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# Monsoon Journal

A parfait media publication

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## Quarter Million Dollars raised through Bowlathon events for Providence Health Care Tamil Caregiver Project



Pictured here are the some of the Team members who were actively involved in the 2008 Bowlathon event held on Saturday April 5th. at Thorncliffe Bowlerama in Toronto. Photo shows the Team holding the cheque for \$73,000 raised at this year's event. The total raised so far is over a quarter million dollars. Left to Right - Amanda Falotico, Director,

Community Outreach, Kanish Thevarasa, Partner, Kanish & Partners (Chair for Bowlathon, Director & Treasurer, Providence Healthcare Foundation) Kulwant Mann, President of Auto Bahn (Co-Lead Sponsor & Co-Chair of Bowlathon), Frank Barbosa & Rajee Muthuraman, Partners of RJ Multi Litho Inc.(Lead Sponsors for Bowlathon since inception & Co-Chair

for Bowlathon), Jennifer Stewart-Vice President of Providence Health Care Foundation & CDO, and Namita Kanishkan of Kanish & Partners, (Director & Co-ordinator for Bowlathon)

**Picture by: Greg Komorek of Heart & Soul Media.**  
**Please see more details on Page 29**

**India's Runaway Economic Growth Expected to Slow Down Marginally**  
Details on Page 6

**Human Rights Conference at Ryerson University**  
A Common Language links different ethnic communities, says Media Consultant...  
By Arjunan Arasaratnam  
"See page 42 for details"

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## U.S. Credit Crunch and it's Impact on Canada

**By Arun Senathirajah**  
"Speculation is like Bubbles in a Stream"-Lord Maynard Keynes (British Economist who predicted the 1930 Great Depression)  
When U.S. sneezes, it is Canada that catches the cold.  
Big Businesses in Canada may take a beating as a result of the Financial crisis that is enveloping

the U.S. Economy. The economic gloom that has set sail south of the border is casting spells on it's neighbor.  
Income drops, disappearance of jobs, less demand for Canadian goods are some of the fears raised in the minds of Economists as a result of the U.S. Credit Crunch. But more often, it is

Speculation that casts it's shadow on the ups and downs in the share and stock markets. As the British Economist Keynes advocated, the ill effects can be minimized by prudent monetary and fiscal measures adopted by the Government.  
(A detailed analysis appears on **Page 20**)

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# Canada Newslines

## The Immigration Bathtub

By Harini Sivalingam

At a community roundtable on immigration held in Toronto, the Immigration Minister used a clever analogy to describe the crisis in Canada's immigration system. The Minister described the immigration system as an overflowing bathtub. In describing the problems with the immigration system, she stated that the immigration backlog is like a clog in the drain that is preventing applications from being processed. While this clog is resulting in serious delays in processing applications, the faucet keeps on running and is causing the water level in the bathtub to rise. Over the years the water level in our immigration bathtub has increased and is now overflowing, causing a flood on the bathroom floor.

In order to address these plumbing problems, the Minister is proposing a series of changes to the immigration system. Some of these measures are administrative and managerial in nature, while others are legislative changes that will have a drastic impact on the face of immigration in Canada. The Minister is suggesting that in order to prevent valuable water from overflowing out of the tub, we need to introduce measures to (1) remove the backlog caused by the clog and (2) be able to control the flow of immigration application by adjusting the faucet taps.

Some of the proposed administrative changes to address the backlog are in the right direction, such as the proposed increase in visa processing officers in targeted countries where there are the most serious delays, such as New Delhi, Manila and Hong Kong. These increased resources allocated through Budget 2008 will go along way toward removing the clog. However, according to the Minister this is not enough. It is also necessary to control the flow of immigration, and the Minister is proposing legislative changes to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act that would increase the discretion of visa processing officers to reject applications that would otherwise qualify. In addition, the Minister herself would have the authority to create categories of classes of immigrants that could be expedited based on Canadian economic needs. It is these legislative measures that are causing concern to immigration advocates.

While initially these may seem like the kind of changes that would be beneficial, upon closer examination there are serious concerns. Firstly, increasing the discretion of visa processing officers increases the possibility of



bias decision making. The whole idea of the point-system was to ensure that applicants were treated in a fair and objective manner. By increasing the discretion of visa processing officers the fairness and impartiality of our immigration system is called into question. Furthermore, these changes will have significant impact of family reunification in cases where refugee children in Canada are separated from their loved ones abroad. Secondly, there are concerns about the transparency and openness of the immigration system when the Minister can simply create and expedite certain classes of immigrants, without any known guidelines. There was a time in Canadian history when immigration was indeed processed in this manner, where immigrants were selected not based on the merits of their application, but rather on the colour of their skin. We can not let ourselves go back to a system such as that.

As most homeowners know, plumbing issues are a serious cause for concern. The measures proposed by the Minister are short-term solutions that do not address the root cause of the immigration problem. When we have a clogged toilet, or a leaky drain in our sink, we may initially try to fix the problem ourselves. However, over time, we may come to realize that the problems are structural in nature and professional help is required. It could be that our plumbing problems are a result of old pipes, and unless we make these necessary

changes, our plumbing system will continue to experience the same or even more exacerbated problems. Similarly, our immigration system has some serious and fundamental flaws that need to be addressed not only with cosmetic changes to the fixtures, but also an overhaul of the entire processing system. Perhaps instead of taking long and luxurious bubble baths, Canada should be taking more showers instead.

## Canada can lead peace process in Sri Lanka: citizens group

**SCARBOROUGH.** A group of concerned citizens, including prominent Ontario legal professionals and members of the Tamil community living in Canada, is finalizing a report about current conditions in Sri Lanka involving human rights and the rule of law in that south Asian island country.

This report marks the first time in Canada that a grassroots group of volunteers has investigated governance, legal and rule of law issues in Sri Lanka. The report is scheduled for release in April 2008. It is the result of more than three months of study and research. The report is based on information obtained from a wide range of sources, including government and international non-government organizations, such as Human Rights Now and Amnesty International.

The report has two objectives:

" To develop a concise plan of action to help restore peace and stability in Sri Lanka; and

" To provide specific recommendations so the Government of Canada can address the Sri Lanka issue by working through international agencies, such as the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Nations

The volunteer group preparing the report includes senior members of the Ontario Bar Association, as well as Tamils who have immigrated to Canada from northern Sri Lanka. Tamils are a minority among the 20 million Sri Lankans. Thousands of Tamils have left their home country to escape the long-standing armed civil war.

"Historically, Canada has led the Commonwealth in bringing peaceful resolution to conflicts involving member states," said Chuck Konkel, a con-

cerned citizen who is spearheading this report. "It's time to resolve the violence and human suffering that has torn apart Sri Lanka."

Konkel notes that 2008 marks the 25th year of ethnic violence in that island country and the 60th anniversary of Sri Lanka's independence.

Canada and other nations have been involved in past initiatives that have been unable to stem the violence in Sri Lanka. Konkel points out that the duration and intensity of these hostilities indicate that structural defects exist in Sri Lanka's system of governance and human rights protection. "Canada's experience with safeguarding minorities' rights and protecting citizens can be a model for effective democratic governance and lasting peace in Sri Lanka," he said. "After a quarter century of violence, action is needed in Sri Lanka without further delay."

Konkel has been active in human rights and public policy issues for more than 30 years. A veteran police officer, he was a driving force behind the creation of Canada's hate crime legislation in the 1990s. He holds a master's degree in international relations and has extensive experience in policing - throughout Toronto, as well as internationally. He's served as a police inspector in Hong Kong, a police advisor in Poland, and a special lecturer at the FBI Academy.

Konkel, whose family immigrated to Canada from Europe when he was a child, is active for the Conservative Party of Canada in the Scarborough-Guildwood riding. That area of eastern Toronto has one of the highest concentrations of Tamil residents outside of Sri Lanka.

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**From the Publisher's Desk ...****Dwindling supply of rice and food supplies...helping farmers help us all...**

Prices on food have been soaring worldwide, including rice, which has doubled in the last couple of months. Rice, the staple for so many people and cultures could get even more expensive, reports say. The price of some rice, for example, is up 100 per cent in the last year, and 30 per cent in the last month alone.

International aid agencies are increasingly worried by the recent dramatic rise in food costs, and particularly rice prices, across Asia

and the effect this will have on food assistance projects for the poorest people in the region.

Escalating food price rises are reportedly threatening the UN's ability to feed around 73 million people in 2008 and is also causing major problems for the world's poorest countries, the World Food Program said recently.

The organisation had been forced to increase its budget by an extra half a billion dollars for 2008 in February, from 2.9 billion

dollars budget to 3.4 billion.

WFP said it was concerned about a rise in malnutrition and under nourishment for children as families were already eating less food and less nutritious food.

In many cases the supply shortage is caused by growing demand for rice and other food supplies around the world.

But in some countries weather factors along with internal conflicts are impacting on rice supplies.

For example, several paddy fields are being kept as off limits to Tamil farmers in Sri Lanka's North-East, marked as high Security Zones by the Sri Lankan armed forces. Farmers and the communities at large have been denied of bountiful harvests from these paddy fields for nearly two decades.

Reports also say that Changing rainfall patterns in Sri Lanka have prompted later paddy planting by farmers and affected the country's overall rice yield in several other parts of the country. M S Swaminathan, eminent agriculture scientist and former head of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) said recently, "People at the grassroots will be the first to bear the brunt of climate change and train people villages needs to be trained to be climate managers."

IRRI is now promoting government and private sector partnerships to improve rice supply by developing and planting varieties that will produce increased yields.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recently announced a grant to IRRI for US\$19.9 million over three years to initially help place improved rice varieties and related technology into the hands of 400,000 small farmers in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Farmers are expected to achieve a 50 percent increase in their yields within the next 10 years, an IRRI press release says.

The Monsoon Journal joins the several non governmental organizations around the world in calling attention and support through governments, the private sector and individuals in addressing all issues faced by farmers. Industrialization and urbanization are getting key resources at the expense of those who till the land to feed us.

Projects spearheaded by individuals with expertise on food and farming development technologies can make a difference for the betterment of the lives of farmers, farms and the communities at large.

Watchful eye on how internal conflicts are harming those who farm also needs the world's attention.

The Monsoon Journal draws attention to fertile paddy fields being kept off limits to farmers in places such as Sri Lanka's North-East provinces. The world humanitarian community must act to allow these paddy fields to become green again, in these worsening conditions of food and rice supplies.

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# Monsoon Newsline

## India, Pakistan Exchange Films For First Time in Decades

By Anjana Pasricha

A Pakistani film has been released in India for the first time in four decades. At the same time, movies from India's Bollywood industry are also being screened in Pakistan, after being banned there for decades. The renewed cultural exchange was made possible by a peace process launched between the once bitter South Asian rivals in 2004.

The widely acclaimed Pakistani film *Khuda Kay Liye* (In the Name of God) explores the rift between radical and liberal Islam, and has been a hit in Pakistan.

Now the film is being screened across theaters in Indian cities. It is a rare event because intense, political rivalry has limited cultural interaction between the two countries for decades.

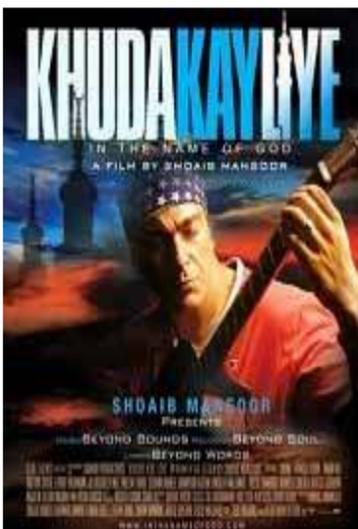
Nadish Bhatia of Percept Picture Company, which is marketing the film, says he does not know how it will fare at the box office. But he says its screening is a landmark.

"We are more proud to be the first ones to get a Pakistani film to

India after 43 years, so for us, that definitely is a bigger high," Bhatia said.

Indian audiences are not the only ones getting to watch a film from across the border after decades.

In Pakistan, several blockbusters produced by the Indian film industry known as Bollywood have been screened in recent months after Islamabad lifted a ban on films shot in India earlier this year. The ban was imposed in 1965 after the rivals fought a war.



*Khuda Kay Liye Poster*

But a peace process launched in 2004 has lowered tensions between the neighbors, and prompted Islamabad to allow an exchange of films between the two countries.

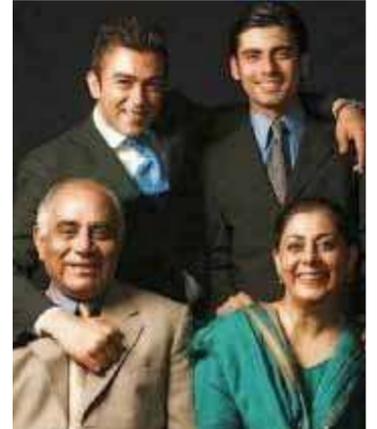
Pakistani filmmaker, Shoaib Mansoor, who directed *Khuda Kay Liye* says the exchange will open new markets to the film industry on both sides. He says it will also help to stem a decline in the Pakistani film industry, which is much smaller than Bollywood.

"More excitement is foreseen in the future. In competition it is always the underdog which benefits more, I am seeing the film industry that is completely down the drain in Pakistan will end up once again on its feet when the Indian films start coming over there. The cinema business will flourish," he said.

Pakistan is no stranger to Bollywood movies. Before the ban, Indian films drew huge crowds in cinema halls. After the ban, illegal video discs, or DVD's, were widely circulated, and private cable television channels beamed the films into homes.



*A Scene from Khuda Kay Liye*



*Scene from Khuda Kay Liye*

Bollywood stars are household names in Pakistan.

India and Pakistan - once a single nation before being partitioned in 1947 - share a common culture.

Now, filmmakers on both sides want to draw on that common culture to establish deeper links. The Pakistani movie *Khuda Kay Liye* stars an Indian actor, Naseeruddin Shah. Pakistani actors, singers and composers have also been hired by Bollywood filmmakers in recent years.

Filmmaker Mansoor sees the

trend intensifying.

"Just take my example. I have received a number of offers to do joint productions or work for Indian films as writer-director," Mansoor said. "So talent will prevail, whosoever deserves an opportunity will get one."

The South Asian neighbors have made slow progress on tackling their political differences since the peace process was launched. But people on both sides have used the opportunity to put decades of hostility firmly behind them and reach out to each other.

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# Monsoon Newsline

## Actor Raghuvaran Passes Away



The quintessential psychopathic baddie of Tamil cinema, the man who gave villainy on screen a good name, Raghuvaran died here at a private hospital in Chennai on Mar 19th, after battling personal demons and a few other debilitating physical problems. He was 49.

Raghuvaran is survived by his former wife actress Rohini (the couple had divorced) and their son, Nanda.

Raghuvaran had been unwell for the last few years and had taken a sabbatical from active films for some time. Sivapathigaram, released some time last year, marked his comeback. After that he was a regular figure acting in big films including Rajnikanth's Sivaji. His last release was however Sila Nerangalil and Bheema (which had been made some time back).

The life of lanky Raghuvaran, who made his debut as a brooding Commie hero in Ezhavathu Manithan under the direction of Hariharan, eventually turned out to be bitter-sweet as he had to constantly fight his tendency to embrace the easier pleasures that were easily available to impressionable youngsters in Kollywood.

Unable to handle the success and fame that came his way early, Raghuvaran fell into bad habits, from which he never really came out till his untimely death today.

But even as he was living life on the edge with women, wine and many other seductive things, Raghuvaran also managed to win a name for himself as someone whose acting ability was refresh-

ingly sans the usual Kollywood cliches. After playing hero roles not with egregious success, Raghuvaran was quick to switch over to the archetypal middle-class character roles. Films like Samsaram Adhu Minsaram, Aaha, Mugavari, Amarkkalam, Run, and many others with Rajnikanth including Muthu, Arunachalam, Siva, Sivaji, Raja Chinna Roja proved his versatility.

But it was as a villain, with shades of deep black and a touch of enigmatic and over-the-top eccentricity, that Raghuvaran's eventual screen image came to be defined. The scene in which he completely lets himself loose, mouthing I know for heaven knows how many times, in the film Puriyatha Puthir, became so popular that his real-life image was almost suspected to be something similar. It was one of the myths that he could never really shake off.

But even as he was fighting what eventually turned out to be a losing battle with the bottle, a spiritual and an ersatz philosophical side to his persona also opened up. He also became a devotee of Sai Baba. It was during this phase he struck a romantic chord with actress Rohini and married her.

The marriage, as it happened, like his film career promised a lot, but ended up mighty short. The couple had a son Nanda, on whom Raghuvaran was doting. When the marriage ended up in the courts, Raghuvaran became an even more broken man and

## India's Runaway Economic Growth Expected to Slow Down Marginally

By Anjana Pasricha

In India, questions are being raised over how a possible economic downturn in the United States will impact India's fast-growing economy. India's economy is expected to slow down slightly, but continue to grow at a healthy pace in the coming year.

Four years ago, retired army officer, Rakesh Dhir, invested a large chunk of his savings in the Indian stock market.

His investments multiplied rapidly as the market grew by an average of more than 40 per cent a year, prompting him to put more money into stocks.

Dhir, like millions of other middle class investors, was optimistic that the stock market would continue to flourish in an economy that has been growing at a rate of more than eight per cent since 2003.

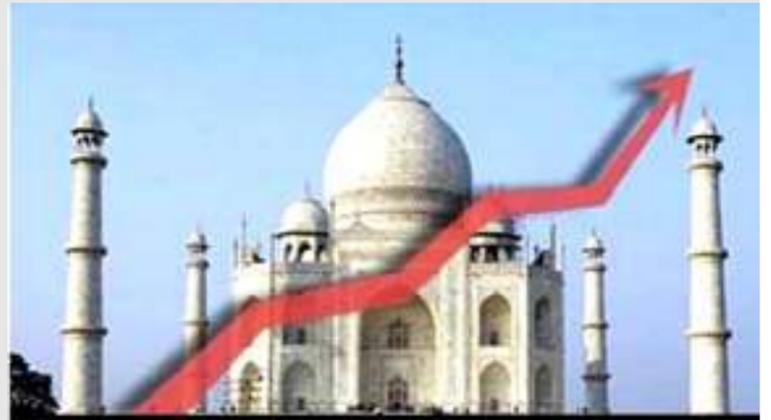
But in January, the Mumbai stock index, the Sensex, plunged along with other Asian markets, amid fears of a global economic downturn sparked by a possible recession in the United States. In the weeks since, stunned investors have seen the Sensex lose more than 20 per cent from its peak earlier this year.

The stock market's volatility has triggered concerns among people like Dhir about how hard India will be hit by a potential slowdown in the West.

"Hearing stories about recession in the West, I keep wonder-

ing whether I should stay invested in the stock market or not. It keeps me awake nights," said Dhir.

ing whether I should stay invested in the stock market or not. It keeps me awake nights," said Dhir.



ing whether I should stay invested in the stock market or not. It keeps me awake nights," said Dhir.

