head. I often work until midnight, there's always so much work and I have to prioritize. I supervise a number of junior doctors and I need to spend time motivating them. They stimulate me by asking questions and they want the answers so they can get better at what they're doing.

What is the biggest lesson you've learned in your career?

The biggest lesson is that success comes with hard work. People talk about luck, but you produce that by working hard. It means you have to sacrifice the usual pleasures that others enjoy.

What is your biggest achievement?

I have contributed to our specialty in a number of ways. I enjoy my role as Head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at St. George's College, London. I was the secretary General of the International Federation of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and I'm now the President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in the UK; a college that produces a lot of leading materials and programs relating to women's healthcare. It sets standards of practice in all hospitals and I am proud to be leading this organization. It is nice to be acknowledged in this way by my peers and to do good work in this specialty.

What is your favorite quote?

There are several, of course.



One simple one might be: "A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks that others throw at him." It is from one of the Hindu philosophers, Chinmayananda.

What are you currently reading? Would you recommend it? If so, why?

There's an interesting book written by Gordon Brown, the current Prime Minister, called *Courage: Eight Portraits*. Essentially, he's portraying eight leaders who have gone out of their way to do things differently, like Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi. They took the majority view and worked against the odds for the betterment of all people.

Who or what is your biggest inspiration?

Hindu philosophy, specifically the Bhagavadgitha. It's a story about a king fighting against his own brothers for the sake of good. They are having a discussion on the battlefield. It's full of quotes about how to live a good life, not to regret what you are doing and to do what is best for the good of others. I normally have a CD of it in my car, or when I travel.

What would you like your legacy to be?

That I contributed to the field, at least in a small way. To improve women's health is my chosen vocation. I like to think that I contributed through my scientific research, writing papers, editing and in my clinical work.

What do you like to do for fun?

I like to meet with my friends and talk about issues in life. We only meet three or four times a year, but we've been getting together for decades. We talk about how things are in our personal lives and the world around us. In my extra time, I like to travel and explore new cultures, to see how people in other places live now and what their history was before.

[Compiled with reports by St George's University of London (sgul.ac.uk) and Elsevier.com]

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Arun Senathirajah

Western countries that supplied weapons, funds in addition to banning LTTE at the request of Sri Lankan Government and encouraged Sri Lanka to crush the LTTE are now weary of their failure in the efforts to stop the human rights violation openly taking place in the internment camps and in getting access to the camps by independent media, NGOs, human rights organizations etc. Further their numerous requests to Sri Lankan Government to show a justifiable solution or political reconciliation to Tamil minority have been totally and continuously ignored by the Sinhala regime. Almost 2 months after crushing the Tamil Tigers the only strong Tamil voice, the international community including the peace mediated Co-chairs and even United Nations which silently gave approval to Sri Lankan Government's criminal act of massacring more than 50,000 Tamils and slaying the surrendered LTTE cadres have failed to get the Sri Lankan Government to bring a justifiable solution to the Tamil ethnic problem. What action Sri Lanka itself has taken or has there to offer to Tamils is nothing.

Tamils Open Imprisonment with the UN Financing and Support

After the war is over why the 300,000 are still kept in the camps and continues the brutal acts of kidnapping, murdering and raping on them. If all the Tamils are branded as LTTE supporters by the Sri Lanka Government, are the international communities and the UN going to allow them exterminated as Sri Lankan crushed the 50,000 Tamils at the end of the war? No action has been taken by the UN to find the truths from the residents of the camps who escaped from the war zones in the final days. They go along with the Sri Lankan Government by not taking action to not to take cameras, video or other communication equipments to the camps. They oblige the Sri Lankan Government request and not taking these equipments to the camps. Surrendered Tamil Tigers holding white flags were murdered after communicated with UN envoy Vijay Nambiar. No action was taken by the UN. Two UN staffers Kandasamy Soundararajan of UNOPS and N Charles Raveendran of UNHCR were arrested by the Sri Lankan military in June 2009. Their inaction in the case of two UN staffers kidnapped by white van people in June 2009 and later accepted by the SLG they are in government custody also proves the full support given by the UN officials to Sri Lankan Government's atrocity activities. While they were in detention camps no action has been taken by the U.N. Secretary General Bai Ki-Moon and but, the UNHCR country officer for Sri Lanka Amin Awar praised the Sri Lankan oppressor and the situation in Vavuniya internment camps, while the abuses and abductions are of daily occurrence. While the UN is funding, do not take serious actions for its detained staffers, and at the same time praising Sri Lanka closing its eyes on ill treatments of Tamils how can the oppressed Tamils trust such an international body to bring any justice?

U.N. Secretary General Ban

UN Financing for incarcerating Tamils while IMF Funding for Replenishing War Crime Expenditures and Settling Sinhalese in Tamil Lands

Ki-Moon's Complicity in Camp Affairs

As pointed out by Prof. Boyle of University of Illinois College of Law and an expert in International Law, international law set forth in Article I of the 1948 Genocide Convention. "In addition, where an individual such as the U.N. Secretary General has an obligation to act to prevent criminal activity and either refuses or fails to do so, that would render him "complicit" with the underlying criminal activity--in this case genocide. Article III(e) of the 1948 Genocide Convention prohibits, criminalizes and calls for the punishment of: "Complicity in genocide." Prof. Boyle said "Not to visit Sri Lanka immediately for this Purpose would constitute a violation of the United Nations Charter by the U.N. Secretary General himself". Bai Ki-Moon has knowingly allowed thousands of Tamils being massacred at the end of the war, although he said, if his visit would save lives he would visit Sri Lanka in May 2009, before the final war, but he didn't visit Sri Lanka means that he didn't want to safe Tamils being killed by Sri Lankan forces.

Sinhala Settlements in Tamil Lands

As reported by Virakesari a few days ago in June 2009, the idea of the Sinhala-Buddhist monks is to show the Buddhist vestiges in the North and East and to use them as a card in the cultural genocide of Eelam Tamils by Sinhalization of the Tamil homeland. Any 'archaeological' investigation would beforehand have the findings with the plot evidence and would be under taken by 100% racist Buddhist Sinhala officers like former Sri Lankan Chief Judge Sarath N Silva, with that they think they have the historical proof to annihilate all the Tamils from the Island of Sri Lanka. In this direction as it has been the case since the Gal Oya Irrigation Scheme, Sri Lankan Government under Mahinda Rajapakse has initiated action to settle Sinhalese in Tamil lands, while chasing them elsewhere forcibly.