Economists are trying to calm such fears. Saumitra Chaudhuri, is a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister. He says a potential U.S. recession will have only a moderate impact on economic growth in India.

"There will be some impact, however the direct impact from a United States slowdown is not very large, because the bulk of the Indian economy still caters to meeting domestic demand, not export demand," he said.

India's domestic demand comes from its 50 million-strong middle class. Their growing incomes have fueled purchases of automobiles, mobile phones and homes, and contributed to rapid businesses growth.

However, economists warn that consumer demand will not be as buoyant as it was in previous

years - primarily because rising inflation in the past year has prompted the government to raise interest rates.

Chaudhuri warns that more expensive credit could mean less spending.

"Prices of all kinds of goods, particularly food and commodities are going through the roof," he said. "When you have a very high inflationary situation, inflationary pressure, it is likely that the action you might take to reduce that inflationary potential from being realized would actually slow the economy down a bit more."

The government says it expects the economy to expand at 8.7 per cent in the coming year, compared to 9.6 per cent a year ago.

For investors looking for clues about the stock market, the decrease may be disheartening. But India is still expected to rank among the world's fastest growing economies.

[voa news]

the almost biographical Idhu Oru Manidhanin Kadhai, was something of a cautionary morality play. A noir show of how success could be as lethal as a failure, sometimes.

[newstodaynet]



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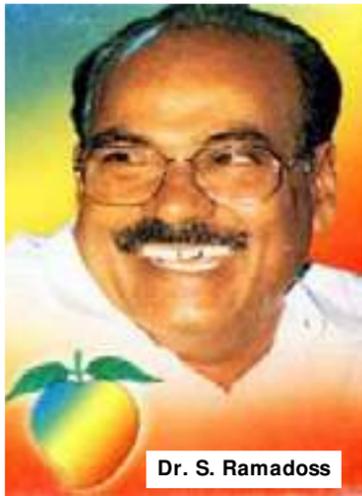
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# Monsoon Newsline

## Not possible to remain mute spectators on the plight of Sri Lanka's Tamils: Ramadoss to Indian PM

Labelling Sri Lanka "a failed state, a condominium of anarchy, and a shame on humanity" that "terrorized its own Tamil citizens," Dr. S. Ramadoss, leader of Paaddaa'li Makka'l Kadchi (PMK, Toilers' Party) and a constituent ally of the Congress-led Indian government, said that it was not possible to remain "passing by-standers to this human tragedy at our doorstep" in his letter to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on March 29th.

"The sixty million Tamils in India cannot wait and watch while their sisters and brothers are being decimated across the Palk



Dr. S. Ramadoss  
Straits and Gulf of Mannar," he said.

## Row with Karnataka over water project unites Tamil Nadu parties

The standoff between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on the issue of a water project and attacks on cinemas screening Tamil movies in Bangalore have brought together ruling and opposition parties in Tamil Nadu assembly which are otherwise divided over most issues.

Chief Minister M Karunanidhi himself thanked the members as it brought the ruling and opposition parties under one umbrella.

"We should welcome the acts by the linguistic-fanatic groups. For, this has made us come together for the cause of the Tamils," he said in his reply to a special call attention motion brought in by various parties in the House recently.

Thanking the parties for their unanimous support to the govern-

ment, which he said is firm in implementing the Rs 1334-crore Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) funded Hogenakkal Integrated Drinking Water Project, Karunanidhi said the future course of action would be decided after consulting all parties.

PWD Minister Durai Murugan also thanked the House for "standing behind the government" and said that though members were divided on political agenda, they were one when it came to the welfare of the state.

"Such oneness can help us a lot," he said.

Recalling a letter written to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh by Karunanidhi a few days back, the minister said the project would benefit about 30 lakh peo-



PWD Minister Durai Murugan

ple of the districts of Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri.

"We are not going to draw water at Karnataka's expense..we would draw 1.4 tmcft out of the 419 tmcft allotted to us by the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal", he said. [PTI]

## India introduces rice export ban

The Indian government has banned the export of non-basmati rice to try and control soaring domestic food costs.

The decision, one of a series of measures to curb inflation, was taken during an emergency cabinet meeting.

The price for exports of aromatic basmati rice has also been raised to \$1,200 per tonne to discourage exports.

The move could have an impact on rice prices globally as the country is the third largest exporter of the grain - a staple food in many countries.

The move is the latest in a series of increases in the export

price of non-basmati rice.

The price of such rice was increased from \$650 to \$1,000 per tonne in the month of March alone.

The government imposed a total ban on non-basmati rice exports last October but lifted it following protests from exporters.

India is the second-largest rice producer in the world. It usually exports more than four million tonnes of rice a year.

The government also announced that it would be scrapping import duty on all crude edible oils as part of its inflation-curbing measures. [bbc.co.uk]

India ended its reliance on food imports in the 1970s, largely to the government's so-called Green Revolution.

But two years ago, it imported wheat for the first time in six years following a significant drop in its stockpiles.

The government wants to avoid a similar situation for its rice stocks.

In mid-March, in an attempt to bolster its stocks, India abolished import duties on rice.

The problem is an international one, as global rice stocks have reached a 25-year low.

## Stop arms supply to Sri Lanka: CPI urges Indian government

The Communist Party of India (CPI), a prominent ally of the ruling Congress party, has urged the Indian Government to "immediately stop supplying arms to Sri Lanka that was mindlessly killing Tamil people." A resolution to this effect was passed recently in the party's four-day 20th National Congress at Hyderabad. According to reports in the Indian media, D. Pandian, State

Secretary, Tamil Nadu moved this resolution which sought New Delhi to interfere in the war-torn island's ethnic problem towards finding a political solution.

Pandian noted that it was shocking to learn that the Sri Lanka Army has unleashed all kinds of attacks on its own citizens. "The brutal atrocities and human rights violations by the SLA keep increasing by the day.

India is affected because of this strife in Sri Lanka. The Government of Sri Lanka unilaterally withdrew from the peace talks. A majority of the Sri Lankan Parliamentarians who were elected to represent the Tamil people have been pressurizing the Government of Sri Lanka to come forward to hold talks in order to find a peaceful political solution" he said. [TN]

## Former Indian Defence Minister urges disruption of Olympic torch relay in India over Tibet

Describing as an "error" the India government decision to recognise Tibet as a part of China, former Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes has said the Communist nation was "potential threat number one" to India and flayed the current dispensation for allowing it to be "bullied".

Venting anger over the Tibet crisis and India's response to it, the former Defence Minister said

the Olympic torch should not be allowed to come to India and that he had asked his "colleagues" and others to make "whatever effort" to prevent the flame's run in this country.

"It was not a mistake but an error. It should not have been done," he said about India's decision to recognise Tibet as part of China during the previous Atal Bihari Vajpayee government in



George Fernandes  
which he was the Defence Minister.

## India asks Dalai Lama to refrain from political activities

New Delhi: India has asked the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, not to engage in political activities that could hurt the country's ties with China, media reports said on Apr 1.

"Dalai Lama is a religious leader. India will render all the hospitality to him as he is a respectable guest, he will have full freedom to preach religion in India but he can't conduct any

political activity in this country that harms India-China ties," External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said in remarks broadcast on TV channels.

Speaking at a function in Behrampore in West Bengal, Mr. Mukherjee said there was no change in the Indian policy on Tibet that was formulated by Nehru. [DPA]

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# Canada Newslines

## Minister Flaherty Tables Legislation to Implement Budget 2008 Measures and Protect Canada's Fiscal Framework

The Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance, recently introduced legislation in the House of Commons to implement key measures from Budget 2008. The bill also includes language to protect the Government's fiscal plan from the effects of Bill C-253.

"Budget 2008 is a plan that is prudent, focused and responsible in this period of economic uncertainty," said Minister Flaherty. "The bill being tabled today will benefit all Canadians with measures such as the new Tax-Free Savings Account. It will also protect the fiscal framework from a Private Member's bill that risks plunging the federal government back into deficit."

Today's budget legislation will:

Allow Canadians to invest up to \$5,000 a year in a new Tax-Free Savings Account, starting in 2009. Investment income earned within the account, including capital gains, will not be taxed and withdrawals will be tax-free.

Benefit small and medium-sized businesses by improving the scientific research and experi-

mental development tax incentive program.

Increase the residency component of the Northern Residents Deduction by 10 per cent, effective for the 2008 tax year.

Support Canadian students with a \$350-million investment in 2009-10, rising to \$430 million by 2012-13, in a new consolidated Canada Student Grant Program that will reach 245,000 college and undergraduate students per year when it takes effect in the fall of 2009.

Commit \$123 million over four years starting in 2009-10 to streamline and modernize the Canada Student Loans Program and expand online services for students, enabling them to manage their student loan accounts online.

Modernize the immigration system with a \$22-million investment over two years, growing to \$37 million per year by 2012-13, including legislation to speed up the processing of permanent resident applications, ensuring shorter wait times and making

Canada's immigration system more competitive.

Improve the management and governance of the Employment Insurance (EI) program through the creation of the Canada Employment Insurance Financing Board, an independent Crown corporation with a legislated structure which ensures that EI premiums are dedicated exclusively to the EI program.

Provide \$400 million allocated proportionately through a third-party trust for provinces and territories to support their efforts in recruiting 2,500 new front-line police officers.

Invest \$500 million in 2007-08 through a third-party trust, allocated on a provincial-territorial per capita basis, for public transit infrastructure.

Set aside \$250 million for a full-scale commercial demonstration of carbon capture and storage in the coal-fired electricity sector and for research projects to accelerate the deployment of the technology.

Build on Canada's knowledge



and people advantage in genomics with an additional \$140 million for Genome Canada.

Provide \$110 million to the Mental Health Commission of Canada to support five innovative demonstration projects across the country to develop best practices to help Canadians facing mental health and homelessness challenges.

Invest \$60 million per year to ensure that low-income seniors who work can realize greater benefits from their earnings through an increase in the Guaranteed

Income Supplement earnings exemption.

Detailed explanatory notes relating to the tax measures in the bill tabled today will be available free of charge on the Department of Finance website in the near future. Printed copies will also be available from the Department of Finance Distribution Centre at 613-995-2855.

More information on these and other Budget 2008 measures can be obtained by visiting the Department of Finance website or by phoning 1-800-O-Canada (1-800-622-6232) or 1-800-926-9105 (TTY for the speech and hearing impaired/deaf).

For further information, media may contact:

Chisholm Pothier  
Press Secretary  
Office of the Minister of Finance  
613-996-7861  
David Gamble  
Media Relations  
Department of Finance  
613-996-8080

## Conservative vote against Motion to Half-Mast the Peace Tower Flag - Karygiannis

The Canadian Flag is a symbol dear to the hearts of all Canadians. The "Red Maple Leaf" is a sign of who we are - we sew it on our backpack when we travel and it welcomes us when we return home; we wave it on Canada Day; and, yes, we drape the coffins of our heroes with it as a sign of that all Canadians are grieving. The Canadian Flag which flies from the Peace Tower, over Parliament Hill, is the most important flag in Canada. When the new Canadian flag was raised for the first time on February 15, 1965, it was raised on The Peace Tower. The Peace Tower Flag is not lowered when a Canadian is killed while serving Canada overseas. On April 2, 2008, Motion M-310 passed the House of Commons. The Honourable Jim Karygiannis had the privilege of seconding the Motion which reads:

"That, in the opinion of the House, in order to show respect and to honour Canadian Forces and other Canadian government personnel who are killed while serving in overseas peacekeeping, peacemaking or humanitarian missions, the government should lower the flag on the Peace Tower to half-staff for the day following their demise as a remembrance of their important service to Canada and Canadians and that a moment of silence to be observed in the House, if the House is sitting on that same day".

When Canadian soldiers are killed overseas, we fly them home to CFB Trenton. Then, they are driven along the Highway of Heroes. Canadians, men, women and children, line the overpasses and wave the Canadian Flag as the cortege, carrying the remains of the soldier and the soldier's family, pass by.

Mr. Karygiannis stated: "I think it would be very befitting if we also think about lowering the flag on the Peace

Tower every time we lose a soldier." On June 20, 2007, Sergeant Christos Karigiannis, a fourth cousin of Mr. Karygiannis, was killed in Afghanistan. During a debate in the House of Commons, Mr. Karygiannis commented:

"As a privy councillor, when I pass away, the flag on the Peace Tower will be at half-mast. I would trade that honour any time for my cousin who died. It was with great dissatisfaction, that when Sergeant Christos Karigiannis died, the flag was not lowered."

All Members of the Opposition voted in favour of the Motion. No Members of the Government voted for the Motion. Mr. Karygiannis further stated:

"The former Liberal Government was lowering the Peace Tower flag when we lost a brave Canadian. The Harper Government is happy to send Canadians into harm's way but won't recognize them when they pay the ultimate price. The actions of the Government Members today are despicable. Before the vote, the Harper Government has indicated that it would ignore the wishes of the House if the Motion passed. I hope they rethink their position and pay respect to our fallen heroes."

Presently, the Peace Tower Flag is lowered to half-mast on the following occasions:

1. on the death of the Sovereign, the Governor General and the current Prime Minister
2. on the death of members of the Sovereign's Family
3. on the death of a Former Governor General
4. on the death of a Former Prime Minister
5. on the death of the Chief Justice of Canada and current Members of the Canadian Ministry
6. on the death of current



Lieutenant Governors

7. on the death of Privy Councillors and current Senators
8. on the death of current Members of the House of Commons
9. on the death of Accredited Heads of Mission to Canada while in Canada
10. on April 28, Workers' Mourning Day;
11. on the last Sunday in September, Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day;
12. on November 11, Remembrance Day;
13. on December 6, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.
14. on April 9, Vimy Ridge Day; and,
15. for the Annual Memorial Service to remember deceased Parliamentarians.

## Government moves are towards bettering immigration process, says Duncan Fletcher, Markham-Unionville PC Candidate

Duncan Fletcher, The Progressive Conservative Party Candidate for Markham-Unionville says that "recent moves by the Canadian Immigration Minister to respond to Canadian labour markets needs is not meant to impede family reunification."

In a recent press release, Duncan Fletcher, Conservative M.P. Candidate for Markham - Unionville said that in Budget 2008 the Conservative government has moved to help reduce wait times for immigrants - which is why it was introduced as a budget item via \$22 million in new funding.

He emphasized the need to process immigration applications faster stating "immigration is the

backbone of Markham - Unionville. The outrageous backlogs hurt us more than the average community because of our high immigrant population. We must do everything in our power to reunite families and bring more skilled workers here. Our community deserves better than foot-dragging and partisan fear-mongering from Liberal quarters. It deserves action."

He emphasized that family unification remains a priority for the government and the changes do not affect refugee claims. He chided the Liberal Party for suggesting that the door is being closed on family reunification and refugee claims.

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# Monsoon Health



## The Pains of Pregnancy

By Mithura Anandarajah, PT

The announcement of pregnancy in the family brings with it a flurry of emotional experiences. Excitement, fear, anxiety and joy are just a few of the feelings found on the spectrum of emotions. Once the initial shock wears off, the mother and her significant others then have to deal with the physical changes that occur. As her body and the baby evolve, they impact every part of her daily lifestyle, be it her diet, sleep patterns and her social life. While the physical and emotional changes may be apparent, what is often neglected but endured, are the musculoskeletal changes. Ultimately, a mother may carry 20-30 pounds. To support this change pregnant moms adjust their walk by tilting their pelvis forward and curving their lower spine. What results is that the pregnant mum's centre of gravity changes. This causes a new weight bearing stance and adds pressure to several body parts: knees, low back and feet. In other words...pain!

While the focus during the pregnancy can often be the child, it is important that the mother takes care of herself. As her body physically changes and she develops pain/discomfort, she is further limited by medication for pain relief. There are, however, alternatives

that should be explored. Massage therapy for example, is a simple pain relief alternative that is safe for the child, and can promote pain relief and stress relief for the mother.

### Musculoskeletal changes:

During pregnancy, joints become hypermobile as a result of hormonally induced ligamentous laxity. Because of this, there is a potential of joint injury especially for weight-bearing joints of the back, pelvis and lower extremities. Abdominal muscles are also stretched to their elastic limit by the end of pregnancy. Massage therapy can help relieve tension in these muscles to reduce the stress placed on joints. This especially impacts joints that are weight-bearing like the low back and pelvis. It is important to keep the muscles and ligaments of the body loose and relaxed to limit the stress and tension on the attachments of bone to muscle.

### Posture:

During pregnancy, the body's centre of gravity shifts upward and forward due to fetal weight increase, with weight shifting to the heels. What results is called lumbar lordosis. Lordosis means that the curve in the spine of our low back becomes further accentuated.



Shoulders become rounded due to breast enlargement with forward head posture which compensates for shoulder position. Massage helps corrects all of these problems. General massage or deep tissue techniques can be used to improve posture, spinal alignment, and circulation. Also it can decrease swelling due to weight increase and minimize pain that is experienced. If the muscles in the back are relieved, pressure will be taken off the shoulder blades and cervical spine (neck) thus releasing some of the pull which is causing the rounded back and forward head posture.

### Cardiovascular System:

During pregnancy, blood volume increases, with increased venous pressure to lower extremities. Swelling in the lower extremities develops, mainly in the latter part of pregnancy by the end of the second trimester. The enlarging

uterus places pressure on the blood vessels in the pelvis and legs causing circulation to slow down and blood to pool in the lower extremity. Water retention may also occur because the body requires more fluid to regulate blood flow and provide liquid for the developing baby, including amniotic fluid. Edema increases at the end of the day and during warmer months. It can cause painful aching legs and feet. Foot massage and posterior leg massage can help move away blood and lymphatic flow that is trapped in the lower extremities. Massage therapy will help redistribute blood to other areas in the body so that blood will not pool in the legs and feet or hands and arms. Other simple suggestions include:

- Elevating your feet
- Wearing compression stockings and seamless cotton socks. A chiropodist can be consulted to facilitate this process.

c) If driving for a long period of time, take regular breaks to stretch your legs and promote circulation

d) Exercise regularly

e) Drink plenty of water and eat healthy. Avoid food high in salt-this can cause water retention

f) Wear correct and proper fitting footwear. You may benefit from custom fitted orthotics to support your feet and correctly align your posture. Custom made orthotics are made by your Chiropodist with plaster of paris while your feet are held in subtalar joint neutral, after a biomechanical assessment has been completed. These devices will provide you with arch support and support your feet to reduce the extra strain on any joints and ligaments. A custom made orthotic will prevent common foot problems such as plantar fasciitis, heel spurs, metatarsalgia and any tendonitis.

It is evident that the physical changes of pregnancy should be addressed, especially since these changes have effects on the body long after the pregnancy. While the above issues mainly address the musculoskeletal changes, they should be part of the package of medical and social management. Considering that a pregnancy is such a life altering event, addressing these changes will have a positive outcome on the mother and child. One can hope that relieving the pains of pregnancy, may relieve some of the pains of delivery!

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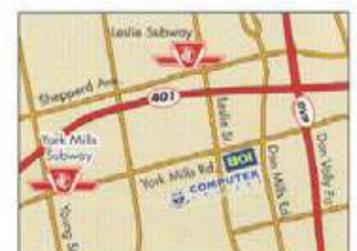
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# Tamil and Singhalese New Year 'Puthaandu Valthugal'

Toronto will be celebrating another New Year on the 14th of April in the year 2008. With the rich diversity of ethnicity the city is blessed with many celebrations. The New Year among the Hindus and Buddhists vary from region to region. The Tamil Hindus, around the world will be celebrating this day, and the Singhalese who are dominantly Buddhist too celebrate this day as New Year. Toronto which has a large Tamil community will be celebrating by going to the temples around the city.

The celebrations of the Tamil New Year, unlike in the west, which has great many parties, will be filled with religious rituals in their celebrations. The day and exact time of birth is calculated by an astrologer using the planetary positions. Among the Tamils the day before the New Year, the house and compound is cleaned, and made ready to receive the New Year.

At the auspicious time the full house hold will take a customary herbal oil bath. The herbal mix for such ceremonial bath is usually supplied by the village temple. The family usually adorn new cloths to receive the New Year. Each year different colours are considered to be lucky. This year the preferred colours are blue and.....

At the predetermined time, the traditional oil lamps are lit and worship is done in the family shrine room by all the members of the family. After offering of prayers the children prostrate at the feet of the elders asking for

their blessings.

The above tradition of prostration benefits the children in teaching them to respect the elders and their wisdom gained by experience. Such respect to elders is lacking in the busy modern world, and there by leading the children in harms way. It also enhances sense of acceptance in the elders which is the best health medication for the elders.

The prayer is followed by a family feast consisting of sweet rice called 'Sarkarai Pongal' and many delicious snacks. As most people attend the temple this day non vegetarian food is avoided.

Another custom which is greatly look forward by the children is called 'Kaivisham'. This is the dealing money for the first time in the New Year. One would like to accept money from the person whom he or she feels will bring him luck. The receiving of gifts of money on this day from the wealthy and influential persons is believed to bring luck and prosperity in the New Year. This gift of money is also a form of charity indulged in by the wealthy when all their employees, dependents and needy neighbours visit them and receive gifts of money. The most suitable time for such exchange of money too is computed by astrologer. During this time the merchant and tradesmen start their business for the first time in the New Year. Of course the children love this custom, as they will have some extra spending money.

What begins as a family observation in



the morning ends in the evening with community celebrations. There will be many traditional sports competitions held where the young lads will get ample opportunity to show off their strength and ability. The young ladies too have sports activities where they have a wonderful time participating. The spirit of community and neighbourly relationship

receive very special consideration in the afternoon. Every one greets the other in the traditional 'Puthaandu Valthugal'. The Monsoon Journal too wishes its Tamil readers 'Puthaandu Valthugal'.

By:- Kumar Punithavel

email:

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# Nrithya Natya Manram hosts fundraising event for Scarborough Grace Hospital



Brian Dawe being presented the donation cheque collected thru Abinayam Program by Smt. Sakunthala Mohan

Nrithya Natya Mandram, a dancing school operating in Toronto for well over 15 years presented a fund-raising dance program "Abinayam", conducted by Smt. Sakunthala Mohan on Friday March 7th, 2008 at the Armenian Youth Centre. She is a renowned dancer and a Teacher attached to the School Board and also the President and founder of Nrithya Natya Manram. She had trained many students in her career and organized many Arangetrums (Arangetrum means, a student after completing all programs and when ready, performs a Stage Program).

Disciples of Sakunthala Mohan were trained to perform beautiful dance program for "Abinayam".

The program was a very creative and unique way in order to raise money for the Scarborough Grace Hospital. Brian Dawe, the President of Scarborough Hospital Foundation along with many other attendees were present for this beautiful event that was initiated for a good cause. Near the end of the show Brian Dawe was presented with the value of a five thousand five hundred dollar cheque as a charitable fund towards the Scarborough Grace hospital.

"Monsoon Journal" wishes to congratulate Smt. Sakunthala Mohan and her troupe for the great efforts undertaken to organize such a wonderful and charitable program.



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All are welcome, from beginners to advanced yoga enthusiasts. For more information visit [www.schizophrenia.on.ca](http://www.schizophrenia.on.ca) or call 1-800-449-6367

**Date:** Saturday, May 10th, 2008  
**Venue:** Distillery District, 55 Mill Street  
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# Malnourished Pregnant Mothers Gets Support from IMHO

The International Medical Health Organization (IMHO), a U.S. based non-profit humanitarian organization established in 2003, held a successful fundraising event on April 5th, 2008 in Toronto. Over 400 attendees supported the event

and raised \$75,000.00 towards a nutritional support program for malnourished pregnant mothers in the North and East of Sri Lanka. Nutritional deficiency and anemia are cited as common problems among pregnant mothers and chil-

dren in the Jaffna peninsula. Through this program, IMHO will provide much needed milk products and vitamins to these pregnant mothers. This is an ongoing project that IMHO is committed to maintaining through consistent fundrais-

ing initiatives. IMHO is also implementing many other healthcare projects in the North and East, including, building and improving psychiatric units in Vavuniya and Thellipalai, establishing a Diabetic center at Jaffna Teaching Hospital,

and running mobile health clinics in rural and areas and refugee camps. For more information this program and other activities of IMHO, please visit their website at [www.imhousa.org](http://www.imhousa.org)



Left to Right: Dr. Rajam Theiventhiran, New York, Dr. Varagunan, Newfoundland, Sivarajan Sivanandarajah, Toronto



Dr. Lambotharan, IMHO Organizing Committee in Toronto



Supporters at the Fundraising Event



Dr. Raguraj Sinnarajah, President IMHO, Baltimore, Maryland



Supporters at the Fundraising Event

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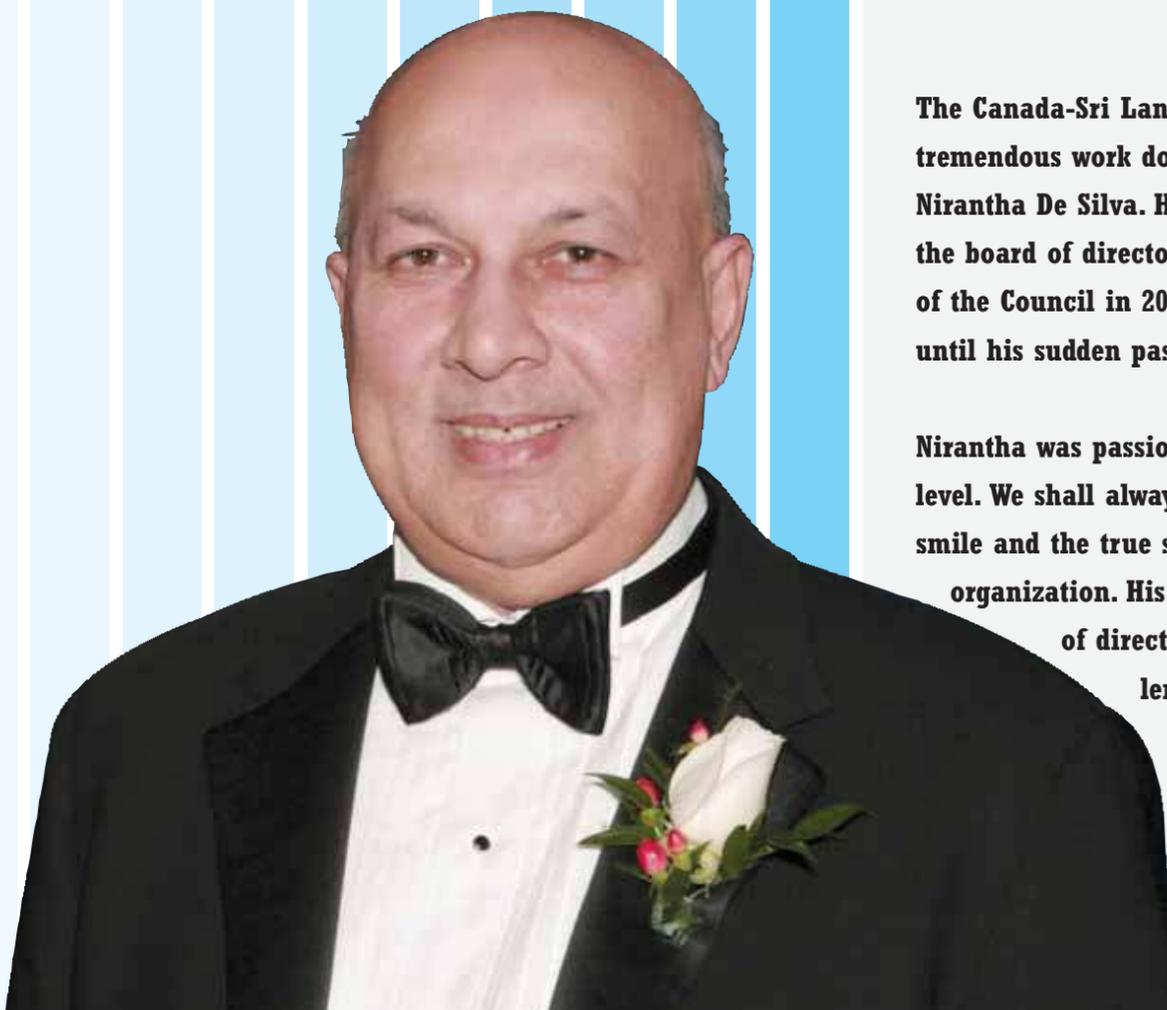
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# TRIBUTE TO THE LATE NIRANTHA DE SILVA



The Canada-Sri Lanka Business Council (CSLBC) salutes the tremendous work done by our friend and colleague - Nirantha De Silva. He joined the Council in 1999, and served on the board of directors since 2001. He was elected Vice President of the Council in 2005 - a position he held with distinction until his sudden passing on February 5, 2008.

Nirantha was passionate in taking the Council to the next level. We shall always remember with fondness his mischievous smile and the true spirit of camaraderie he brought to our organization. His integrity was beyond question. The board of directors entrusted Nirantha with many challenges. He executed these tasks with ease and exceeded our expectations at all times. We enjoyed his company and shall miss him in our midst.

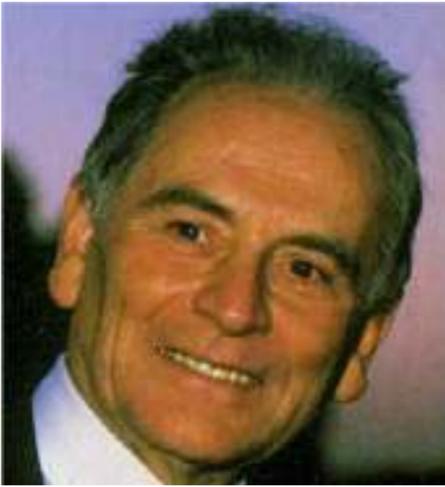
May his soul rest in eternal peace!

# Monsoon Living



**Founder: Pierre Cardin**

Born: 1922, San Biagio di Callalta, Italy



Often overlooked and regarded as a businessman than designer, Pierre Cardin's creative talents have been eclipsed by his ability to put his name to just about any product around, from perfumes to ties (over 600 products by 1970). His skill at licensing his name is only matched by his ability to publicize it. Cardin's appearance on the cover of Time magazine had him clad in just a bath towel - a Pierre Cardin bath towel. By the same token, Cardin was



the first French designer to establish markets in Japan (in 1958), China (in 1978) and more recently Russia. It was this business talent that made him not only a household name but also, at one time, the world's richest Haute Couture Designer.

Pierre Cardin grew up in Loire region of France, leaving home in 1935 to work for Manby, a tailor in Vichy. He moved to Paris after France's liberation in 1944, with the intention of studying architecture, but soon began working for Elsa Schiaparelli and the house of Paquin.

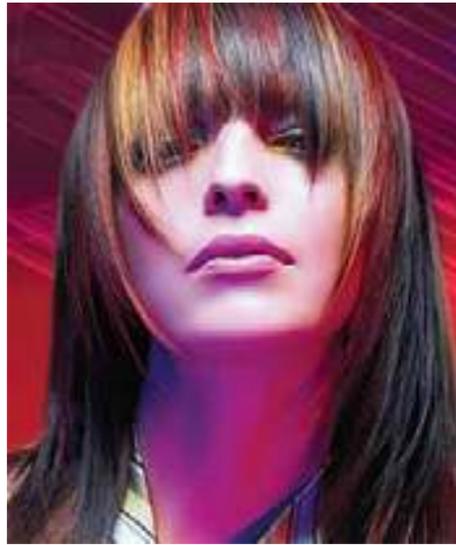
In 1946 he became head of Christian Dior's design studio. He set up his own business in 1949, making an odd mix of sober suits and extravagant theatre costumes (he had already designed costumes for Jean Cocteau's film *La Belle et la Bête* in 1947). In 1954 Cardin opened his first shop, called *Eve*, on rue du Faubourg Saint Honore in Paris, and in 1957 he launched his first Womenswear collection. Ready-to-wear followed in 1963.

Cardin's widely influential, bold designs have always shown a taste for the future and the conceptual. Although associated with the use of knitted body stocking style fabrics, leggings and cat suits, in the 1950's he also designed bubble skirts, bias-cutting over a stiffened frame and unstructured shirts. He moved on to cut-out dresses (those outsized appliqué pockets in the early 1960s. Along with Andre Courreges' collection of the same year, Cardin's 'Space Age' collection in 1964 comprised cat suits, batwing jumpsuits and helmets.

## A-Z of Hair

# Designer Profile

## PIERRE CARDIN



Want the sexy look of an A-list'er?

### A - ALCOHOL

Your skin may hate it, but the devil's juice works wonders for your hair. 'If your hair is looking dull and flat [been drinking too much?], rinse it with a real ale or beer (not lager),' says Sienna Miller's stylist Johnnie Spong. 'The wheat protein and hops will give it a real shine.' Alternatively, try Apple Cider Clearing Rinse.

### B - BLOW-DRY

The beauty girl's press-ups. 'Blow-drying at home needs patience and strong arm muscles,' says Keira Knightley's stylist, James Gavin. 'Save your energy for the top layer of hair as this will cover up any mistakes on the bottom. 'And for a flat, sleek fringe, ditch the irons. 'Blow-dry it first one way, then immediately the opposite way,



'says L'Oreal colourist Rae Palmer. Protect your hair with styling lotion by Bumble and Bumble.

### C - CHEWING GUM

Hair's worst enemy! 'If, God forbid, you ever get chewing gum stuck in your hair, rub sum chunky peanut butter onto the area,' advises hairdresser Ben White at Fordham White salon. 'The abrasive action helps to remove the gum.'

### D - DIFFUSER

A diffuser is a must to create curl definition for summer's more relaxed styles. 'If

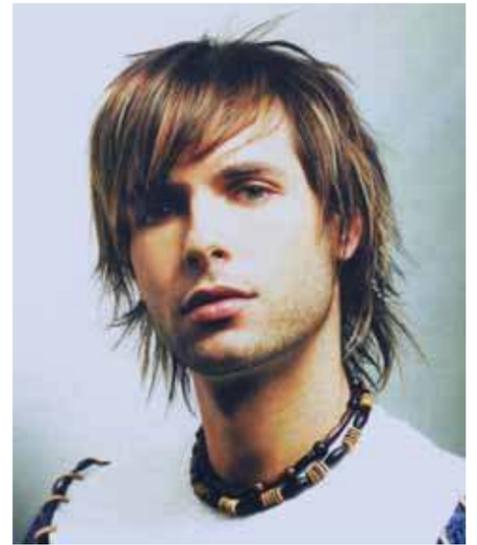
you're travelling or at the gym without a diffuser, put a sock over the end of your hairdryer. It will mimic a diffuser's effects and protect hair from direct heat,' says Johnnie Spong.

### E - ELIMINATING FRIZZ

'Use a lower heat setting and keep your dryer's nozzle moving round so you don't overheat and damage the hair,' says Joel Goncalves, UK creative director of John Frieda salons. 'Keep the hair cuticle flat by positioning the dryer behind the brush, following it down the hair shaft. Always direct the heat south or you could end up with a halo of frizz. 'Frizz Ease Hair Serum by John Frieda is the ultimate frizz fighter.

### F - FINE HAIR

Get beautiful, get retro. 'Crimp some of the underneath sections so that the straight hair on top is supported and stands away from the head,' suggests Ben White. Or go crazy for colour. 'Colour is a great friend to fine hair as it gives lift and creates more texture,' says Kylie's hair stylist, Kevin



Murphy. Also lay off any styling products containing oil and try a vitamin spray - such as Perfect Endings Essential Moisturiser by Andrew Collinge - on the ends instead of regular conditioner. A shampoo that contains balancing ingredients such as lime, lemon and sage will keep your hair in top condition.

### G - GROWTH

'Hair grows about half an inch a month; six inches a year,' says trichologist Philip Kingsley. 'It grows faster in summer than in winter due to heat and extra UV from the sun, which increases metabolism. Theoretically, sitting under a heat lamp, using hotter than usual water when shampooing or going into a sauna should all help boost growth.'

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continued from previous page



**H - HANGERS**

Got a static problem? 'Get rid of unsightly static hair by grabbing a coat hanger and running the metal hook down the length of your hair,' says GHD and Clairol UK style director James Brown. A thermal protector such as Poker Straight Flat Iron Protection Shine Mist by Lee Stafford, will control flyaway hairs by deflecting heat damage and adding moisture.

**I - INTENSIVE CONDITIONING**

'I remember women along the Riviera slicking their hair back with coconut oil before they went to the beach,' says hair stylist Frederic Fekkai. 'Heat helps the oil absorb into the hair shaft, so it can saturate the hair.' No sun? No fear. 'Slather on a deep conditioner, pop on a shower cap and hit the steam room,' says Rae Plamer. Try Lifetex Nutri-Care Extra rich-Nutrition Self-



Warming Mask by Wella.

**J - JUICE**

'Aloe Vera juice is natural detoxifier which makes hair squeaky clean,' says hair stylist Errol Douglas. Try Aloe Vera conditioning shampoo by Crabtree & Evelyn.

**K - KETCHUP**

'Tomato ketchup will remove the green tinge on blonde hair caused by chlorine in swimming pools,' says Yasmin Le Bon's



colourist, Charlie Double. 'Sponge it onto the hair and rinse immediately to avoid staining the red hair!' After a swim, use UV Rescue After-Sun Shampoo by Redken to cleanse and clarify.

**L - LATHER**

It's not just your hair that needs washing. 'Your comb or brush picks up dirt in your hair, so wash it in hot soapy water once a week to help hair stay clean,' says Philip Kingsley. The best hairbrush is a Mason Pearson, as spotted in Kate Moss's handbag.

**M - MASSAGE**

'Scalp massage increases blood flow to make hair grow faster,' says Philip Kingsley. Enhance the process with Scalp Mask by Philip Kingsley.



**N - NUTRITION**

'Hair consists of protein, so include this in your diet for strong, healthy hair,' advises Philip Kingsley. 'Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, as the energy levels to your hair follicles are at their lowest in the morning.'