They gradually settle Sinhalese in the name of proving services for military camps. For Sri Lanka such service provision is far more important in peaceful time than in the war time, is tool to fool others to bring Sinhalese in Tamil lands. Further recruiting of another 50,000 to 100,000 after the war is over is another plot to bring more Sinhalese in Tamil lands. From Menik Farm Camp 5,000 Tamils were forced to resettle as pockets surrounded by Sinhalese Areas in Tharmapuram village against their wishes. So, that those Tamils voices are put into silence and they have to live in fear for the rest of their life. They will lose their own properties in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu. Their permanent addresses, property details would have definitely been taken by the soldiers in the camps. So, the properties of these 5,000 would be clear target for Sinhala settlement without any opponent. Although promises given by the President Mahinda Rajapakse to resettle Tamils in their villages, the only construction taking place in the North is that of new military installations and Sinhala colonies. In the name resettling Tamils, Mahinda Rajapakse continuously takes actions to destroy the identity of Tamils in the island. As like Indian Tamils are living with fear surrounded by Sinhalese Mahinda

Rajapakse Brothers moving Tamils forcibly from the Camps and in addition to losing their own house and lands they purposely put in places where they will be minority forever, their right to chose their own habitat is rejected. Claiming that they need more time to clear land mines they forcibly remove Tamils from the camps and put them with Sinhalese, at the same time the government has forced land mine clearing teams to evacuate by killing and threatening their employees. In June 2009, top Sri Lankan military officials appointed by SL President Mahinda Rajapaksa as Competent Authority in charge of resettlement of Tamils displaced from Vanni have finalized a plan to settle 200 Sinhalese people in Musali where 2,000 displaced Tamils have been allowed to resettle, informed civil officials in Vavuniya told Tamil Net Friday. More than 4,500 civilians were forced to flee Musali division in Mannaar district in September 2007. The Sri Lanka Government had the agenda of transforming the Madu shrine area into a full-fledged Sinhala colony. Despite assuring the international community that most Tamils interned in militarized detention camps would be resettled by the end of 2009, the Sri Lankan government is turning Manik Farm, the largest barbed-wire ringed site, into a permanent detention centre, The Times newspaper reported on July 03, 2009. Tamil refugees are being used as forced labour, UN sources told the paper. Aid workers say the site was fast becoming Sri Lanka's second biggest city after the capital, Colombo. Whilst Sri Lanka blames mines for preventing resettlement, foreign demining agencies say that they have been given access so far to only about 30 sq km of the former Vanni conflict zone. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and his official John Holmes continue to avoid proper reply to the allegations of rape and disappearance highlighted by the London Times and The Australian. Claude Heller, the Ambassador of Mexico who had at least tried to get the Security Council to consider the plight of civilians in Sri Lanka.

IMF to Replenish War Crime Expenditures

Sri Lanka used up its foreign reserves for war purpose and presented huge deficit budget that would have adverse impact on the value of Rupee. Then, approached IMF to buffer the foreign reserve and fix the value of Rupee problems. Sri Lanka sovereign credit cut to B+ on bad budgets, foreign borrowing, and war in April 2009. Fitch Ratings has downgraded Sri Lanka's sovereign rating by one notch to 'B+' saying budgets were weak, inflation was high and the country was borrowing heavily from foreign lenders at commercial rates. The rating agency said the government's "overriding priority" was war rather than fixing the economy. "The ratings downgrade of Sri Lanka reflects the increased vulnerability of sovereign creditworthiness to adverse shocks associated with rising inflation, persistently large fiscal deficits and worsened terms of trade due to soaring oil prices in the context of greater government recourse to commercial and market-based financing," James McCormack, Head of Asia sovereign ratings said. Prevailing high and volatile inflation increases the risk of macroeconomic instability and discourages investment, with negative



medium-term growth implications. Sri Lanka last year raised 500 million dollars through a sovereign bond. However, external turmoil from an international crisis has significantly pushed up risk premiums on the country's sovereign debt and made it difficult to raise money beyond one year. Central Bank Governor Nivard Cabraal who said, in early June 2009 'We will never go after donors and lending agencies with a begging bowl. We are capable of standing on our own and raise funds through capital markets,' now in July 2009 says, 'Let it come at the time it comes. Till it comes let us managed it (exchange rate) as it is being managed.' But , Sri Lanka Trade minister G L Peiris said to Reuters in June 2009, 'if the developed countries are going to cut off resources at this time, that is ironical, because now is the time to infuse greater resources.' Sri Lanka Government needs to resettle war refugees, create jobs in depressed areas formerly run by the Tamil Tigers...Politically, Colombo is trying to re-integrate a country riven along ethnic lines and fashion a political system that include minority Tamils-a process that needs economic development to succeed'. According to Peiris Tamil's refugee problem to be considered for funding and 're-integrate a country' means bringing resettling Sinhalese in Tamil lands as started in Musali and totally erase Tamil identity as they forcibly removed 5,000 IDPs and put in Anuradhapura then there would be no ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. There is no anything to offer to Tamils even after 2 months the war is over. They plans to permanently keep 300,000 Tamils in the camps funded by the United Nations

While the approval for IMF funding of \$1.9 billion (now estimated to \$2.5bn) is being delayed, Over the ashes of dead Tamils HSBC, Citigroup and Deutsche banks are getting ready to finance Sri Lanka Government's agenda by buying it 'Tamil Blood Tainted Bond' or 'Bloodbath Bonds'. Their profit greediness has tempted to study the Sri Lankan Capital Market as an fantastic opportunity to make money. 'The rebound will be spectacular,' said HSBC private banking Chief Investment strategist for Asia, hyping the possibility of Sri Lanka becoming the 'Hong Kong of India' and 'wealth Indian' investing there.