**O - OLIVE OIL**



'Olive oil is ultra moisturising and adds shine to lacklustre hair,' says Fredric Fekkai. Liz Hurley's colourist, Jo Hansford, whips up a homemade conditioning treat. 'Mix two eggs with two table spoons of olive oil, smooth it through hair, wrap with cling film, leave for 10 minutes then rinse thoroughly.'

...continued in Page 45

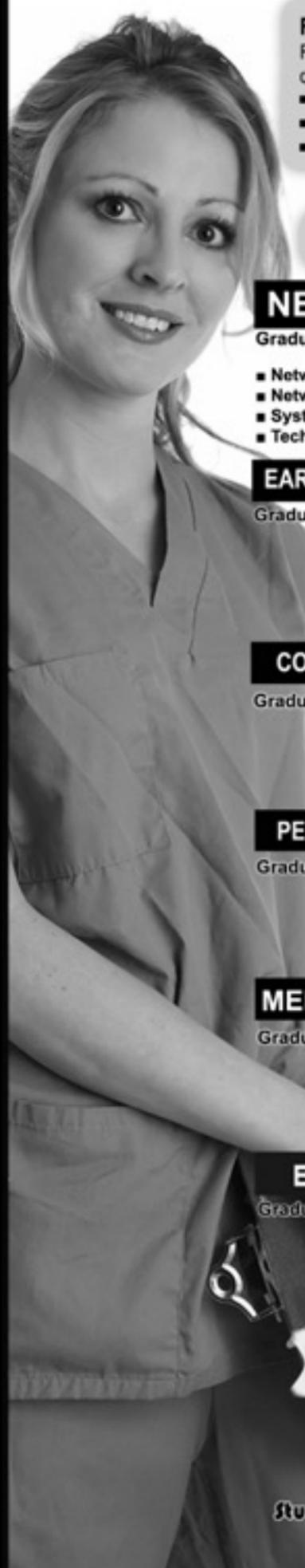
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# Monsoon Newslines

## Newly resettled IDPs dream of life without war

The last 18 years of Kanavathipillai Thangarasa's life have been in constant flux. The 62-year-old man and his family have been displaced from their home on numerous occasions since 1990 by fighting in eastern Sri Lanka between government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

In 1991, his 15-year-old son disappeared while travelling to the capital, Colombo, 330km from his native village Vavunathivu in Batticaloa District. The strain of those years shows on Thangarasa's face, which is dominated by wrinkles and heavy-set eyes.

"All we have ever wanted is peace, to live like anyone else without fear of having to run in our night clothes," he told IRIN. Like many in his village and thousands of others in eastern Batticaloa District, Thangarasa hopes the latest phase of eviction and resettlement is the last of his lifetime.

Thousands fled and returned to villages like Vavunathivu and Vakari, further north of Batticaloa town, within a span of six months



**[Children in front of the shelters they live in in Ichchanthivu, Batticaloa District]**



**[Villagers in Vakari stand in front of their home, which still bears the marks of fighting-pic: Sanjaya Nallaperuma]**

in 2007 when fighting flared up. They remain nervous about their economic futures.

"A year ago I was either living my life in a bunker or running from shell fire," Nalathambi Shanthi, a 23-year-old woman from Vakari, said. "Today, I am living in a house but still unemployed."

### Resettlement plans

Signs of over a decade and a

half of fighting are evident. "There are still big holes in the walls of my house," Thayabaran Premila, a 29-year-old mother of three from Uriyankettu village in Vakari, said.

The last harvest was one of the first in recent times that allowed farmers in the newly resettled areas to cultivate without fear of war. "The last crop was good because we could sell the paddy at a high price," 29-year-old Sinnathambi Wimalendran

from Vavunathivu said, noting that rice prices were high throughout the country.

When fighting broke out between government forces and the Tigers in early 2007, thousands of civilians fled villages like Vavunathivu and Vakari, which were then under the control of the Tamil Tigers, to the relative safety of government controlled parts of the district.

By June 2007, government forces had chased out the Tigers from areas they held in the eastern district and a massive resettlement drive was launched. According to the Ministry of Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services, 31,200 families (104,000 people) have been resettled in the district, with 27,000 of them, including the Thangarasa family, returning to Vavunathivu.

### Lagging behind

Despite the mass resettlement, areas like Vavunathivu still lag far behind the rest of the country in development, according to economist Muttukrishna Sarvananthan, the author of the recent study *Economy of the Conflict Region in Sri Lanka: From*

*Embargo to Repression*, published by the East West Center, in Washington, DC.

"Newly settled areas have a long way to go," he told IRIN. "They lack basic amenities and

shelters during the resettlement and that government agencies were looking at ways to reconstruct permanent houses.

The government hopes the successful completion of elections



**[A bicycle repair shop in Ichchanthivu, Vavunathivu which is doing brisk business due to a lack of public transport-pic: Amantha Perera]**

infrastructure such as proper houses, roads, electricity, water supply and telecommunications. Further, human resource development is at a very low level."

"It is very important that jobs are created to ensure long-term sustainability of these areas," Thandi Mwape, the head of the Batticaloa sub-office of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said.

Several international organisations have launched programmes targeting people involved in fishing, home gardening and food crops in the newly resettled divisions of Batticaloa.

Roads need repair and houses, most of which still bear the tell tale signs of a protracted war, need rehabilitation.

### Kick-start development

Mwape said the UN and other agencies provided transitional

on 10 February for nine bodies in the Batticaloa District, including those overseeing Vavunathivu and Vakari, will kick-start localised development projects.

Each of the councils was allocated Rs 2.5 million (about US\$23,000) by President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the 20 March swearing-in ceremony in Colombo. "You now have to find solutions to their (voters) problems," he told the newly elected members.

The Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP), a breakaway faction of the Tamil Tigers, won control of all nine councils at the election, the first held since 1994.

The newly resettled families are eager to get back to normal productive lives. "My village is still overgrown and looks like a jungle," Thangarasa said. "With half broken houses, flooded roads and people still living off handouts . . . it's time for all of this to change."

**[irinews]**

# Monsoon Newsline

## Variable rains and flooding impact on rice harvest in Sri Lanka

Changing rainfall patterns in Sri Lanka have prompted later paddy planting by farmers and affected the country's overall rice yield, government officials said.

Traditionally, rice farmers would begin planting in early October for the Maha harvest - the main growing season in the country.

However, variable rainfall in that month over the past two decades has pushed farmers to wait until the rains arrive, sometimes as late as the end of the month.

"For about 15 years we have noticed this. The farmers would wait till the rains arrive," Dr B Poonyawardena, head of the Agro-climatology Division at the country's Department of Agriculture told IRIN.

But now the Maha crop, generally harvested in February and traditionally a dry month, is falling in mid March.

"This year stronger than usual torrential rains in mid-March left the harvest even more vulnerable," Poonyawardena said.

### Heavy rains affect 400,000 people

According to the National

Disaster Service Centre, heavy rains beginning on 12 March lashed the island nation, affecting close to 400,000 people in 10 districts.

"In some of these areas the rainfall was sometimes 70 percent higher than the usual," S H Kariyawasam, the deputy director at the Department of Meteorology told IRIN, resulting in heavy flooding in Ampara, Mannar, and Batticaloa districts, as well as parts of the Polonnaruwa District - all major rice producing areas.

Sri Lanka produces around 3.3 million metric tons of rice annually, says the country's Department of Census and Statistics.

But this year's rains and the subsequent flooding destroyed about 2.5 percent of the total yield, Shantha Emithiyagoda, deputy director at the Agriculture Department noted.

"The problem is that this will add to the 10 percent shortfall between the harvest and local demand, making it 12.5 percent," he said, referring to this year's yield.

### Rice price rising

This in turn has increased pressure on local market prices,

and led to a drop in quality, Emithiyagoda said.

"We would have to locate seed paddy for the next harvest and also there will be qualitative and quantitative effects on prices," he explained, adding his department has already moved to locally procure six million kilograms of paddy seed for the next harvest.

Rice prices have already risen significantly over the past year due to a combination of factors, including high local demand and rising global prices.

Some varieties have recorded price gains of between 60 to 90 percent in the retail market, according to the Census and Statistics Department.

### Limited understanding of climate change

Meanwhile, researchers and experts worry that limited scientific studies on climate change and local harvests have prevented them from gaining a proper handle on the situation.

"Obviously, there have been changes to the harvesting due to the changing rains over the years," Nalin Munasinghe, programme associate at the Food and



Variable rains and flooding impact on rice harvest in Sri Lanka

Agriculture Organization in Colombo said.

But planting delays in October may be an indication that the farmers have already begun adjusting. "They may not have the scientific knowledge, but they feel the practical changes and that may be one reason why the planting is delayed," he said.

One solution being suggested is to use sturdier rice varieties, rather than trying to tinker with planting patterns.

"Most paddy cultivations are on low level fields and excess

water flows over those fields. One way (to get over this) is by selecting suitably tolerable paddy varieties for floods," Gunawargana Banda Giragama, research fellow at the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute said.

"If there are warnings of bad weather the crop can be harvested even two weeks before maturity. But it should be consumed as early as possible. It is difficult to store for longer durations," he added.

[irin news]



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# Monsoon Newslines

## Sri Lanka offensive claims civil victims- Washington Post

"...[U]nder a recent military offensive to wipe out those rebels [from LTTE], government forces have abducted hundreds of members of the Tamil minority group, including civilians, according to human rights groups. Many of the "disappeared" never turn up again," Washington Post said in an article on Apr 1st 2008. The paper further said, "abductions are carried out in various ways, according to activists and relatives of those who have disappeared. Sometimes Tamil men of fighting age are rounded up at checkpoints, hurried into white vans and never heard from again. Sometimes they are arrested with little explanation in house-to-house raids at night."

"The government denies that abductions have become widespread and says heightened vigilance at checkpoints is necessary -- even if Tamils complain of ethnic profiling. Authorities cite the danger of suicide bombings, like one that killed more than a dozen

people, including members of a high school baseball team, in February," the paper said.

The article quoted rights activists as saying, "President Mahinda Rajapaksa and his lieutenants are intent on eliminating the separatist insurgency known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or LTTE, no matter the cost. They also say Sri Lanka's growing ties with Iran, China and Russia have emboldened the government to ignore criticism from the United States and other Western powers."

"The government arrests Tamils for being Tamil," the paper said quoting Mano Ganesan, parliamentarian and leader of the Civil Monitoring Commission in Colombo. "And they ask questions later. I hate terrorism. I don't want bombs to go off. But that doesn't mean the government should conduct mass arrests without even giving proof or updates to the families," the paper added.

## Amnesty International says Sri Lanka violated international treaty in detaining Tamil Journalist



London based human rights group Amnesty International (AI) says Sri Lanka government has breached international covenants on civil and political rights in detaining a Tamil journalist.

The editor of the Outreach Lanka website and a columnist for Sunday Times, JS Tissainayagam, was detained by the Terrorism Investigation division (TID) since 07 March, 2008.

In a Fundamental Rights (FR) petition to the Supreme Court, Mr. Tissainayagam said he was inhumanely treated in custody and not informed of any charges against him.

He was arrested as he visited a colleague arrested by the TID on 06 March, the journalist said.

He is at risk of going blind if

he does not receive specialist treatment for a serious eye condition

He was allowed to meet the lawyer after filing the petition but the AI says he was only once allowed to meet the legal representative on 21 March.

The arbitrary arrest under emergency Regulations, AI says, has clearly violated Sri Lanka's obligations under international treaties.

"He is at risk of going blind if he does not receive specialist treatment for a serious eye condition," an AI statement issued on Apr 4th said.

The Sri Lanka government has accused the journalist of supporting the Tamil Tigers.

## IMF says Sri Lanka's double-digit inflation is due to poor economic management

Sri Lanka's double-digit inflation is not driven by runaway global crude prices but by poor economic management, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Mar 30th.

Reporting on the IMF report, the AFP news agency said:

The Indian Ocean island nation's official year-on-year inflation rate rose to 24.0 percent in February, up from 21.6 percent in January and 7.1 percent a year earlier.

The government, which is battling over three decades of war with Tamil Tiger rebels, has blamed accelerating inflation on rising in global crude oil, commodity and food grain prices.

However, the IMF report that studied Sri Lanka's inflation in 2006 and 2007 found that "external shock" such as oil prices were only partly to blame.

"Since late 2006, Sri Lanka's inflation has increased sharply relative to other economies in the region," said the 28-page report

titled "Pass-Through of External Shocks to Inflation in Sri Lanka."

"The sharp increase in inflation compared to other countries in Asia points out that increases in oil prices in the recent past cannot explain most of the increase in inflation in Sri Lanka."

The study found that most of the inflation in Sri Lanka is home-grown.

It said only 25 percent of recent consumer inflation could be explained by external factors with oil accounting for about six percent, import prices 11 percent and the exchange rate about 10 percent.

The fund concluded that "domestic shocks likely play a more significant role on inflation in Sri Lanka," indicating that better economic policies were needed to lower inflation.

"With external shock not playing a major role in influencing domestic inflation, domestic policies can be very important in containing inflation," the report said.



Sri Lanka's fiscal policy reversed sharply in 2004, when the then-government began to hire more people into the already-bloated public sector and stopped privatising loss-making state entities, which lead to higher budget deficits.

In 2004, inflation, which was close to zero in the first quarter, was driven towards 20 percent by the end of the year with oil subsidies themselves being financed with central bank credit.

## US concerned over Lanka's 'anti US axis'

By Mendaka Abeysekera in New York

The United States has clearly indicated that it has serious concerns over Sri Lankan Government's growing ties and diplomatic relations with anti-US axis, with countries like China, Iran and Russia. It is learnt that the US State Department has already displayed its displeasure over Sri Lanka's bilateral relationship with President Mahmud Ahmadinejad's administration. Despite, the Iranian President's scheduled state visit to Sri Lanka in April, the US State Department conveyed its displeasure to Colombo through diplomatic channels.

The high ranking Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry officials in Colombo downplayed the importance of Sri Lanka's close ties with Iran as traditional bilateral diplomatic relations between two independent countries.

"We learn that the US State Department is totally satisfied with Sri Lankan Government's diplomatic response," diplomatic sources said. (Mendaka, This is absolute Nonsense, and I do not know why you even published it?)

During his state visit, President Ahmadinejad is expected to visit the water power plant project in Uma Oya and other projects developed with the help of Iranian grants.

During President Mahinda Rajapaksa's visit to Tehran in November 2007, the Iranian Government agreed to grant a US\$ 1.6 billion line of credit, pri-



marily to help Sri Lanka buy Iranian oil. Iranian line of credit is the biggest single foreign grant, which Sri Lanka has received during the last few years. Rajapaksa discussed regional and international issues including Palestine and the expansion of bilateral ties between Tehran and Colombo, during his trip. He also met with Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and some high-ranking officials.

China and Russia are Sri Lanka's main arm suppliers. According to Jane's Defence News, Sri Lanka has already advanced talks with Russia over the procurement of five new MiG-29 fighter aircraft.

Last year, Chinese Government's assistance has grown to nearly US\$1 billion, eclipsing Sri Lanka's long-time biggest donor, Japan.

Last week, The New York Times, discussed the new development with Sri Lanka's Foreign

Secretary Palitha Kohona. He admitted that Sri Lanka's 'traditional donors' namely, the United States, Canada and the European Union, had "receded into a very distant corner," to be replaced by countries in the East. Foreign Secretary Kohona gave three reasons: The new donors are neighbours; they are rich; and they conduct themselves differently. "Asians don't go around teaching each other how to behave," he said. "There are ways we deal with each other - perhaps a quiet chat, but not wagging the finger."

In January, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriation Act 2008, which was passed by the US Congress, banned the supply of military equipment and services to Sri Lanka.

According to this Act, before any military supplies are made to Sri Lanka, the Secretary of State should certify that Colombo has improved its human rights record in certain specific areas.

# Number of Missing Sri Lankan Tamils Increasing, Human Rights Groups Say

By Raymond Thibodeaux

As violence surges in Sri Lanka, so does the number of abductions and disappearance of mostly Tamil men. That is the assessment of human rights activists and international aid groups operating in the Indian Ocean nation.

Soli Chana, 23, is trying to find out what happened to her husband. Witnesses say three men in civilian clothes stopped him, not far from his house in Vanuniya in central Sri Lanka. They handcuffed him, shoved in a plain white van and sped away. That was a year and a half ago. He has not been heard from since.

"She is shocked and upset, [very] upset. She made complaint to the police, the Red Cross, the Human Rights Commission and ICRC [Red Cross/Crescent] also," Chana said. "All they can say is, 'We will search.'"

Thousands of other families across Sri Lanka are doing the same - making the rounds at human rights agencies to find family members who have disappeared.

The missing and the families left behind, most of them left struggling, impoverished without their breadwinners, are caught up in a growing list of atrocities being committed by both sides of this 25-year conflict between the Sinhala-dominated Sri Lankan government and Tamil militants, known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The American government and others, around the world, say the LTTE is a terrorist organization.

The numbers of the disappeared are in dispute by the Sri Lankan government, but human rights groups and foreign observer say that thousands of mostly Tamil men have been abducted in the past decade and remain missing.

Palitha Kohona is Sri Lanka's foreign affairs minister. He says the government is sincere in trying to locate those who have disappeared. He says the numbers are being exaggerated by Tamil activists and international aid agencies to tarnish the government's human rights record. Kohona says he helped investigate the disappearance of 355 people from list that an American diplomat recently handed to him.

"To us, one person disappearing is one too many," Kohona said. "When you have 355 it is a matter of serious concern. But, in that list, when we went through the list, there were some repetitions in it. There were 23 in that list whom we have located, up to now, and they are well and kicking. And, there are others whose names are suspiciously similar to those recorded by



Father Henry Miller runs a Catholic diocese in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka, for about 60 years

our immigration authorities as people who have left the country."

He says nearly half of the 355 people on the list were accounted for and that authorities are continuing their investigation.

Father Henry Miller is a Jesuit priest who has . He has a list of eight-thousand people - mostly young Tamil men - who have been abducted in the past decade. He says most of them are still missing.

He says the Sri Lankan government is touting a recent election here as a sign that democracy is flourishing in a part of the country once controlled by the LTTE. The winner of that election - the first here in 14 years - was an supposedly-less-militarized political split-off of the LTTE, known as the Tamil Makkal Vidutalaip Pullikal, led by a former LTTE commander.

For some, their victory could usher in a new era of trust between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil community.

But Father Miller is skeptical. He says the TMVP is merely a proxy party of the government.

And, now the government can say we have restored self-government to the people of the Batticaloa District and it has not been done," Miller said. "This is the government's program. And, with this they proclaim to the world that they have liberated and restored democratic government to the people of Batticaloa. It is a falsity."

Father Miller says that, in the government's ongoing attempt to control Tamil militants, they treat all Tamils as potential terrorists. He says that, with Sri Lanka's civil war flaring up once again in the Tamil-dominated north, that is not likely to change anytime soon.

A March report issued by the U.S. State Department cited almost daily extrajudicial killings and attacks against civilians by the army, paramilitaries and pro-government militias in the government-controlled Jaffna Peninsula.

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# Monsoon Business

## Subprime Mortgage Crisis

**Arun Senathirajah MBA**  
(Banking Mgmt)

Subprime mortgages amounted to US\$34 billion in delinquent state that made severe impact on US\$57 trillion US economy and the global financial system has a history of past 70 years. Repackaging of mortgages into credit derivatives-MBS (Mortgage Backed Securities) and CDOs (Collateralized Debt Obligations) by major Wall Street banks and securities firms using modern financial engineering techniques has given an impetus to a new home mortgage market structure. This structure shifted the elements of risk from mortgage granting bank or institutions to mortgage asset purchasers. This inherent feature embraced the entire global financial system into a crisis.

Prime Mortgage: Fannie Mae (Federal National Mortgage Association) started in 1938 has lending guidelines for what it considers to be "prime" borrowers on conforming mortgage loans. Their standard provides a good comparison between those who are eligible for prime vs. subprime loans. Eligible borrowers for prime loans have a credit score above 620, a debt-to-income ratio (DTI) no greater than 75% (meaning that no more than 55% of net income pays for housing and other debt), and a combined loan to value ratio of 90%, meaning that the borrower is paying a 10% down payment.

Subprime Mortgage: The term subprime lending refers to the practice of making loans to borrowers who do not qualify for market interest rates due to various risk factors, such as income level, size of the down payment made, credit history, and employment status. Subprime mortgage is a lending at a higher rate than the prime rate. This is also known as B-paper, near-prime, or second chance lending. The term "subprime" in mortgage lending also refers to loans that do not meet Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac guidelines. Many of these loans included exorbitant fees, hidden terms and conditions and frequently lead to default, seizure of collateral, and foreclosure.

### The Crisis

As early as the 2003 Annual Report issued by Fairfax Financial Holdings Limited, Prem Watsa was raising concerns about securitized products: 'We have been concerned for some time about the risks in asset-backed bonds, particularly bonds that are backed by home equity loans, automobile loans or credit card debt...' Nouriel Roubini, a professor at New York University said that if the economy slips into recession 'when you have a systemic banking crisis like we haven't had since the 1930s'. The controversy surrounding subprime lending has expanded as the result of an



ongoing lending and credit crisis both in the subprime industry, and in the greater financial markets which began in the United States. During 2007 and 2008, this led to a restriction on the availability of credit in world financial markets. Hundreds of thousands of borrowers have been forced to default or file for bankruptcy. Hundreds of subprime lenders or brokers have closed, some have filed for bankruptcy and several have been acquired. As housing prices started to drop moderately in 2006-2007 in many parts of the U.S., refinancing became more difficult. Defaults and foreclosures increased dramatically as ARM interest rates reset higher. During 2007, nearly 1.3 million U.S. housing properties were subject to foreclosure activity, up 79% from 2006. The value of U.S. subprime mortgages was estimated at \$1.3 trillion as of March 2007, with over 7.5 million first-lien subprime mortgages outstanding. Approximately 16% of subprime loans with adjustable rate mortgages (ARM) were 90-days delinquent or in foreclosure proceedings as of October 2007, roughly triple the rate of 2005. By January of 2008, the delinquency rate had risen to 21%.

Role of the US Government: US Government is the initiator of the current crisis by creating government sponsored enterprises that were supportive of the market structure and process. The US Government started Fannie Mae, Ginnie Mae (Government National Association in 1968), and Freddie Mac (The Federal Mortgage Corporation in 1970) and originated the Mortgage home mortgage securitization process. Fannie Mae bought eligible mortgages and returned cash proceeds to the mortgage issuing institutions in order to enhance the liquidity of the housing mortgage market. It acquired the credit risk, market risk and liquidity risk. Ginnie Mae developed Mortgage Backed securities (MBS) and shifted the federal funding to the mortgage market and market risks to MBS investors. Freddie Mac's role is to securitize conventional mortgages and to pro-

vide competition to the privatized Fannie Mae.

Securitization: This is a process of pooling of mortgages into a special-purpose vehicle, which is normally a corporation registered in offshore. This corporation issues shares that represent claims on the mortgages. The structure pools to pass through the payments on its mortgages to security holders. Securitization allows originators to earn fees and interest income, Issuers of MBS earn underwriting fees, investors get more liquid and diversified portfolios of mortgage assets and Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac earn guarantee fees for securitized issuances. Private label securities issues accounted for only 24% of the MBS and the rest 76% of the issues were by government sponsored enterprises such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in 2003. Major Wall Street firms such as JPMorgan, Goldman Sachs, Wells Fargo, Lehman Brothers, Bear Sterns etc. and several high risk subprime borrowers such as Indymac, WAMU and Countrywide. By 2006 market shares radically changed to 57% by Private label securities issues and 43% with government sponsored enterprises. That means subprime mortgage related securities emerged to dominate the market. The mortgage lenders who bear the credit risk were supposed to be affected, as payment defaults increases. But, major banks and other financial institutions around the world have reported losses of approximately U.S. \$175 billion as of March 16, 2008. Through financial engineering process called securitization, many mortgage lenders had passed the rights to the mortgage pay-

ments and related credit/default risk to third-party investors via mortgage-backed securities (MBS) and collateralized debt obligations (CDO). Corporate, individual and institutional investors holding MBS or CDO faced significant losses, as the value of the underlying mortgage assets declined.

### Credit Crunch

Crisis has caused panic in financial markets and encouraged investors to take their money out of risky mortgage bonds and shaky equities and put it into commodities as "stores of value". Most of the recent increases in global food prices have been the result of speculation and the collapse in the value of the US dollar. Since the major component of assets (MBOs & CDOs) of the financial institutions declined in value, their stock prices in the stock markets also dived down drastically. This trend spread too many other countries as well. This uncertain situation made impact on financial institutions and their lenders were reluctant to lend even at higher interest rates. So, the financial institutions restricted funding on the issuance of commercial paper by their corporate clients. This liquidity problem facing banks and financial institutions is the core issue of the credit crunch. The liquidity concerns drove central banks around the world to take action to provide funds to member banks to encourage the lending of funds to worthy borrowers and to re-invigorate the commercial paper markets. The subprime crisis also places downward pressure on economic growth, because fewer or more expensive loans decrease investment by businesses and consumer spending, which drive the economy.

### Crisis Management

Housing Market Correction: According to the S&P/Case-Shiller housing price index, by November 2007, average U.S. housing prices had fallen approximately 8% from their 2006 peak. Sales volume of new homes dropped by 26.4% in 2007 versus the prior year. By January 2008, the inventory of unsold new homes stood at 9.8 months based on December 2007 sales volume, the highest level since 1981. Housing prices are expected to continue declining until this inventory of surplus homes is reduced to more typical levels. As MBS and CDO valuation is related to the value of the underlying housing

collateral, MBS and CDO losses will continue until housing prices stabilize.

Rescue Operations by Central Banks: The U.S. central banking system, the Federal Reserve, in partnership with central banks around the world, has taken several steps to address the crisis. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke stated in early 2008: "Broadly, the Federal Reserve's response has followed two tracks: efforts to support market liquidity and functioning and the pursuit of our macroeconomic objectives through monetary policy. Between September 18, 2007 and March 18, 2008, the target for the Federal funds rate was lowered from 5.25% to 2.25% and the discount rate was lowered from 5.75% to 2.5%, through five separate actions.

Fed Chairman Bernanke advocated several solutions, including the reduction of loan principal amounts. This solution was highlighted to address a growing concern that an estimated 8.8 million U.S. homeowners with negative equity will have a financial incentive to "walk away" from the property, further exacerbating the crisis. In March 2008, the Fed also provided funds and guarantees to enable bank J.P. Morgan Chase to purchase Bear Stearns, a large financial institution with substantial mortgage-backed securities (MBS) investments that had recently plunged in value. In addition, Bear had taken on a significant role in the financial system via credit derivatives, essentially insuring against mortgage and other debt defaults. The risk to its ability to perform its role as counterparty in these derivative arrangements was another major threat to the banking system. Lenders and homeowners both may benefit from avoiding foreclosure, which is a costly and lengthy process. Some lenders have taken action to reach out to homeowners to provide more favorable mortgage terms. Homeowners have also been encouraged to contact their lenders to discuss alternatives.

President George W. Bush announced a plan voluntarily and temporarily to freeze the mortgages of a limited number of mortgage debtors holding ARMs.

Banks worldwide are still finding it difficult to raise money to lend out, even though central banks have injected huge amounts of money into the financial system since the credit crunch first hit in

**Continued in Next Page**

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# Monsoon Business

## Networking Event hosted by Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce

A networking event hosted by CTCC was held on March 7th at the Millcreek Restaurant in Mississauga. In spite of a heavy snowfall in the evening over 100 business persons and others participated in the event. Hon. Ontario Minister Harinder Thakar was the Guest speaker for the event. The minister in his speech stressed the importance of the growth of small businesses in Ontario and stated the Ontario Govt. will provide all assistance for the growth of businesses. Earlier while introducing the

Minister, a former President of CTCC, Gnana Gnanachandran complimented the CTCC in taking an initiative to host such meeting in Mississauga which was first of its kind and also attended by a Provincial Government Minister. The President of CTCC Gary Anandasangaree stated that such future events will be held regularly in Mississauga and other cities. The event was sponsored by Ajith Sabaratnam of Sun Life. Seen here are pictures taken at the event.

Picture Courtesy: Sivam



Guests at the event



Ajith Sabaratnam of Sun Life



Esa Para, a former Director



Members with Minister Harinder Thakar



Minister presenting a plaque to President Gary



President Gary, Minister Harinder and guests

## Subprime Mortgage Crisis

Continued from previous page

August. Central banks around the world, including the Bank of Canada have announced a coordinated plan to pump billions more into the financial system to ease the global credit crunch. The U.S. Federal Reserve, the Bank of England, the European Central Bank and the Swiss National Bank are also part of the agreement. The Bank of Canada said the measures are "designed to address elevated pressures in short-term funding markets." The Bank of Canada said it would provide around \$3 billion in funding. It will also expand the kind of securities it will accept as collateral. The global plan will put more than \$67 billion US in extra liquidity into the financial markets over the next six months - including more than \$40 billion US by the Fed, \$20 billion US by the ECB and \$4 billion US by the Swiss National Bank.

US Government Actions: A sep-

arate but related dynamic is the downturn in the housing market, where a surplus inventory of homes has resulted in a significant decline in new home construction and housing prices in many areas. This also places downward pressure on growth. With interest rates on a large number of subprime and other ARM due to adjust upward during the 2008 period, U.S. legislators and the U.S. Treasury Department are taking action. A systematic program to limit or defer interest rate adjustments was implemented to reduce the effect. In addition, lenders and borrowers facing defaults have been encouraged to cooperate to enable borrowers to stay in their homes. The risks to the broader economy created by the financial market crisis and housing market downturn were primary factors in several decisions by the U.S. Federal reserve to cut interest rates

and the economic stimulus package signed by President Bush on February 13, 2008. Both actions are designed to stimulate economic growth and inspire confidence in the financial markets.

Regulations: Guidelines can also influence the nature, transparency and regulatory reporting required for the complex legal entities and securities involved in these transactions. A sweeping proposal will be presented regarding the regulatory powers of the U.S. Federal Reserve, expanding its jurisdiction over other types of financial institutions and authority to intervene in market crises. Banks have sought and received additional capital from sovereign wealth funds, which are entities that control the surplus savings of developing countries. An estimated U.S. \$69 billion has been invested by these entities in large financial institutions over the past year. On April 02, 2008 Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke accepted that recession is possible

in the first half of 2008. US Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson has come out with a plan to overhaul the financial regulations. President's Working Group on Financial Markets to cover entire financial sector, create a Mortgage Origination Commission to develop uniform licensing standards for mortgage market participants, merger of Commodity Futures Trading Commission with Securities Exchange Commission, establish an Office of National Insurance under the Treasury, and establishing of three major regulators - Market Stability Regulator, Prudential Financial Regulator & Business Conduct Regulator are the proposals put forward by the secretary. It will take a considerable time line to fully organize and implement these proposals.

Impact on Canada

As a result of the subprime crisis write-downs on the value of loans, MBS and CDOs by Canadian banks - CIBC amounted to \$3.2 bil-

lion and RBC to \$0.360 billion. Owners of non-bank Asset Backed Commercial Paper (ABCP) are the main victim of the crisis in Canada. This market is not much regulated. Owners of the ABCP which are exposed to credit default swaps, worth of \$35 billion are at the brink of losing 50% of the asset value. The National Bank of Canada and the Caisse are the biggest holders of the ABCPs facing the loss. ABCPs are traded in OTC (Over-the-counter) market and their risk exposure is not disclosed to the investors. Canadian housing market was not much affected compared to the level of the US market. Canadian economic growth is expected to slow down by more than half a percent next year. Future prospect is much dependent on the quick recovery of the US housing market, responsive action of the Bank of Canada and the channeling of liquid assets by central bankers as already initiated.

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# Monsoon Newsline

## Margosa Credit Union Shares - An unexplored source of Investment

**-George Thambithurai -  
Corporate Secretary, Margosa  
Credit Union Limited**

Margosa was created to meet the needs of a fast growing Sri Lankan community that is not well served by the major banks. The Financial Services Commission of Ontario has accepted the fact, that we are a strong and a vibrant community and that our common bond of association is that we are all from Sri Lanka. This was a major factor when they decided to give us this approval.

We started this journey forty months ago, and during this period we have made considerable progress. We are now on our last lap. Are we seeing the light at the end of the tunnel? The Canadian Winter this year has to a great extent hampered our progress but we are seeing some rays of light. Just a little more effort and we are bound to have a Financial Institution, to call our own. The challenge before us now, is to raise the 1.5 million.

### Raising of Initial Capital:

Our Board of Directors and some dedicated Incorporators have spent their time and energy, in trying to convince our members that Margosa Credit union is here to stay.. We have tried quite a few options in trying to get our message to our community. Sometimes this pattern of getting our information does not seem to last long. In today's changing fast paced world, nothing lasts. Nothing has a shelf life of more than half a day. In this age of continuous news cycle, the new pushes out the old, regardless of significance or importance. What cannot be known at this point is how our message is resonating around our communities. The question that is being asked is how have we prepared our community? What should we do to get our people become members and become actively involved in our crusade to collect enough deposits? After a series of creative brain storming sessions, we have come to the conclusion that we have to resort to the application of the three C's. They are Communication, Contact, and Commitment. The teams have been visiting potential Investors and met them individually and we are convinced that this strategy will show substantial results in the days and weeks to come.

A Start-up Financial Institution like us, need to explore every financing option and get our hands on Funds from as many members as possible. We not only need Investors to build up a capital Base, but we also need members who will begin to use our services. When we open our door for Business, we will be a full-service financial institution. It will

also be a trusted, reliable home environment where language, culture and unfamiliarity with the Canadian market place will no longer be barriers for our people in obtaining appropriate financial services on fair terms.

As a start up Credit Union, we need much more capital than what we could raise through the membership fee. In order to raise the extra capital, the financial services commission of Ontario have permitted us to sell investment shares to our Members. This is the only tool that is available to us to build our Equity which in turn will support our growth. The Investment share issue is the method used to raise the starting capital. It is also important to remember that investment shares are equity shares which are designed to provide the permanent capital that will allow Margosa to grow and provides its members the financial services they need now and in the future.

### Investment Shares for Sale:

Margosa credit union was authorized to sell to its members, Class A and Class B Investment shares on September 28, 2007. There are more than 1,500,000 Class A and Class B Shares for sale and each share will be sold at \$1.00 per share. We have openings for two types of investors - the small time investor who would like to associate with us, just because it is a Sri Lankan Venture. These Investors could purchase Class A shares which are Cumulative. The minimum investment for this type of share is \$500.00 and maximum is \$5000.00. The Class B shares is Non Cumulative and the purchase of these shares is from a minimum of \$5000.00 to a Maximum of \$25,000.00 This type of share is for the affluent in our community who typically invest \$5000 to \$25,000 of their money at a time.

Dividends will be paid as and when declared by the Board of Directors of Margosa. Dividends on the Class A shares are cumulative, meaning that they accumulate, and once accumulated must be paid before dividends are paid on shares ranking below the Class A shares. Once dividends are paid on Class A shares, Dividends may be paid on the Class B shares. The Dividend rate on the Class A investment share exceeds by 1% the simple average of the yields on the monthly series of the Government of Canada five- year Bonds as published by the Bank of Canada for each month in Margosa's Fiscal year. Once these shares are issued, they are not redeemable for a period of 5 years. Exceptions will be made on approval by the Board of



Directors.

Investment shares will be sold to Margosa Members only. They will be given a copy of the Share Offering Statement which carries all the important information. They could pick up a copy by dropping by our Office located at 2100 Ellesmere Road, Suite #100A. If you need a copy in the mail, just call us at 416 915 8989. We would be more than willing to discuss your concerns and will not obligate any member to purchase shares.

### The Process:

Assuming that you choose to buy, you can subscribe for investment shares by completing the Subscription and the Authorization Forms which are included in the share offering statement. The subscription form will set out the number, class and the dollar amount of the shares you wish to buy. This form with your cheque will be forwarded to Concentra Financial. The Authorization Form is to give your consent to Concentra to place your funds in Escrow. (Escrow is a form of Trust agreement in which funds are temporarily placed with Concentra until specific conditions as set out by FSCO are met.) Concentra will act as the Trustee for Margosa. Concentra will escrow all purchase funds until such time as the Investment share issue reaches the desired level of \$1.5 million. At that point, the funds will be released to Margosa and the Share Certificates will be issued to the Investors. It is only then, will the time period for dividend calculation, begin. Concentra will provide the assurance to all the investors that Margosa will not have access to the funds until it has complied with all contractual agreements.

What we hope to achieve:

Successful Credit Unions have made their start with their community. From the beginning, we have strived to achieve a significant impact as ethically based, democratically controlled Sri Lankan Owned Financial Institution. Our aim is to bring Credit Union advantage to all who

can benefit by being a Member with Margosa. We will bring an entirely different dimension to the provision of banking services to our community. Margosa will achieve long term self-sustainability by reaching a membership of at least a Thousand. Only then will we make a positive impact in our community. At a time when the Financial Industry is in Transition, the reason that precipitated in getting a credit Union for Sri Lankans was the dissatisfaction with the locally available financial service options. This is a situation that is not only faced by us, but also by other communities in Toronto. Among Mainstream Banks, the trend is clearly towards mergers and consolidation and this will end up in closure of bank branches.

We would like to ask our members in our community to become first a Member by paying \$25.00 which would give them the right to do their banking business with us. The best compliment you could pay Margosa would be to pass along your positive connection with us to your friends and family. Given the present Credit Market, in which certain categories of borrowers cannot purchase credit, or can only do so on disadvantageous terms, then the importance of such an alternative increases. Our Loan and Mortgage policies are likely to be the most liberal in the community, because we know and can relate to the problems our members are facing. We will provide money saving interest rates and hassle free service and follow the principles of co-operation. It is therefore important that our members invest in our community. If you own a business, there will come a day when you believe, that there has to be a more flexible way to do your business banking. As a Sri Lankan, Margosa will be there for you. Margosa will strive to make a difference through their commitment. Who you know is a simple reflection of the truth in business ownership. Who you know makes what you know and what you do even bet-

ter.