Recent Activities and Abuses Cast More Doubts

Sri Lankan government officials are running a prostitution racket using Tamil women interned in at least one of the militarized camps for displaced people, The Australian newspaper reported on July 02 2009. "It's been

brought to the attention of senior government officials but no one seems to be doing anything about it," an aid worker, who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal, told the paper. In response to the accusations, Palitha T. B. Kohona, Permanent Secretary to Sri Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Affairs told the paper: "These (the military) are the guys who were winning the war - they could have raped every single woman on the way if they wanted to. Not one single woman was raped." Palitha Kohona's statement clears the standpoint of the government in rape accusations by the Sinhala soldiers. He has said 'victorious soldiers would have raped each and every Tamil woman, but did not do so'. It means as if they have done, the Sri Lanka Government would let it go, and as it is now taking place in reality. That is how the victorious soldiers also got the blessing of the government to bulldoze 50,000 Tamils in the last days of the war. For Sri Lankan Government victorious soldiers are set to do any crime on Tamils.

Mahinda Rajapaksa government, after killing 50,000 Tamils and incarcerating the rest in concentration camps and open prisons, is appealing to Buddhist countries to support its agenda. Call by Mahinda to Buddhist countries to save the countries from Western countries is an open invitation to spread Sinhala Buddhist Chauvinism in international level. Presidential Commission of Investigation that was set up to look into abuses prior to this year's upsurge in fighting has been disbanded without imposing any accountability, including for Action Contre la Faim, NGO workers who were killed. Tamil Minister in the Sri Lankan Government, Douglas Devananda who is a full supporter of Mahinda Rajapakse government itself is not allowed by Mahinda Rajapakse to contest local election in his own party election symbol. This means he is merged with Sinhalese political party is not allowed to identify as a Tamil political party. That's the real future for Tamils in Sri Lanka. Tamils will not be allowed to be as a distinct race according to the agenda of the current Sinhala Buddhist Chauvinistic rulers.

Sri Lanka has grave fear in allowing unfettered access to the horrific camps bring out the plain truth of the Sri Lankan soldiers inhuman act during the last days of the war. The world should accept the fact of continuous refusal by Sri Lankan Government to allow independent access itself a cover-up of the truth. There no need for any other evidence other than this standpoint of Sri Lanka.

Religion & Spirituality

By: Devadas Chelvam

From the five years of being an adoption worker at New York Foundling Hospital, a young female client stands out vividly in my memory, due to her extraordinary presence. Her children had been removed and placed in foster care, since she was a hard core drug addict, and her husband a drug dealer. I went to her, wanting her signed permission, to place her children in an adoptive home.

I was somewhat nervous as I walked into the apartment building in the South Bronx, since I expected the client to be depressed and her home rather untidy. A simply clad pretty young woman opened the door to a spotlessly clean apartment. She received me graciously, and introduced herself as Jennifer, exuding an aura of peace and bubbling with joy.

Jennifer claimed to be a 'born again' Christian. The ups and downs of drug addiction had landed her in a hellish hole of misery. Her husband died in her arms shot by another drug dealer. Consequently even the drugs could not make a dent in her deep depression.

Later Jennifer's sisters brought her to a Christian Church, where she was inspired to surrender herself completely to Lord Jesus Christ. It was a miraculous transformation. She said that the bliss she feels constantly was incomparably greater and deeper than the 'high' she felt while taking drugs.

I continued to work with her for three months, arranging her visits with the children at the agency, in order to return them to her eventually. During this period, her sense of peace and joy seemed to be unceasing, even when there were occasions to be hurt, when the children did not show up for a visit, for an example. Quite often I found her reading the Bible at home. But she never quoted from it, nor did she ever try to convert me.

My subsequent years were blessed by contacts with few more people like Jennifer from various religions. Two of them did not have any religious background. Their common characteristic was a life uncommonly full of peace, love and joy. What set them apart was genuine spirituality, acquired either through religious belief and practice, or with-



out any traditional belief system.

A spiritual person lives here and now, honoring the sacred quality of the present moment. He is free from the past and future. No burden of guilt, regrets or grievances from the past. No worry or anxiety about the future. He is aware of the infinite Intelligence within and around everything. Hence he is able to accept the good and the bad that come to him daily from the loving hands of God, in complete trust and surrender. By constantly communing with God, he is able to advance daily in peace and joy.

The essence of religion is spirituality. Religious rites and rituals are meaningful, only if they mediate spiritual values to man. Otherwise they remain merely empty husks, or may be even harmful. Religion is often used to cover up inner insecurity and turmoil. Then it functions like a drug, and can become an "opium of the masses."

Our inner demons may be hard to face. However they will vanish easily, if we bring them into the light of pure awareness, beyond judgments and thoughts, surrendering to God's loving presence within us. Then we will derive our happiness not from any action or anything external. Rather, we would have realized that peace, love, and joy are the natural state of our being.

I was brought up to believe that Catholicism was the only true religion, and other Christian denominations were partially true, whereas the non-Christian religions were altogether false. Opening my heart and mind to

modern spiritual Masters, and reading other sacred scriptures and the lives of sages and saints from various religions made me realize that I had been steeped in blind ignorance.

God is far beyond any name or form. The Absolute cannot be limited to names and forms. Yet God can and does manifest His divinity through different forms in various historical contexts. If God is unable to manifest Himself in such a manner, He would be limited, and hence not God.

As Christians experience the

vision of Lord Jesus and Our Lady, God can manifest Himself to Hindu devotees as Lord Muruga, Lord Krishna, or Durga Ma, depending on their faith and devotion. There are numerous tales of saints or ordinary devotees having such visions, which inspired in them an ardent love for God. It enabled them to move towards a state of endless joy and peace.

When Christ said "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" or Lord Krishna declared that He was the sole savior of the universe, they were speaking not as individuals limited to particular forms, but from the divine state of supreme consciousness. Ultimate spiritual consciousness is perfect oneness. There is no room for division, contrast and comparison in such a state of consciousness.

Perfect Masters must not be approached with a materialistic mind, which comes nowhere close to understanding them. An open heart, humility, and silent receptivity are the only way to get even a slight glimpse of their incomparable greatness and glory.

Einstein affirmed the essential oneness of humanity and all creation, stating that individual separateness or egoism is an "optical



illusion". Though illusory, egoism both individual and collective is the common experience of man throughout history.