Our Main Financier: Credit Union Central of Ontario: (CUCO) Credit Union Central of Ontario exists for only one reason: To help Credit Unions like Margosa to survive and thrive. It will act as a Wholesale Bank for Margosa. It will provide us with all the payment and banking services. It has 154 Credit Unions in Ontario as its members and services more than 1.2 million Ontarians, who are members. Central's primary financial role is to maintain a large pool of funds for its member credit unions. CUCO will become our main finance facility. They will provide payments and Banking services to Margosa.

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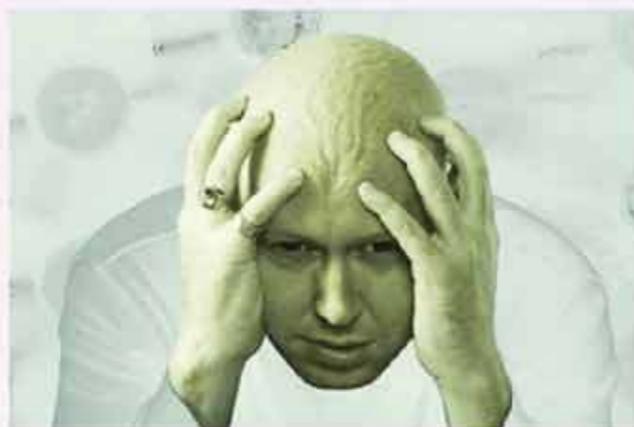
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# April Showers bring Autumn Bowlers

## Bowlathon raises Quarter million for Tamil Caregiver Project run by Providence Healthcare

**By: Krishni Loganathan**

The Tamil Caregiver Project initiated by Board Member and Treasurer of Providence Healthcare Foundation, Kanish Thevarasa began as a way to provide targeted healthcare education and support to Tamil speaking caregivers within our community. The goal of the Tamil Caregiver Project is to facilitate understanding and access to relief for caregivers as a quality-of-life outcome. The Bowlathon was a way to encourage and raise awareness to people and businesses to support the Tamil Caregiver Project.

Many sponsors took on the challenge to ensure that the tools were available to make this proj-

ect a success. Lead sponsors of the event included R.J. Multi Litho, who has continued to be the lead sponsor for the fourth consecutive year. The co-lead sponsor this year was Autobahn Freight Lines, and many other sponsors followed generously including TD Canada Trust.

The event began with Mo D as the MC welcoming the guests to the Autumn Bowlathon and entertaining the guests humorously throughout the event. The festivities continued with bowling and dinner as guests networked and mingled with one another. An auction and silent auction also took place which added to the generous donations that were made.

Leading sponsors and winners

of the Bowlathon for the fourth consecutive year was RJ Multi Litho. They were truly winners of the event as they continued to show their support for this worthy cause.

The event was a success as it raised \$73,000 to the grand total of over \$250,000 for the Tamil Caregiver Project. With the help of the generous sponsors, donors, Bowlathon volunteers, committee members and Providence Healthcare staff the Bowlathon was a huge success. The continued support of everyone is needed to ensure that the Tamil Caregiver Project achieves the goals it has set out to do.



*Kanish Thevarasa, Partner, Kanish & Partners (Chair, Board Member and Treasurer, Providence Healthcare Foundation with Co-Lead Sponsor Kulwant Mann of Autobahn and Lead Sponsor RJ Multi Litho partners Frank Barbosa and Rajee Muthuraman*



*Amanda Falatico, Director, Community Outreach with David Jeyasingh of Tamil Caregiver Project and Jennifer Stewart, Vice President, Providence Healthcare Foundation & CDO*



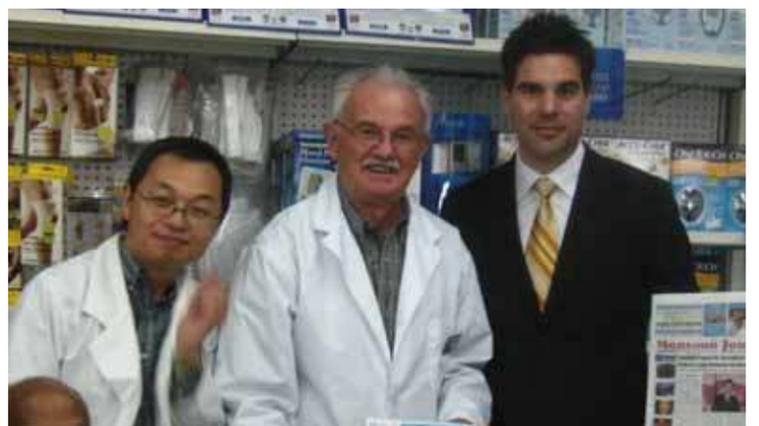
*Kanish Thevarasa, Partner, Kanish & Partners, Namita Kanishkan and Julian Emmanuel, Partner, Kanish & Partners receiving a plaque in appreciation for their Sponsorship and all their efforts from Jennifer Stewart, Vice President, Providence Healthcare Foundation & CDO*



*Youngest Bowler at the Bowling Alley*



*Jennifer Stewart with Lesley McCarroll and Luci Anderson (all from Providence Healthcare Foundation)*



A free Diabetes Clinic was held at the Kennedy Road Pharmacy, Scarborough last month and a Registered Nurse was at hand to answer questions from participants. Free door prizes were given to the first 50 participants. Picture shows Bill Liu, Pharmacist from Kennedy Pharmacy, John-a Registered Nurse and Greg Johnson -Senior Professional Representative from LifeScan, Canada Ltd., a Johnson&Johnson Company, present at the clinic.

<p><b>A. ARIARAN, CGA</b>  <b>CERTIFIED GENERAL ACCOUNTANT</b></p> <p><b>(416) 293-1616</b>  <b>(647) 893-8295</b></p> <p>Fax : 1 866 886 0736  aarian@hotmail.com</p> 	<p><b>ACCOUNTING &amp; TAX SERVICES</b></p> <p><b>CORPORATE &amp; PERSONAL TAX PREPARATION, TAX APPEALS, CONTROLLERSHIP SERVICES, GST, PST, PAYROLL, WSIB, BUSINESS INCORPORATION, BUSINESS PLAN &amp; PROPOSALS. TAX RETURNS E-FILED.</b></p> <p><b>"NAME YOUR BUSINESS NEED"</b></p> <p><b>PERSONAL STRENGTH, PROFESSIONAL SERVICE..</b></p>	
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# Monsoon Features

## The Forgotten Instrument

In the constant quest to find satisfaction in the new and different, people forget about the beauty of existence, says Prem Rawat widely known as Maharaji, who travels the world asking people to search within for self-fulfillment.

In his presentations, he often relates stories that illustrate how easily people get distracted from their true nature.

"Once there was an exquisite, beautiful musical instrument," he says. "When it was played, it made the most beautiful sound. It was exquisite in every detail. It was precious.

"But then, people started looking for the new, the different. That's what people wanted—the new and the different sparked their curiosity. They invited other musicians to come and play, musicians who could play drums, guitars, and flutes. But none of them knew how to play this one very special instrument.

"Although it was beautiful, slowly the instrument started to collect dust because it was ignored. It wasn't played, and it had gone out of tune. Nobody understood what the fascination and the beauty of this instrument was. They would look at it and wonder, 'What good is this instrument?' It was put away because nobody knew how to play it.

"Then one day, someone came along and said, 'Why have you cast aside this most beautiful instrument?'

"People looked at him and questioned. 'What is he talking about? Which instrument? The drums are all in tune, the flutes are great, the violins are perfect, and the piano is in tune.'

"The man said, 'Don't you remember this one instrument? It is because of this instrument that you even became interested in music. Because of this one instrument, you built this place. Because of this one instrument, you started to gather, to listen to it. Now that your curiosity has gone to the new and different,

you have ignored this instrument.'

"Nobody understood. 'Why is this man so interested in this old dusty instrument? Why is he attracted to this old, dusty, ignored instrument?' Not everyone was interested. But some were, and they asked, 'What is so special about this instrument?'

"The man said, 'Let me show you.' He cleaned the instrument, and when he had cleaned it, it began to shine. Then the man did the most important thing: he tuned it. He gave it back to the people and said, 'Now, you play.' When they began to play, they were mesmerized by its beautiful,

incredible sound, because here was an instrument that could truly touch the heart."

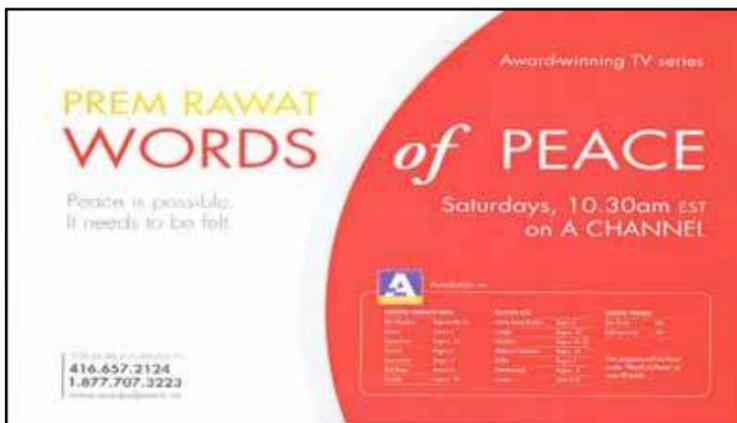
In the same way, Maharaji says, people have forgotten something essential.

"In our race for the new and different," he says, "we have forgotten ourselves.

"We look and the first thing we see is the dirt. We form our impressions by what we see. But a person who has the ability to see beyond that dirt can clean the dust and renew its beauty, its spark and glory.

"When you can listen to this instrument, when it is tuned and you play, you will hear a melody that is the melody of this breath coming to you."

Maharaji began talking about the universal search for happiness and the possibility of finding it within as a very young child in India. By the time he was 13 he had attracted the attention of



people in the West who invited him to come to speak in their countries. Since then he has spent many years bringing to people around the world the simplest human truths—understanding and accepting the gift of being alive, and knowing how to play this instrument of life. He also offers inspiration and assistance in that quest.

Maharaji suggests we find ourselves in the beauty of that instrument. "It is such an exquisite instrument," he says. "The sound is so pleasing to this existence, to this heart. This is the gift we have been given."

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## Mahashivaratri

### performed at

## Shri Ram Mandir

Om Namah Shivay rent the air at Shri Ram Mandir as young, old and aged prayed to Lord Siva on the occasion of Maha-Sivaratri". Over 5,000 Hindu devotees congregated at Mandir and sought blessings from Siva - for fulfilment and success in life. People thronged the temple since early morning starting at 6 AM on 5th March and until 6 AM next day morning inspite of very snow storm which disturbed the flow of devotees to Mandir. The temple remained opened for Shiv puja all the time. The attending priests

were dressed in white Kurta and dhoti, headed by Pandit Roopnauth Sharma the spiritual leader. The Siva Lingam was worshipped throughout the night by washing it every three hours with milk, curd, honey and rose water as the chanting of the mantra "Om Namah Sivaya" (praise to Siva) continued. This is one day when bhakti (devotion) overwhelms and unites. A special lingam of ice made for the occasion was placed in the Mandir for the worship by the devotees.



Lingam in Ice



Lingam being worshipped



View of Devotees

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# Monsoon Features

## HOLI HAI HOLI HAI

It is said, "Life turns Colourful" when it is time for Holi. HOLI HAI... HOLI HAI... Come holi and the streets will reverberate with the chants of Holi hai... in India. Holi is an ancient festival of India and was originally known as 'Holika'. At Shri Ram Mandir we are celebrating Holi on 21st March this year.

On this day everybody takes delight looking at the other, as he or she is usually drenched in colour. Really, the other name of the festival is FUN. Whatever be the choice of colour, nobody remains in their original texture at the end of the play as Holi knows no bars, everybody feels it is their right to enjoy and enjoy they do. Songs, dance, drinks, food everything goes in excess when it is time for Holi.. It is not just children, but the young and the old alike who take delight in this joyous festival of colours. Seniors too, move in their groups (tolis). Their enthusiasm is at times greater than that of their children as they forget the bars of age and follow their hearts.

The literal meaning of the word 'Holi' is 'burning'. There are various legends to explain the meaning of this word, most prominent of all is the legend associated with demon king Hiranyakashyap. Hiranyakashyap wanted everybody in his kingdom to worship only him but to his great disappointment, his son, Prahlad became an ardent devotee of Lord Naarayana.



Hiranyakashyap commanded his sister, Holika to enter a blazing fire with Prahlad in her lap. Holika had a boon whereby she could enter fire without any damage on herself. However, she was not aware that the boon worked only when she enters the fire alone. As a result she paid a price for her sinister desires, while Prahlad was saved by the grace of the god for his extreme devotion. The festi-

val, therefore, celebrates the victory of good over evil and also the triumph of devotion.

Legend of Lord Krishna is also associated with play with colors as the Lord started the tradition of play with colours by applying colour on his beloved Radha and other gopis.

Young Krishna is known to be very playful and mischievous. The story goes that as a child, Krishna was extremely jealous of Radha's fair complexion since he himself was very dark.

One day, Krishna complained to his mother Yashoda about the injustice of nature which made Radha so fair and he so dark. To pacify the crying young Krishna, the dotting mother asked him to go and colour Radha's face in whichever colour he wanted. In a mischievous mood, naughty Krishna heeded the advice of

mother Yashoda and applied colour on her beloved Radha's face; Making her one like himself.

Well, there is also a legend to explain Krishna's dark complexion. It so happened that once a demon attempted to kill infant Krishna by giving him poisoned milk. Because of which Krishna turned blue. But Krishna did not die and the demon shriveled up into ashes. The beautiful scene of Krishna's prank in which he played colour with Radha and other gopis has been made alive in myriad forms in a number of paintings and murals.

Gradually, the play gained popularity with the people of North India and became a tradition. This prank of Krishna later, became a trend and a part of the Holi festivities. Southern India is that of Lord Shiva and Kaamadeva. According to the leg-

end, people in south celebrate the sacrifice of Lord of Passion Kaamadeva who risked his life to revoke Lord Shiva from meditation and save the world. Celebration of the various legends associated with Holi reassures the people of the power of the truth as the moral of all these legends is the ultimate victory of good over evil.

In spite of being such a colourful and gay festival, there are various aspects of Holi which makes it so significant for our lives. Though they might not be so apparent but a closer look and a little thought will reveal the significance of Holi in more ways than meets the eyes. Ranging from socio-cultural, religious to biological there is every reason why we must heartily enjoy the festival and cherish the reasons for its celebrations. So when, its time for Holi, please don't hold yourself back and enjoy the festival to the hilt by participating with full enthusiasm in every small tradition related to the festival.

Bollywood has typically portrayed the mood of Holi from time to time. Folk touch in the film songs on Holi have made them all the more popular amongst the masses so much so that the famous Holi numbers have become as much essential part of Holi celebrations as the colours itself.

No Holi celebration can be complete without the famous Amitabh Bachchan number from the film Silsila. The song was an instant success... and hit.

Rang barse bheeg chunar wali, rang barse

Are kaine maari pichkaari tori bheegi angiya

O rangrasia rangrasia, ho Rang barse bheeg chunar wali, rang barse ...

Sone ki thaali main jona parosa

Are, sone ki thaali main jona parosa

Haan, sone ki thaali main jona parosa

Are, khayee gauri ka yaar balam tarse rang barse

Holi hai!!!

O, Rang barse bheeg chunar wali, rang barse ...

Rang Barse...the song has become the Holi anthem of India. This song was penned down by late Dr. Harivansh Rai Bachchan, father of Amitabh Ji.

An attempt was made to duplicate the magic of that song about two decades later with Mr Bachchan again in the movie Baghbaan, by incorporating the famous folk song- Holi khele Raghubeera..awadh mein Holi khele Raghubeera.

**Kanayalal Raina**  
Brampton



### Indian Tamil Film "Killathe"

Production by Meena Cine Combines Selvaraj and Director K.S. Saravanan, Music by Kapileshwar Canada. On this film "Killathe" Popular Music director Deva sung a song in Kapileshwar's music direction. In the picture above, K.S. Saravanan, Deva and Kapileshwar.



**THEY MESMERISED SRI LANKA**

&

**NOW THEY ARE IN TORONTO**

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## APPRECIATIONS

## Journalist Mallika Wanigasundera, Mentor and Friend

By Philip Fernando

Mallika Wanigasundera passed away at the ripe age of 81. In the early sixties those of us aspiring to be journalists, like my friends Siva Sivapragasam, Thalif Deen and others, found Mallika to be a great mentor and friend. I found Mallika always in the company of two stalwarts, Vijitha Fernando and Sumana Saparamadu. The trio adorned the editorial department. Those were the heydays of Lake House with Esmond Wickremesinghe at the helm. Mallika's stunningly articulate and forthright pieces in the Op-Ed pages of the Daily News were our daily cup of tea as we gasped for inspiration inside Esmond's somewhat stuffy Research Unit headed by Dr. Rangenekar. Every year a new crop of freshmen took up positions awaiting the winnowing process: those willing to take the serious plunge into journalism. Many, I am certain, would write in glowing terms about Mallika. This is a short account of fond memories of an icon who never failed to inspire me during my impressionable days as a journalist.

Mallika was a Peradeniya

graduate who joined Lake House in 1956. Her stint earlier, as Health Minister A.E. Nugawela's private secretary got her ethos fortified for pursuing her career in journalism. She paid her dues doing the rounds at Janatha, Daily News and Observer and was stuck for good at the editorial desk of the Ceylon Daily News as features and editorial writer and an excellent sub-editor. She never stopped writing and the last article she penned was to the Asian Tribune last year about Hillary Clinton's famous statement about international terrorism. Many took the cue from her and criticized Senator Clinton. Mallika won the Gold Medal for Excellence in Journalism given by the Newspaper Society, Editors Guild and Free Media Movement.

Remembering someone who is a close associate is hard but Mallika's insightful forays into the oft ignored national issues come to mind immediately. In her writings, she caught the inner cravings of the nation struggling to be rid of the colonial legacy. She guided those crossing the bridge from the colonial mindset to a freer spirit d'corps, with an



unabashed passion of her own. She showed that there was a choice between subservience and freedom. She was provocative and daring but never mean. She took features writing way above the painfully dull stuff dished out by many practitioners of the game.

To reminisce is to be nostalgic and also be painfully sad. Like what was said of the "last editor" Jim Bellows, Mallika never failed to be true to herself. She epitomized the distinctive spirit of a culture she believed in without any reservations.

Good bye and May She Attain Nibbana!

## Remembering Mrs. Senthil Chelvam Ratnathicam, former Vice-Principal of Hindu Ladies College-Colombo (Saiva Mangayar Vidyalayam)

- Siva Sivapragasam

Mrs. Senthil Chelvam Ratnathicam, former Vice-Principal of Hindu Ladies College, Colombo (formerly known as Saiva Mangayar Vidyalayam) passed away recently in New York at the ripe age of ninety-four.

Those of us who knew Mrs. Ratnathicam of yester-year will remember her as a strict disciplinarian in the teaching profession yet adored greatly by her students for her fair and just ways. She demanded nothing but excellence from her students. She served the institution for thirty long years and retired as the Vice-Principal. Her role as a teacher did not end for the students when they left school. She continued to guide them in their lives providing wise counsel whenever it was necessary. She invested a lot of time and energy providing guidance in the careers and social lives of the students who came under her wing. The love and attachment she showered on her students were evidenced in the numerous calls she used to receive during her later years in life in New York. Although she moved to New York in 1980 to be with her children, retirement was not to her liking. She joined the Field Library in Peerskill, and worked in their Archive Room until about four years ago, although she had reached ninety.

Mrs. Ratnathicam was the daughter of Rasamma and Ramanathan from Jaffna and was educated at the famous girls' school-Ramanathan College. Mrs.



Ratnathicam had Abdi Ratnathicam as her life-partner and he was himself a teacher by profession at the prestigious Royal College in Colombo. As a student of Royal, I can still visualize Mr. Ratnathicam's portly figure both in the class room and the sports field.

Mrs. Ratnathicam leaves behind her cherished sister Chenthamani Mylvaganam (formerly of Radio Ceylon), five sons Nirajan, Wijayan, Sanchayan, Jayanthan, and Raguvaran, (all of USA), nine grand children, two great grand children, and her adorable Menika, who looked after for the past 63 long years.

Mrs. Ratnathicam's contribution to womanhood was the discipline and decorum she imparted to the Hindu girls of her time at Saiva Mangayar Vidyalayam. She will always be remembered for that.

She perfectly fits into the words of Simone De Beauvoir that "One is not born a woman; One becomes one."

## "For giving spirit-the very essence of humanism"

The Good Friday Service of the Tamil Christian Church of Canada was held at the Bridletowne Church Building in Scarborough with the usual traditional songs, meditations and devotional prayers. The service which lasted for more than 2 hours was based on the seven words that Jesus spoke from the cross. The Rev. I. Selvaratnam who led the service stressed the need for forgiveness in uplifting the nature of humanity, eulogizing Jesus's first statement from the cross- "forgive them, they do not know what they are doing. "Forgiving spirit" is the very essence of humanism and it is vital for smooth, meaningful human relationships. He related the story of an American commander in Iraq who helped to heal an Arab youngster ailing with the problem of coronary ventricular failure ('hole in the heart'). He had contacted his wife in the U.S to make arrangements for the heart surgery. In the meantime, the American commander got killed by the Arab insurgents. In spite of the disaster, the wife of the general faithfully fulfilled the request of her husband and helped to heal the Arab youngster and adopted him as one of his sons in America. Doing good to those who hate you demands the best in you. It's the spirit of forgiveness that gives humanity the glimmer of hope to lead useful lives in a world of sin, hatred and revenge. The other sayings from the cross were elucidated and presented by The Rev. Bobby Mather, Messrs. Joel Joseph, Wilmot Olagasegaram, Thaya Ponniah and

Mrs. Daisy Hensman.

The choir rendered meaningful songs and thevarams to depict the words from the cross to the accompaniment of scintillating traditional and western musical instruments.

There was a large number of worshippers at the meditations worship service from all over Toronto and its conurbations.

Community News by  
J. Atputharajah



## PROJECT HOPE

Batticaloa, Sri Lanka

TAMIL CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF WATERLOO REGION, CANADA

HOPE - IS ALL THEY HAVE  
HOPE - BROUGHT US HERE  
HOPE YOU CAN HELP THEM  
THEY ARE OUR CHILDREN, TOO.

## AN APPEAL FROM BATTICALOA

"We have requests from many families who were internally displaced and who are still not settled permanently to help their children study in boarding schools. Studying in boarding schools would cost a minimum of Rs.3,000/- a month. If you agree, we could embark on this task of helping really deserving, studious children to continue their education, in relatively safe and wholesome surroundings."

Swami Ajaratmananda  
Ramakrishna Mission, Batticaloa, Sri Lanka.

Fund raising for Nursery school & IDP facility in Batticaloa. Operated by Sri Ramakrishna Mission

SEND YOUR KIND DONATIONS TO

Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region  
P.O.Box 25068, Kitchener, Ontario, N2A 4A5

"A small community with a big heart"



# Waterloo News

## Immigration Stage

Colin Hunter

RECORD STAFF, KITCHENER

An immigrant couple stands in a grocery store, dumbfounded by their options.

They only want a can of tomatoes. But which can? Diced? Chopped? Crushed? Spiced? Stewed? Brand name or no-name?

Back home, they were never faced with such a surplus of possibilities. Paralyzed by indecision, the couple begins to bicker. They never imagined that coming to Canada, the land of plenty, would create such challenges at every turn.

This particular couple is fictional -- two characters in a play -- but their feelings of confusion and alienation are universal, and are among the fundamental themes in the play *Seasons of Immigration*.

The show, which has a special one-night-only staging at Centre in the Square Tuesday, is the creation of MT Space, a multicultural troupe founded three years ago by Majdi Bou-Matar.

"The show looks at the common themes of the immigration experience," says Bou-Matar. "The language barriers, the coldness and vastness of the new land, conflicts between parents who are of one culture and children who are raised in another . . . the doctors and engineers driv-



ing cabs in their new country."

It may sound like heavy, depressing fodder for a play, but it's quite the opposite, Bou-Matar says.

"It's all done in a very light-hearted way. The issues are much more complex than the ways we portray them."

The six actors in the cast come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and they portray characters in the show with even more diverse histories. The goal is to highlight and celebrate cultural uniqueness, not simply bemoan the hardships of immigration. "As artists we can work together, using our differences to create something greater collectively," Bou-Matar says.

The show was created in early 2005, when Bou-Matar, himself a new immigrant to Kitchener from Lebanon, put out a call for submissions of stories about the immigration experience.

Dozens of immigrants respo-

nded with tales about their own experiences, and Bou-Matar looked for elements common to all.

An eight-week "creation workshop" followed, during which Bou-Matar and a crew of co-writers pieced together the vignettes that make up *Seasons of Immigration*.

The play has since been staged three times at The Registry Theatre, and Tuesday's performance at Centre in the Square will be its debut at a large mainstream theatre.

Other theatre companies around the province have recently expressed interest in staging productions of *Seasons of Immigration*.

"I hope this is the beginning of the play's real success story," says Bou-Matar. "I hope audiences will be touched by it, they will smile from their hearts, and they will connect with this play."

[chunter@therecord.com](mailto:chunter@therecord.com)

## Agency honours volunteers who conquered obstacles in Canada

VALERIE HILL  
RECORD STAFF, WATERLOO REGION

Immigrant women face numerous obstacles when they come to Canada, not the least of which is losing the stability of the familiar: How will they fit into their new culture? Will they be accepted?

"I didn't have the self-confidence," admitted Renu Bhandari, who came to Canada from India with her husband in 1974. Though she hoped to pursue a medical degree, the nearest medical school was too far away so she settled on a business program, which brought a whole new set of anxieties.

"I went to Laurier," she said. "I didn't know if I'd be able to do the course, to study."

Bhandari surprised herself, scoring 99 per cent in one course, 100 per cent in the other. Suddenly, she was confident enough to pursue a certified management accountancy designation.

Bhandari has worked for Canada Revenue Agency for 27 years, most of that as a team leader. Her success has been such that she wanted to help other immigrant women, through Focus For Ethnic Women, in Waterloo.

Tomorrow, Bhandari will be one of two immigrant women honoured for their achievements at the organization's seventh annual Focus on Friends gala and fundraiser, which this year focuses on women in finance.

Accepting the same award will be Ramona Servellon, a SunLife Financial support clerk and a busy volunteer.

It was fear and tragedy that brought Servellon to Canada from Honduras in August 1995, at age 48 with her husband and three teenagers. Only her husband spoke English and her children, particularly her daughter, were confused and miserable over moving from their house in Honduras to a two-bedroom



apartment in Waterloo.

It was a necessary move after Servellon's mother was attacked by youths wielding baseball bats when she walked to church one day. After 10 days in hospital, she died.

"When you live in a country that's not safe, you're always under stress," Servellon said. "I came here with no English . . . I learned English and got a job. I'm so happy."

Servellon learned work and language skills at Focus for Ethnic Women. The agency then landed her a placement at Sun Life, which offered her a full-time job.

"It opened the door for me," she said. Servellon's three children completed post-secondary education and all work in a profession while her husband, a forester, runs his own business.

Servellon and Bhandari are immigrant success stories, but both women agree that it would have been much more difficult without the support of an organization like Focus. The women have served on the board of directors for Focus, volunteered on committees and are today leaders for new immigrant women arriving in Canada, facing all the same fears and uncertainties.

Executive director Olga George-Cosh said women are usually not the ones who make the decision to uproot the family and come to Canada. And when they come, there is often a "deeper sense of isolation."

Her organization recognizes that helping the mother has a ripple effect throughout the family.

"When you help a woman, you know the kids are going to be helped, and her husband will be helped too."

[vhill@therecord.com](mailto:vhill@therecord.com)

## Latest census shows 61,455 of region's 478,121 residents are visible minorities;

### Region's diversity increasing

Liz Monteiro

RECORD STAFF, WATERLOO REGION

The face of Waterloo Region is changing.

Locally, the visible minority population has risen to 13.8 per cent from 10.7 per cent in 2001, according to a report Statistics Canada released yesterday. The 2006 Census shows that in the Kitchener Census Metropolitan Area -- all of Waterloo Region except for Wellesley and Wilmot Townships -- one in seven people is from a visible minority group. South Asians, people of East Indian, Pakistani and Sri Lankan descent, make up the largest visible-minority group in the region, accounting for 3.6 per cent of the population.

Yoke Kennedy, a settlement worker at the K-W Multicultural Centre, said when she started working with immigrants in 2000, she went looking for clients, dis-

tributing business cards at community centres. "I used to get so excited when I saw someone who was Chinese at Conestoga Mall," said Kennedy, who came to Canada in 1981 from Singapore. "Now I see them everywhere."

Toronto had the largest proportion of visible-minority immigrants -- 42.9 per cent. Across the country, more than five million Canadians identified themselves as a visible minority, accounting for 16.2 per cent of the population. Provincially, 22.8 per cent of the population hails from a visible minority group.

Statistics Canada spokesperson Sylvie Bourbonnais said the region ranks 10th in a list of Canadian cities with high numbers of visible minorities, just behind Winnipeg at 15 per cent. Guelph's visible minority population is 12.7 per cent, while Hamilton is at 12.3 per cent. Windsor is slightly higher at 16 per cent.



Bala Thambypillai, controller for the Delta Hotel in Kitchener, with responsibilities in Mississauga and Stratford, said the latest census data shows immigrants are choosing Canada as their new home. Sri Lankan-born Thambypillai came to Canada with his wife and two children from Saudi Arabia 10 years ago. "This is one of the best places to live," he said. Thambypillai's daughter recently graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University with a degree in busi-

ness economics and his son is a fourth-year engineering student at the University of Waterloo.

Thambypillai, director of public relations and finance for the Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region, said locally the Sri Lankan population is slowly growing. Thambypillai said Sri Lankans are coming to the area and working at Sun Life, Toyota and RIM. "It's smaller, less pollution and the cost of living and housing prices is better than Toronto," he said. "People prefer to raise their kids here."

Linda Terry, executive director of the Cambridge and North

Dumfries Social Planning Council, said supports must be in place to assist new immigrants coming from South Asia rather than traditional European countries such as Portugal.

"How are we going to make their lives easier?" she said. "How do our services best meet the needs of these people?"

Terry said she's concerned the community may not be able to meet the need because of recent cutbacks in English as a second language at the public school board and immigrant work programs.

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# Waterloo News



## Immigrants unable to farm in Canada



Study conclusion: Immigrant farmers need help getting back to working the land.

Researchers: Prof. Stewart Hilts, director of the University of Guelph's Centre for Land and Water Stewardship, and research assistant Peter Mitchell.

Study focus: The research project is aimed at removing barriers for immigrant farmers.

As a result, okra, green chilies, sweet potatoes and other ethnic foods may soon be growing in rural Ontario.

Hilts and Mitchell have talked to six immigrant groups in the greater Toronto area to find out what's preventing them from continuing with the farming life they once had in their home country.

"It surprises me the number of immigrants who were farmers back home or have a PhD in agriculture and are driving taxis in Toronto," Hilts said.

"They would like to continue farming here, even if it's part time, but they can't afford to buy land.

"As a result, Canada's multi-ethnicity is not reflected in what's being grown in the province."

The project is also targeted at removing barriers for younger people interested in farming.

"We're starting to see young urban people wanting to learn to farm and grow organic vegetables, but they don't have access to training or farmland," Hilts said.

"With the number of farms

and farmers declining along with the amount of farmland, it's important to create opportunities for a new generation of ethnically diverse farmers and young farmers, including children of current farmers."

Results: As a result of the research, Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation awarded \$400,000 to help establish training farms in Ontario's greenbelt.

The farms will allow immigrant farmers to try their hand at growing food indigenous to their home country in the Canadian climate, as well as give young farmers the chance to learn the profession.

Researchers are also trying to find solutions to other barriers facing immigrant farmers, including insufficient lease term agreements for rented land and difficulty in getting loans.

They're investigating what crops immigrant groups would like to see grown in Ontario that are now being imported.

An Environics public opinion poll found that one-third of Ontarians have increased their consumption of ethnic or multicultural foods over the past five years.

Researchers are working to develop programs that will link immigrant farmers and young farmers with members of the existing agricultural community.

Source: University of Guelph news service.

## Children of immigrants face challenges beyond first generation, study finds

### THE CANADIAN PRESS

OTTAWA - A new study suggests second-generation Canadians, particularly visible minority males, face many of the same challenges their immigrant parents did.

The Statistics Canada study compares the earnings of young men and women born in Canada to immigrant parents with those of their peers with Canadian-born parents.

Taking education levels into account, the study found that young women with two immigrant parents had significantly higher earnings than young women with Canadian-born parents.

But young men had no such advantage—in fact, some visible minority men with two immigrant parents appeared to have a significant disadvantage in earnings compared to their peers with Canadian-born parents.

The study looks at 17- to 29-year-olds during two six-year periods between 1996 and 2004.

It says roughly half of women's advantage in hourly earnings was due to geographic distribution.

Three-quarters of young Canadians with two immigrant parents were concentrated in Ontario and British Columbia, and more than



three-quarters lived in large urban centres.

In contrast, half of their counterparts with Canadian-born parents lived in less economically prosperous regions such as Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. And about 60 per cent lived in smaller cities, small towns and rural areas.

The agency says a large part of the annual earnings advantage among young women with immigrant parents was also because they were less likely to have been married or had children.

The study says visible minority

status had no bearing on women's earnings, but it had a large impact on those of men.

Visible minority men born to immigrants in Canada earned significantly less than young men with Canadian-born parents.

But the earnings of second-generation men who were not visible minorities were no different from those of men with Canadian-born parents. In fact, the study found some evidence suggesting that the earnings of those with one immigrant parent might be higher.

## AFTER THE TSUNAMI: CITIES HELPING CITIES

Sri Lanka was one of the hardest-hit nations when a tsunami struck Boxing Day 2004, losing 20,000 people, and thousands of homes. The disaster sparked an unprecedented outpouring of sympathy and aid. Since then, about 80 per cent of the homes lost have been replaced.

But the work of municipal volunteers, recruited from cities across Canada, goes beyond basic aid. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), in partnership with Sri Lankan communities, is boosting local services.

"Collecting garbage and taxes may not seem very glamorous, but they're essential to help create ongoing stability," says

Kitchener Councillor Berry Vrbancic, a Vice-President at large with FCM.

"Garbage is a huge problem in the developing world," says Todd Pepper, General Manager of the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority. "Uncollected trash attracts mosquitoes which carry malaria," says Pepper. We show you his made-in-Sri Lanka solution which has not only slashed one community's garbage output in half, but also rehabilitated sea-damaged land.

Joyce Evans is the top tax collector in Kitchener. "If we didn't collect taxes, there would be absolutely no services available to anybody within the municipal



areas," says Evans. We follow her to Batticaloa, on the east coast, as she helps modernize that city's tax office.

There's also a trip to a local library which lost more than 5,000 books when sea water poured in. With financial help from FCM, and expertise advice from Kitchener librarians, we reveal the transformation.

## Affordable Home Ownership Program - Waterloo Region

The Affordable Home Ownership component of the Canada-Ontario

Affordable Housing Program is being delivered by the Region of Waterloo on behalf of the Federal and Provincial governments.

The program provides qualified low to moderate-income households with Down payment assistance loans of 5 per cent of the purchase price of a home, for a maximum of \$10,400. Starting in March 2008, a series of lotteries will be held to select an estimated 208 applicant households to receive this assistance toward the purchase of a new or resale home in Waterloo Region that has

a maximum purchase price of \$208,000.

The down payment assistance loan is forgivable after 20 years, provided there has been no default under the terms of the loan. If the home is sold before 20 years, or the loan is in default, the principal amount of the loan plus 5 per cent of the capital gain realized through the sale is payable to the Region of Waterloo's Revolving Loan Fund.

Are you eligible to apply?

To be eligible to apply, you must:

\* Qualify for a mortgage,

\* Have a maximum household income of \$61,400,

\* Be at least 18 years old and currently renting,

\* Not own or have an interest in a home,

\* Not owe money to a community housing landlord,

\* Be a legal resident of Canada, and

\* Intend to have this home as your one and only residence.

you can call 519-575-4046 to request for an application package.

Completed applications can be dropped off, mailed or faxed to:

Region of Waterloo, Housing Division

Attention: Affordable Home Ownership Program



150 Frederick St., 8th Floor, Kitchener, ON N2G 4J3

Fax: 519-575-4449

Incomplete applications will not be included in the lottery!

Therefore, if you have questions, please contact by phone at 519-575-4821 or e-mail: aho@region.waterloo.on.ca

### Lottery Draw Dates

Thursday, June 12, Monday, September 15, Monday, December 15

### Application Deadlines

Monday, June 2, Friday, September 5, Friday, December 5

Applications must be submitted a minimum of 10 days prior to the draw dates in order to be included. Only one application is required to be included in all draws that take place after your application is submitted.

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**WEALTH ADVISOR**  
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## 2007 Year-End Tax Tips

The end of another year is once again upon us. And while tax planning is a year-round activity as part of the financial planning process, now's the time to pay special attention to various tax issues before it's too late. To that end, this issue of Year-End Tax Tips briefly outlines some of the more common items that may need consideration and some changes for 2008.

Note: These points are by their nature general and brief, and not applicable to all situations. Your tax advisor can assist in determining if any of these points are relevant to specific situations.