Egoism is tied to a dualistic thought pattern of comparison and contrast such as superiority/inferiority, good/evil, right/wrong. Religion easily inclines towards collective egoism and a judgmental attitude. Egoism both individual and collective has been responsible for all the crimes, wars, and consequent misery.

Now evolution seems to be pushing man to rise above collective and individual egoism, and realize his innate spirituality and unity with all creation. It is the only way to avoid destroying the planet and ourselves through the selfish use of modern technology.

Paramahansa Yogananda used to say that our primary duty is to reform ourselves, since through self-transformation, we can transform thousands of others without even knowing about it. Like Jennifer we too can learn to cultivate and exude peace, love and joy, by surrendering to God, and accepting ourselves and others as we are. Only spirituality or peace and love can serve and save humanity.

Fathers should show the way for their children

A song cum expressive dance performance depicting the human suffering in the war-affected areas of Sri Lanka was the highlight of the 'Father's Day' service of the Tamil Christian Church at Scarborough. God was invoked as 'the Great Father' who should shower His blessings on the suffering people and relieve their miseries. There were also songs, speeches and sermon pertaining to the role of the father in shaping the lives of their children.

The song 'Jehovah Jirah' by the fathers' choir in folk-dialect words was well rendered with appropriate musical accompaniments. Rev. Milton delivering his message said Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus proved to be an excellent model for fathers. He accepted the Will of God and provided the right conditions and support for Jesus to fulfill His



ministry in the earth. He became a world -winner. Fathers should spend more time with their children specially in their formative years. Most of our fathers are more keen on making money but forsake their children. They do not value the time they have to devote for them. The net result is that they go astray and become a perpetual burden in their later years. As the Book of Proverbs instructs we should direct the

children in the path they should go and they will blossom as fountains of glory and joy to their parents.

Bernard Benjamin (Convenor-Father's ministry) and his team of dedicated fathers should be commended for presenting a meaningful service to inspire and enlighten the fathers of their duty towards their children.

By: jj



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MONSOON FEATURE

Raymond Rajabalan

In 1903, American aeronautical engineers Orville and Wilbur Wright built the first working airplane. On December 17, 1903, Orville Wright made the first successful flight of a piloted, heavier-than-air, self-propelled craft, called the Flyer at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, USA traveling a distance of about 37 m (120 ft) through the air.

Since that momentous day, the air line industry has undergone a great revolution resulting in the manufacture of a wide variety of air planes which have helped the world to become a global village due to the ease of travel covering vast distances.

Though statistically flying is nowadays an extremely safe form of transportation, periodically accidents do occur. The relative rarity of such incidents coupled with the often dramatic outcome, is definitely one reason why such incidents still make breaking news across the globe.



Air France447

Even though the odds of actually getting caught in a plane crash are distinctly low (the odds of dying on a commercial airline flight are as low as 9 million to 1) compared to other means of transportation, the probability of not surviving such a disaster is notably higher. And it's an open secret that a lot can go wrong at 33,000 feet above the ground, and if you're unlucky enough to be aboard when something does, the decisions you make could mean the difference between life and death.

Meanwhile, Air France is to change speed sensors on its fleet of Airbus A330 aircraft following last month's crash over above the Atlantic which killed 228 people. French newspaper Le Figaro, quoting sources from the airline's biggest union, said Air France had prepared a timetable to carry out technical upgrades after it was confirmed speed sensors had failed on the crashed aircraft. Work should take a matter of days, according to the report.

A variety of factors can throw an aircraft into an uncontrolled dive including explosives, a catastrophic system failure and simple

Air Travel: How safe is it? An Indepth Analysis

pilot error.

EXPLOSIVES

In the latter part of the past century, there were at least two incidents involving large aircrafts that suddenly suffered catastrophic events at cruising altitude

❖ **Air India 182:** On June 23, 1985, a terrorist bomb ripped apart a Boeing 747 off the Irish coast, killing all 329 people - most of them Canadians - on board a flight from Toronto and Montreal to London and onward to Delhi.



Air France447 Flight Path

❖ Three years later on Dec. 21, 1988, a terrorist bomb destroyed a **Pan Am Boeing 747** over Lockerbie, Scotland as it headed out over the Atlantic to New York on a flight from London. All 259 passengers and crew were killed, along with 11 people on the ground.

At high altitudes, an explosion that ruptures the aircraft fuselage creates a **characteristic elongated wreckage pattern**. Some parts break away and fall nearly straight down while other flutter and spiral along the aircrafts route.

Such breakups usually scatter bodies-often intact-along the wreckage track and many are found floating on the surface, as was the case of Air India disaster and the July 1996 crash of TWA Flight 800 which broke up after its central fuel tank exploded off Long Island, New York at an altitude of about 10,000. The cause of the crash of Flight 800 still remains uncertain.



Air France passengers just before disappearance

Air Crashes due to system failure

By contrast when, when an aircraft plunges into sea largely intact, the enormous impact leaves few, if any, bodies intact and human remains are mostly found trapped in the wreckage once it is located in the sea bottom, as was the case with Swiss Air 111, an MD-11 that crashed off Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia on Sep 2, 1998 killing all 229 onboard. Only one intact body

was recovered in the crash.

A rapidly spreading fire in the ceiling of the first-class cabin destroyed the jet's electrical systems resulting in the crash of this doomed flight. The pilots elected to circle to dump fuel rather than make an immediate landing at Halifax, about 50 kilometers away. Twenty-one minutes after the first detection of smoke, the aircraft crashed.

Meanwhile, nearly 57 bodies have been recovered after the crash of Air France. However since the black boxes have not been recovered it will not be possible to pin point the cause of the accident.

Importance of Black boxes

Recovery of the planes two "black boxes" is crucial in determining the cause of an accident

1. Cock pit voice recorder tapes all conversations between the pilots as well as radio transmissions to air control.

2. Flight Data Recorder



Cockpit voice Recorder

produces a computerized log of scores of details about the aircraft, its engines and control surfaces as well its speed and altitude.

Pilot inattention

Not all sudden controlled dives are caused by malfunction or terrorist attacks. Sometimes pilot inattention is enough to cause serious air crashes and there have been few such tragic incidents throughout the past decades

❖ Perhaps the most extraordinary case - at least in terms of successful recovery from a terrifying drive- was a China Airlines Boeing 747 cruising at 41,000 feet over the Pacific Ocean in

1985.

The crew failed to set the autopilot properly and as the jumbo jet slowly lost air speed. It was suddenly buffeted by turbulence. The aircraft rolled sharply, lost first one engine and then the remaining three.

It plunged at high speed, out of control for nearly 30,000 feet, before the crew managed to relight the engines and regain control. The high speed descent so severely overstressed the frame that, even though the pilots managed to land safely hours later in San Francisco the aircraft was a write-off.

Contd. Next Page

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Contd. from previous page

Of course, many high speed dives end in tragedy - and some are deliberate

❖ Egypt Air 990: A suicidal co-pilot deliberately wrenched control of the Boeing 767 and sent it into a fatal dive on Oct. 31, 1999, off Nantucket Island, Mass., on a flight from New York to Cairo. All 217 people were killed.

❖ On Dec. 19, 1997, the bankrupt and emotionally troubled pilot of a Silk Air Boeing 737 flying from Jakarta to Singapore slipped out of his seat disconnected the cockpit voice and flight recorder and pitched the aircraft over into a sharp dive.

As it plunged from 35,000 feet all the way into Indonesia's Rive Musi, the jet broke sound barrier -about 1000 kilo meters an hour. Parts of the tail were torn away and all 104 people on board were killed.

The pilot, Tsu Way Ming, was having financial difficulties and had been disciplined in the months before the crash, according to a report by investigators.

❖ Another bizarre case involved the co pilot of an Aerofloat Airbus -311 that was fly-

ing from Moscow to Honk Kong in 1994. He allowed his children into the cockpit and let them play with the flight controls.

When the pilots chatted, the 15 year old son nudged the aircraft into a sharp bank. The Airbus stalled and then plunged, spinning out of control. As the co-pilot screamed at his son to "get out" and struggled back into his seat, the whirling aircraft plummeted towards the ground.

At about 100 feet the spinning was brought under control, but it was too late to halt the high speed descent. The Airbus crashed, killing all 75 people on board.

❖ A Royal Air Maroc flight that crashed, killing 44 people in southern Morocco in August 1994 was piloted by Youes Kayaei, 32, who was apparently driven to suicide by failed romance according to the commission investigating the crash.

The pilot "disconnected the automatic pilot and directed the aircraft toward the ground". The accident "is due to the deliberate wishing of the pilot to end his life", the commission said after examining the aircraft's flight



Black Box (Flighty Data recorder)

recorder and cockpit voice recorder.

❖ In Feb, 1982 A Pilot flying Japan Airlines DC-8, airliner crashed the aircraft, killing 24 passengers and injuring 80. The pilot Seiji Katagiri, 35, said later that he had been hallucinating for three months before the accident. The airline had demoted the pilot after he suffered a psychosomatic illness in November 1980, and then a nervous disorder six months before the crash.

However, these are very rare incidents since the modern day pilots undergo various psychological tests before being hired. In

addition they are very well trained and their health regularly monitored

Even with great advances in aviation industry it will never be possible to ensure an accident free air travel, just like any other means of transport. However, unlike in the past decades the air crashes are very rare proving the rapid progress in modern methods of air craft manufacturing.

The two photos attached were apparently taken by one of the passengers before the aircraft crashed. The photos were retrieved from the



camera's memory stick. You will never get to see photos like this. In the first photo, there is a gaping hole in the fuselage through which you can see the tailplane and vertical fin of the aircraft. In the second photo, one of the passengers is being sucked out of the gaping hole.

These photos were found in a digital Casio Z750, amidst the remains. Although the camera was destroyed, the Memory Stick was recovered. Investigating the serial number of the camera, the owner was identified as Paulo G. Muller, an actor of a theatre for children known in the outskirts of Porto Alegre. It can be imagined that he was standing during the impact, he managed to take these photos, just seconds after the tail loss the aircraft plunged. So the camera was found near the cockpit. The structural stress probably ripped the engines away, diminishing the falling speed, protecting the electronic equipment but not unfortunately the victims. Paulo Muller leaves behind two daughters, Bruna and Beatriz.

Grand Opening of RBC Royal Bank's Branch at Markham Rd & 14th Avenue



The Grand Opening of RBC Royal Bank's Branch located at Markham Rd & 14th Avenue, took place last month amidst a gathering of clients, friends and well-wishers.

The VIP guests who attended the event included Mr. Frank Scarpitti, Mayor of Town of Markham, Mr. John McCallum M.P, Mr. Logan Kanapathi, Markham City Councillor, Ms. Jennifer Tory, Regional President from RBC, Mr. Imtiaz Seyid, Vice-President, South Asian Markets, RBC and Nancy Van Kessel, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity of

York Region.

Mr. Bala Narayan, the energetic Branch Manager was present to receive the guests who attended the function. One of the highlights of the Grand Opening was the presentation of a cheque donation to the value of \$ 20,000 by the Bank to the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity. Habitat presented a plaque of Appreciation to the Bank in honour of RBC's contribution.

John McCallum, the MP who incidentally is a past Chief Economist of RBC, paid a glowing tribute to Royal Bank compliment-

ing that RBC has opened six branches in six months in the Town of Markham specially during times of recession and thereby helped to boost the economy. The Branch provides both retail and Business Banking services with a staff team that speaks thirteen different languages.

Unfortunately, due to the inclement weather some of the outside activities planned were restricted. Seen here are some pictures taken at the Grand Opening.



Imtiaz Seyid, Vice President South Asian Markets-RBC (on left) and Bala Narayan, Branch Manager-RBC (on right)



Nancy Van Kessel, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity of York Region and Siva Sivacantharasa, Senior Account Manager-RBC



(From Left) Bala Narayan, Branch Manager-RBC, Sylvia, RBC, Nala Brodie, Mortgage Specialist and Mina, RBC



Opening Ceremony-Cutting Ribbon



Jennifer Tory, Regional President-RBC talking to Chris at counter



Markham Councillor Logan Kanapathi, Siva Sivacantharasa and guest



20,000 Cheque presentation by RBC to Habitat

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A TALE OF THE MONSOONS

(The Spirit of The Mountains and The Spirit of The Sea) Vietnam

By Chandrani Warnasuriya

Princess Mi Nuong was the only daughter of King Hung of Vietnam. She was sad as

much as she was beautiful. Her maids did their best to comfort her and console her. They combed and brushed her glossy black hair fixing it, setting it prim and proper, befitting a royal princess. They dressed her up in gorgeous robes and beautiful clothes, that was the admiration of all.

One day after the routine grooming and ceremoniously dressing her up, the maids were saddened at the way she shunned and refused to look at the mirror. The problem was even though she was beautiful, the princess was getting old; and she was scared to see those budding wrinkles on her face. She was still not married.

The King was very fond of his daughter, and wanted nothing but the best of suitors for her. A rich and powerful prince charming; excellent in all the arts and adept in warfare. But such a suitor was not easy to find. Years passed by and it looked as though the princess would never find a partner at all.

One fine day however, two handsome young men visited the palace. They came in one after the other, and wooed the princess's hand in marriage. They seemed to possess all what the King dreamed for his daughter. The King was confused. Sadly, he could not decide between the two suitors. So the King wondered and wondered, how to settle between the two.

Who could these extraordinary princes be? The King did not wait to think or inquire about it. One happened to be the Spirit of the Sea disguised as a prince and the other was the Spirit of the Mountains in disguise.

At last the King decided and went ahead, and called the two princes and said, "Go back to your country from where you came, whoever returns first with the desired gifts for the princess will get to marry her," said



the King. So the two princes hurried back, one went to the sea and the other went to the mountains.

The Spirit of the Sea rushed to its ocean abode and called upon all the sea creatures. He commanded them to search for the rarest and the most precious pearls, tastiest crabs, the most delicious squid and other delectable sea food and treasures from the sea as gifts for the princess and the King. The Spirit of the Mountains called upon all the mountain animals to look for the treasure chest filled with diamonds, jewels and precious stones hidden in a cave in the mountains. He also collected baskets of exotic fruits and flowers to present as gifts to the King.

The next morning the Spirit of the Mountains returned with his treasures, fruits and flowers and presented them to the King. The King unable to resist the gifts gave his daughter in marriage to the Mountain Spirit.

Alas! The Spirit of the Sea returned minutes later, when the Mountain Spirit was already on its way down the gates of the palace with the beautiful Mi Nuong as his bride. The Spirit of the Sea finding that he was

late to claim the hand of the princess, suspected the Mountain Spirit of mischief and went raving mad.

He ordered the sea to blow a terrible storm across the land. Ferocious winds destroyed everything on its way. Trees got tossed and uprooted; roof tops blown off. Rains fell and flooded the land; swollen rivers overflowed their banks and houses were washed away. Ocean waves pounded mercilessly against the land; men women and children were displaced, and everywhere the Sea Spirit caused havoc as it rushed against the Mountain Spirit determined to snatch the princess away.

But the Mountain Spirit high up in his mountain palace was not hurt. He could not be consumed by the waters; for as the foaming waters lashed against the mountains it fell back and poured helplessly down into the sea. The Mountain Spirit challenged the Ocean and mustered all its forces, of animals in the Mountains; elephants, lions, tigers, and cobras to fight the

Spirit of the Ocean storms. The sea creatures accepted the challenge and fought back; but they could not fight much on land and many of them were killed.

When the Spirit of the Sea found that the sea animals were losing the battle and could not get the princess, they retreated. The wind and the storm calmed down; the flood waters receded and peace came over both land and sea.

But every year around August, the Sea Spirit encounters the land in a battle to win the hand of the princess up in the mountain palace and sends stormy winds and pouring rain to flood and destroy the land in the hope of winning the princess. When its fury ceases, peace is restored and the people are able to get about planting their rice fields and preparing for the harvest. That is why in Vietnam and other South East Asian countries like Sri Lanka we hear of the "Burst" of the Monsoon.



Food Frenzy

In Belgium, there is a Museum that is just for STRAWBERRIES




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Tamil Canadians stand behind GlobalMedic



Gord Martineau, CityTV anchor endorses GlobalMedic

By: Dhimo Sornalingam

GlobalMedic, the Toronto-based NGO founded 10 years ago, has since worked in 31 developing countries around the world, providing emergency relief aid. In Sri Lanka it has worked on 4 previous missions and is currently in Manik Farm zone 2 and 4 with field hospitals and water purification units up and running.

A few weeks ago Global Medic held a fund-raiser to help raise \$50,000 for another field hospital and water purification unit. However, GlobalMedic was very disheartened by the dismal turnout from the community and only \$7000 raised. It was taken as a goal by some concerned Tamil-Canadians to raise that \$50,000.

With the aid of the community leaders and media the event brought in about \$30,000 with an additional 100 people taking pledge forms to their places of work, worship and schools. The goal of this event was twofold. The primary objective was to facilitate GlobalMedic in their efforts to put up another field hospital and water purification

unit servicing 60,000. The second goal is to use this fundraiser as a tool to reach out to non-Tamils. By asking coworkers and neighbours to pledge, the opportunity is presented to give a brief explanation about current conditions in Sri Lanka and the plight of 300,000 IDPs in camps. It is through these personal, intimate conversations that we will win over the general public.

The Canadian community at large is incredibly kind and sympathetic, as was witnessed in outpouring of love and financial aid the aftermath of the tsunami. It is in this vein, that we must trust that Canadians will feel empathy when they are approached in a non-confrontational manner with just the sad facts before them.

Even though the event was planned and executed in under two weeks, it was a successful starting point. MP John McCallum (Markham) presented the organizers with a letter from Liberal Party Leader, Michael Ignatieff stating that he is pressing the Canadian government to act more swiftly and sternly in condemning the plight of the IDPs in Sri Lanka.



CityTV Anchor Gord Martineau



Dr Bahe Rajendran explaining the critical needs of the IDPs

MP Jim Karygiannis (Agincourt) presented the audience with a passionate plea denouncing Sri Lanka's activities in the final days



Dhimo Sornalingam receiving Liberal leader's message from Markham Unionville MP, John McCallum

of the war and in the conduct with IDPs. He also challenged the members of the audience to exercise their right to democracy in reaching out to the Prime Minister's office demanding that he take more action. He can be reached at pm@pm.gc.ca. MPP Hon. Gerry Phillips reiterated the peaceful resolution approved by Premier Dalton McGuinty.

Rahul Singh, Executive Director of GlobalMedic gave details about previous missions around the world and specific information about the current work being done in Sri Lanka and



Rahul Singh, Executive Director for GlobalMedic

the restrictions that they work within. GlobalMedic hopes to also get involved in the sustainable, rebuilding process when that begins. Gord Martineau, CityTV anchor, showed footage from his trips to Sri Lanka and the devastation that he witnessed.

As Tamil Canadians, we alone cannot effect change by working in isolation. By partnering up with organizations and individuals with whom we share common views, we stand stronger and more able to advance our goals of prosperity, fairness and peace in our little teardrop island.

Margosa Credit Union holds special meeting to adopt Two Resolutions

A special meeting of the membership of Margosa Credit Union was held on 21st. May to adopt the following two Resolutions:

Resolution 1 :

By -Law to amend the By-laws of Margosa Credit Union Limited:

Whereas the Board of Directors and Membership of Margosa Credit Union Limited find it expedient to reduce the Credit Unions membership share requirement from \$100.00 to \$25.00.

Resolution 2 :

The Credit Union be hereby authorized to proceed, once the approval of the Superintendent of Financial Services is obtained, with the issuance of 5,000 Class B Investment Shares to each of the 43 Incorporators of the Credit Union in return for each of those Incorporators releasing the Credit Union from its obligation to repay to him or her the sum of \$5,000.00 which he or she contributed to the incorporation and capitalization costs of the Credit Union;

The two Resolutions were adopted at the meeting. Member and Share holder approval is one of the final steps in this process before Regulatory approval is received from FSCO. Marketing Strategies with respect to Membership, Community Development and Opening Business Accounts were also discussed and several proposals were put forward for the consideration of the Board of Directors.

The meeting was chaired by Penny M. Rintoul of RZCD Law Firm.



MCU Admin Staff at Registration Desk



MCU Members networking before meeting

RBC Royal Bank Opens New Branch in Ajax Easier Banking for the Neighbourhood

By: Siva Sivapragasam

One of Canada's prestigious Banks, RBC Royal Bank opened yet another Branch in Ajax last month making Banking easier for the neighbourhood.

Bringing Banking closer to your home or work, the Branch is conveniently located at the corner of Middlecote & Taunton. The brand new Branch will offer both Retail and Business Banking services to its clients and also has the additional facility of providing safety lockers.

Branch Manager Dimitrios Michalitsianos and his team were quite enthusiastic and excited on the opening day, welcoming the stream of new clients, visitors and well-wishers. Royal Bank's

Regional Vice-President Lisa Gallacher was at hand to grace the occasion and assisted us on a tour of the Branch. The Branch Team is adequately trained and equipped to service the multi-ethnic community of it's neighbourhood in that the staff is capable of serving in eight languages including Tamil, Urdu, Nepali & Hindi. As part of the celebrations of the opening, the Branch sponsored \$ 2,500 for the family day events at the Trails of Ajax on the 27 th. of last month. In addition, the brand new Branch recognized Ajax's "local heroes" during RBC's community Celebration week, including a visit from Lisa Gallacher, the Bank's Regional Vice-President. The Business Hours of the Branch will be -Mondays to Wednesdays -

9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., Thursdays - 9.30 a.m. to 8.00 p.m, Fridays- 9.30 a.m to 6.00 p.m and Saturdays- 9.00 a.m to 3.00 p.m.

Residents in the neighbourhood are sure to obtain the advice and expertise they want from a team of who will be a part of the community. Dimitri Michalitsianos who heads the Team is an experienced Banker and understands the importance of personalized attention and solutions. He is ably supported by Edda Kavanaugh, an experienced and knowledgeable Mortgage Specialist, Tania Slade, An Investment & Retirement Planner, Keith Venantius, Sujita Simkhada and Jennifer Ramdas, Account Managers who will be active partners for the banking needs of their clients.



Branch Team and Regional Vice-President Lisa Gallacher at Community Event.



Branch Team with Lisa Gallacher, Regional Vice-President and Branch Manager Dimitri Michalitsianos



The first Account holder Chandrabamini Sritharan, a Sri Lankan, receives a bouquet of flowers from Branch Manager Dimitri Michalitsianos

Muktupath Meditation - a path towards utter freedom - XV

MONSOON
FEATURE

Prof. Saran Ghai

A child is a born star in the eyes of parents. This depends upon the destiny of that kid what he becomes when he grows up. It is seen that most of the children grow up as common people. They study, earn, eat, marry, make kids, nourish them, their kids grow up young, they themselves grow old and die. There are some fateful kids too. They grow up as super stars. They become artists, scientists, astronomers, mathematicians, authors, editors, publishers, sports person, movie, TV and stage artists, politicians, doctors, engineers etc. They make their name in their respective field and live the life of a celebrity. Their journey starts from being a star of their family to the stars of masses. This happens with their own hard work and the hard work done by their parents at home and teachers at school. Parents and teachers find out what kind of hidden talent a kid has. They start working on grooming his/her talent. Keep an eye as to when an opportunity arrives, they grab it for their kid and if he/she is fateful, achieves his target. Once the kid is successful in his/her attempt, gets establish him/her self as the super star.

To be a super star is a great achievement. Not many but only a few are lucky to become super stars. But the motto of this article is far higher than that. Through this article I would like to appeal the parents to make their kids not just super stars but Superior Stars. You may ask what do I mean by a Superior Star and how is a Superior Star different than a Super Star? Let's understand it this way:

A Superior Star is lot different than a Super Star. A super star is a person who enjoys a charming and glamorous status. He enjoys his fan following. In other words we can say that fans follow him. But a Superior Star is he who is not followed by his fans but is followed by his followers. A Super Star is applauded and cheered but a Superior Star is appreciated. The biggest difference between the two is the Super Star is praised but a Superior Star is



prayed.

Being a Super Star is by talent but being a Superior Star is by deeds. Super Stars are made but Superior Stars are born but they too need a proper environment surrounding them to achieve their position as to establish themselves as Superior Stars. It takes years to make a star, a Superior Star.

Let's discuss how we can make our kid a Superior Star:

1. Good Habits: From very beginning a child should be taught good habits. Lessons of good habits start right from home. He should be taught loving the younger and respect the older. A person who knows to love and respect others is loved and respected by others throughout his life.

2. All round development: A child should be given ample opportunity to develop his/her personality. The field of work he/she chooses - Science or Commerce, Medicine or Engineering, Games or Arts, Politics or Religion, I mean any field the kid is interested in, should be provided facility to develop himself, to be a different person than an ordinary person.

3. Culture: Kids must be given enough opportunity to make themselves acquainted with

the culture of their respective community. They should be comfortable with the culture and traditions of the family they belong to. They should have a feeling that they have their firm roots and can move together with their community for uncounted years to come.

4. Goal of life: Each child from very beginning should be given thoughtful guidance to form a goal for his/her life. They should be given proper guidelines as to how they can achieve their goals.

On the whole it is an all round effort which makes your child a Superior Star. This world, in the prevailing circumstances is getting disgusting as the domain of hatred is overpowering the regime of peace, tranquility, brotherhood and cooperation. It's an irony that in the present age we do networking on computers but are losing network among families. Nobody believes in anybody. Discrimination and hatred are skyrocketing.

Those who have understood the superiority of peace over the war are raising their voices and are trying to throw the reasons of the wars away before it damages the humans. If on one side there are people indulging in terrorism,

there are some others on the other side who are fighting against terrorism.

As many are the problems that many are the solutions. The best way to make this world a heaven is that the upcoming generations should be kept away from hatred and discrimination. They should be taught to live in peace and harmony. They should be taught to love and respect. They should be taught to follow the path of truth and non-violence. Some of them will surely become the torch bearers and will spread this message to the coming generations the world over. They will prove that the regime of peace is always superior then the domain of war. They will be the real Superior Stars.

- Continued...

-Prof. Saran Ghai

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(Prof. Saran Ghai is an Author, Editor and Publisher of a number of Books, Magazines and



Newspapers. He is a Palm Reader and a Numerologist too. To book appointment to know about your present and future, Love, Marriage, Business and other problems, make an appointment on phone.

Prof. Ghai publishes a monthly magazine titled "Superior Star" covering Meditation, Wellness, Naturopathy, Yoga, Palmistry, Astrology, Numerology, Astronomy, Reiki and many other alike subjects. To Subscribe Superior just for \$20 per year, please e-mail - superiormonthly@yahoo.ca.

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Displaced Afghans in Khan Colony, Lahore

**“Displaced societies are of value. Their issues are our issues.”
- Cynthia Basinet (b. 1971)- American Singer, Social Change Activist
(1,000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize-2005)**

By *Dushiyanthini Kanagasabapathipillai*
dushi.pillai@gmail.com
courtesy: *humanityAshore.org*

Pakistan’s estimated population was 172,800,000 in July 2008. It’s the World’s sixth most populous country. By the end of this decade it is expected to be nearly 180 million according to wikipedia. Pakistan has hosted one of the world’s largest refugee populations since 1978. Almost two million Afghan refugees remain there according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The refugees who fled the fighting in Afghnaistitan are scatted in the cities of Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Rawalpindi, and other cities.

There are 500 families (4,500 persons) living in Khan Colony, Gulberg in the city of Lahore. Lahore is the second largest city in Pakistan. They left from their homes in 1996, and came

to Lahore. Most of them here feel frustrated and disappointed. They have to walk for a few kilometers to fetch water. They are not rich, and find it difficult to meet the daily needs in life. Men go for labourer job, and earn Pakistan Rupees 100/= or less per day. The women go to houses for cleaning, and earn Pakistan Rupees 50/= to Pakistan Rupees 100/=.

They say it’s not enough to meet the needs. But they are left with nothing. Their mother tongue is Darwi. They speak fluently in Pashto and Urdu. Most of the children do not go to school, as their parents cannot afford to send them to school.

The people in Khan Colony languish, and have no hopes for their future.



Goats in Khan Colony are being fed with Carrot



A view of the mosque in the colony



Children began to pose for the camera as soon as they saw the foreign journalists visiting them



The do not know their ancestor’s place



Most of the refugees like to return to Afghanistan



They have been living in this colony for more than a decade, and they feel that they are neglected



Afghanistan looks as a distant dream for those who left their homes as children



The kids in Khan Colony do not know what the future holds for them



The responsibilities lie on their shoulders, but they do not know how to carry it out



Almost every household has a goat or more goats



They have to compete with the host community for resources



Farhanda Ali (10) carries her younger brother Ali Khan

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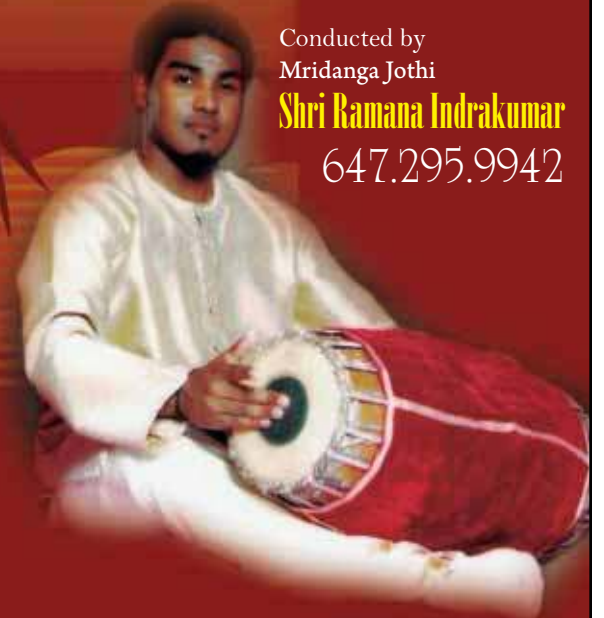
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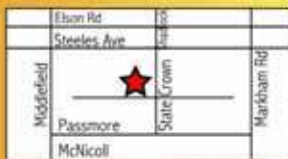
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