## Securities Trading

- **Consider realizing losses**, particularly if there will be a net loss that can be carried back to reduce taxable capital gains in the prior three years. Losses not carried back can be carried forward indefinitely against future years' capital gains. Don't forget to watch out for the superficial loss rules if the individual or the individual's spouse or related corporation acquired the same security within 30 days of the sale (the rules will work to prevent the immediate claiming of the loss). To maximize the loss, consider deferring sales of securities with gains until January (this could also be used to defer tax where there are no accumulated losses).
- It is important to note that dispositions of securities by individuals that are repurchased by their RRSP will be subject to the superficial loss rules.
- Final trade date for security transactions for Toronto trades is December 24, 2007. Final trade date for securities transactions through New York is December 26, 2007. Key: Settlement must take place not later than December 31st.
- Consider delaying the purchase of annual pay/accrual fixed income securities (e.g. 1 year T-Bill or annual pay GIC) until 2008, thereby deferring the taxation of the income by a year.
- Election to defer the income inclusion of stock option benefits must be filed with the individual's employer by January 16, 2008 (Form T1212).

## Registered Plans

- Deadline for 2007 RRSP contributions is February 29th, 2008.
- **Reminder:** The annual contribution limit for 2007 is the lesser of 18% of 2006 earned income up to a maximum of \$19,000 (increased from \$18,000 in 2006), less the Pension Adjustment for 2007. The 2006 Notice of Assessment will indicate the allowable amount along with any unused amounts from prior years.
- If the annuitant turns 71 in 2007, RRSPs must be terminated and, to avoid being fully taxable in 2007, converted to a RRIF and/or annuity by December 31. Note: Contributions to the plan must be made by December 31, not 60 days after year end as the plan won't exist after December 31! Where the individual still has contribution room, contributions can continue to be made to a spousal plan if the individual's spouse is not over 71.
- The RRSP limit for 2008 will be \$20,000.
- The overcontribution limit is \$2,000. If this is exceeded the penalty is 1% per month.
- The 2007 federal budget increased the maturity age from 69 to 71. So if you are between the ages of 69 and 71 and have unused contribution room from previous years, consider converting your RRIF back to a RRSP (or open a new RRSP) and make a contribution to your plan to create a tax savings.
- Contribute to RESPs no later than December 31 to maximize the income deferral and benefit from the Canada Education Savings Grant (20% of contribution to maximum of \$500 per year if beneficiary is under 18). Note: The maximum lifetime contribution limit is \$50,000 per beneficiary.

## Personal Payments

- Final tax instalment payment for 2007 is December 15.
- Remember: In addition to non-deductible interest on late or deficient instalments (currently 9%), if your instalment interest charges are more than \$1,000 the penalty is calculated by first determining which is higher, \$1,000 or one-quarter of the instalment interest. Then the higher amount is subtracted from the instalment interest and the difference is divided by two.
- Charitable donation payments must be made before the end of the year. The maximum annual claim is 75% of net income. Unused amounts can be carried forward up to five years. Where publicly listed shares are donated, the gain is no longer taxable.
- Eligible medical expenses can be claimed for any 12 month period ending in the calendar year. Only amounts in excess of the lesser of 3% and \$1,896 are eligible.
- Beginning this year, parents of children under the age of 16 are entitled to a non-refundable tax credit of up to \$500 for each child registered in an eligible program of physical activity.
- Other payments that must be made by December 31 to be considered in the 2007 tax return include
  - investment management & custody fees
  - loan interest
  - safety deposit box
  - alimony/maintenance payments
  - political contributions
  - tax shelter payments
  - tuition fees
  - child care
  - professional fees
- Interest on family loans (generally at the prescribed rate) must be paid by January 30, 2008 to avoid income attribution. Consider new arrangements while the prescribed rate is low – currently 5%.
- Review family trusts for any action that's required by December 31.

## Stock Option Deferral

- Stocks acquired (through stock option plans) but not sold during 2007 can have the benefit deferred on amounts up to \$100,000 in total fair market value (based on the fair market value at the time the options were granted)
- Your employer must be notified of your wish to defer before January 16, 2008.

## Transit Pass Tax Credit

- A non-refundable tax credit is issued for the cost of public transit passes (yearly, monthly, weekly and cost-per-trip electronic cards) provided that certain conditions are met.
- The amount claimed is multiplied by the lowest personal income tax rate for the year (currently 15.5%) and then deducted from the amount of taxes otherwise payable.

## Shareholder Loans

- Shareholder loans not repaid before the year-end may result in the full amount of the loan being fully taxable on your 2007 tax return. If the loan was made to help with the purchase of a home, automobile for work, or corporate shares an exemption would apply.

Continue reading this article at [www.kulasellathurai.com](http://www.kulasellathurai.com)

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# Monsoon Photo Journal



## Holi, Celebrating everlasting love, life and joy in colours

Holi-the Festival of Colours, is one of the major festivals in India. It signifies the end of winter and welcoming the spring. People smear each other with coloured powder and splash with water. The colours are traditionally made of Neem, Kumkum, Haldi and Bilva and various other medicinal herbs. It is believed that, smearing with coloured powder has medicinal significance. People also believe that the bright colours represent energy, life and joy. It is originally known as "Holika", an ancient festival of India. This is a festival that is as much a gateway to celebrate the arrival of spring as much as it is a way to celebrate the season of love.

There are many legends given as reason for celebrating Holi.

by Dushiyanthini Kanagasabapathipillai

One among many stories is a story of everlasting love between Lord Krishna and Radha. Krishna, being the mischievous child of Yasotha, was a prankster and was also the creator of many legends for himself. He once asked his mother-why is Radha fair and he is dark in complexion. Mother Yasotha replied to him saying-If you are so much jealous of Radha's colour then go and put dark colours on her and she will also turn dark like you. Lord Krishna went ahead and smeared colours on Radha. Since then each lover usually puts colour on his or her beloved to pay homage to Lord Krishna.

In the state of Tamil Nadu, people worship Lord Kamathevan

for his supreme sacrifice on the occasion of Holi. People know Holi by three different names-Kaman Pandigai, Kamavilas, and Kama Dahanam. People of Tamil Nadu have great faith in Lord Shiva and Lord Kaamathevan. The story is that, Lord Shiva went into deep meditation after the death of his consort-Sati. Due to Lord Shiva's indifferent attitude, Gods became tensed and worried. And the daughter of the mountains-Goddess Parvathi started to meditate to get Lord Shiva as her husband.

The Gods sought help of Lord Kaamathevan in order to get Lord Shiva back to his original state. Kaamathevan is a God of Love.

He was well aware of the repercussions of such act, but Lord Kaamathevan agreed to help. Lord Kaamathevan shot his powerful arrow on Lord Shiva, while he was meditating. Enraged Lord Shiva opened his third eye and burnt Lord Kaamathevan into ashes. However the arrow had the desired effect and Lord Shiva agreed to marry Parvathi.

But Lord Kaamathevan's wife-Rathi felt very sad, and she told her sad story to Lord Shiva and requested him to revive her husband-Lord Kaamathevan.

Lord Shiva listened to her story and agreed to her request.

In Tamil Nadu songs are sung on Holi day depicting Rathi's extreme sorrow. People offer sandalwood to Lord Kaamathevan to

ease the pain of burning. People also believe that, Lord Kaamathevan was revived on the day of Holi, and celebrate the festival in his name. It's the celebrated season of love.

This is a colourful festival celebrated with much joy and fervour all over North India. White colour dresses are preferred to be worn on Holi day. Folk songs and dance are also important feature of the festival.

Holi festival will be celebrated on the 22nd of March this year.

A Holi celebration was held at the South Lawns of Taj Samudra Hotel in Colombo on March 4th 2007.

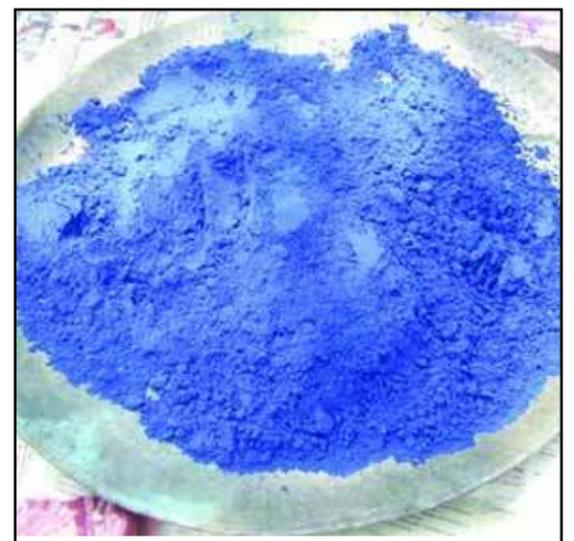
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Performing Bhangra dancer from Punjab



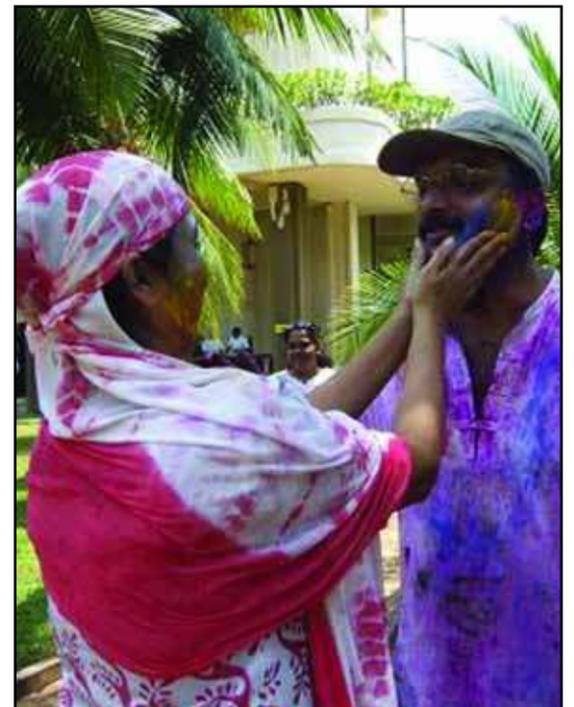
The spirit of Holi is colour



People used to prepare holi colours at home earlier by using flowers blossomed on Tesu tree



High Commissioner of India in Sri Lanka Shri Alok Prasad and Deputy High Commissioner of India in Sri Lanka Shri A. Manickam are seen enjoying the festival



The festival is full of feelings and movements



Trees wrapped with cotton sarees



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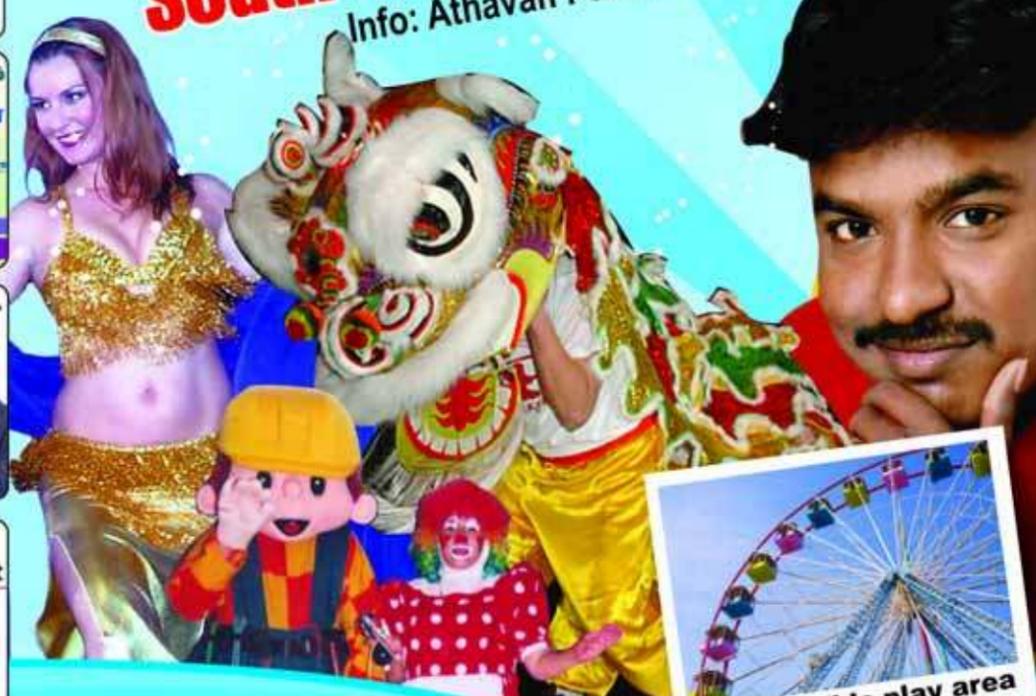
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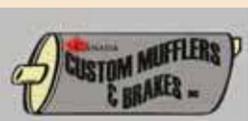
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# Monsoon Food Court



## Italian Cuisine

Italian cuisine as a national cuisine known today has evolved through centuries of social and political change. Its roots can be traced back to the 4th century BC. The cuisine changed significantly with discovery of the New World which helped shape much of what is known as Italian cuisine today with introduction of items such as potatoes, tomatoes, bell pepper and maize, which are all central parts of the cuisine but were not introduced in scale until the 18th century.

Ingredients and dishes vary by region. There are many significant regional dishes that have become both national and regional. Many dishes that were once

regional, however, have proliferated in different variations across the country in the present day. Cheese and wine are also a major part of the cuisine, playing different roles both regionally and nationally with their many variations and regulated appellation laws. Coffee, and more specifically espresso, has become highly important to the cultural cuisine of Italy.

Italian cuisine has evolved extensively over the centuries. Although the country known as Italy today had not officially formed until the 19th century, the cuisine can claim roots going back as far as 4th century BC. Through various influences throughout the

centuries, including neighboring regions, conquerors, high-profile chefs, political upheavals as well as the discovery of the New World, a concrete cuisine has formed to what is known today as one of the premiere cuisines in the world.

Each area has its own proud specialties, primarily at regional level, but also even at provincial level. These regional variances can come from the influence of a bordering country (such as France or Austria), vicinity to the sea or mountains as well as economic progress. Italian cuisine is not only highly regional, but is also distinguished by being very seasonal with high priority placed on the use of fresh, seasonal produce.

Meals are structured in a cyclical order in Italy and invariably contain no fewer than 3-4 courses. Meals are seen as a time to spend with family and friends instead of immediate sustenance, as such the regular daily meals can be a bit longer than other cultures. During holidays, many family feasts will last for many hours, if not the entire day.

In many homes today the traditional Italian menu is kept for high days and special events (as weddings) while the everyday menu only includes the first and second course, the side dish and coffee. One notable aspect of an Italian meal is that the primo or



first course is usually the more filling dish and will consist of either risotto or pasta, both being rich in carbohydrates. Modern Italian cuisine also includes single courses (all-in-one courses), providing carbohydrates and proteins at the same time (e.g. pasta and legumes).

### Aperitivo

apéritif usually enjoyed as an appetizer before a large meal. Popular drinks include Campari, Cinzano, Byrrh, Suze, and Vermouth.

### Antipasti

Literally "before (the) courses", hot or cold appetizers

### Primo

"First course", usually consists of a hot dish like pasta, risotto, gnocchi, polenta or soup.

### Second

"Second course", the main dish, usually fish or meat. Traditionally veal, pork and chick-

en are the most commonly used meat, at least in the North, though beef has become more popular since World War II and wild game is very popular, particularly in Tuscany. Fish are those which are caught locally.

### Contorno

"Side dish", may consist of a salad or cooked vegetables. A traditional menu features salad along with the main course.

### Formaggio e frutta

"Cheese and fruits", the first dessert, usually served together

### Dolce

"Dessert", such as cakes and cookies

### Caffè

Coffee/espresso

### Digestivo

"Digestives", liquors/liqueurs (grappa, amaro, limoncello) sometimes referred to as ammaz-zacaffè ("coffee killer")



## Fettuccine with chicken and cream sauce

### Ingredients

- 14 ounces skinless boneless chicken breast
- 2 tablespoon butter
- 2 large green bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 2 small red onion, thinly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 2 1/2 cups whipping cream
- 2 cup chicken stock
- 4 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh basil
- 1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 10 ounces fettuccine
- Additional grated Parmesan cheese

### Preparation

Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. Melt butter in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook until brown on both sides, about 5 minutes. Transfer chicken to plate. Add green and red bell peppers and onion to same skillet and sauté until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Add minced garlic and crushed red pepper to skillet and sauté 4 minutes. Add whipping cream and chicken stock. Simmer until sauce thickens



slightly, about 10 minutes.

Cut chicken into strips and add to sauce. Simmer until chicken is cooked through, about 4 minutes. Add basil and 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese to sauce, stirring to incorporate. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, cook pasta in large pot of boiling salted water until tender but still firm to bite. Drain and return to pot. Add sauce and toss to coat. Serve, passing additional Parmesan separately. Served with garlic bread.

## Vegetable Lasagna

### Ingredients

- 10 oz Ricotta cheese
- 1/2 cup chopped pitted black olives
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh thyme
- 1/2 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 4 tsp minced garlic
- 6 cups prepared pasta sauce
- 2 lb whole-wheat lasagna
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 3 small zucchini, diced
- 3 small squash, diced
- 1 cup bottled roasted red pepper, diced
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan

### Preparation

Heat oven to 375°F. Mix ricotta cheese, olives, thyme, basil, oregano, and garlic in a bowl; season with salt and pepper. Spread 2 cup pasta sauce on the bottom of an 8" x 11" baking dish. Add one layer of lasagna and season with black pepper. Add a layer of zucchini, squash, and red pepper. Dollop spoonfuls of ricotta cheese mixture over vegetables and spread to cover. Repeat layers, finishing with pasta and sauce. Sprinkle Parmesan on top, cover with foil and



bake 40 minutes. Uncover and bake 5 minutes or until top browns. Let stand 10 minutes; serve with garlic bread.

by Chef Nate  
chef@monsoonjournal.com

# Revered statue of the Virgin Mary relocated in Sri Lanka Senior Sri Lanka cabinet minister killed in bomb blast

A statue of the Virgin Mary has been relocated from Sri Lanka's most revered Catholic shrine for the first time in centuries because of intense fighting.

The most sacred statue of "Our Lady of Madhu" was shifted from its home shrine on Apr 3 by a small group of Roman Catholic clergy and civilians, due to the vulnerable situation in the area on account of heavy fighting between the Sri Lankan military and the LTTE.

As security situation deteriorated in Madhu, church authorities in Mannar had decided to move the sacred statue to Thevanpiddi Church in Mulangavil, a Roman Catholic area, close to Kilinochchi District.

Mannar Bishop, Rayappu Joseph, told media last that the church authorities had decided to move the statue from the church immediately, due to the unstable security situation in the area following heavy fighting.

"We are going to take it to a safer location, we cannot allow it to remain there as it is our treasure," he said. The bishop said people who were sheltering at the shrine had also fled.

Referring to the statue he said "our lady had to go with them".

The bishop said some priests



and nuns had decided to remain with the statue in Madhu church for the time being, but added that no one could afford to remain long because of deteriorating security situation.

According to the bishop, the civilians in the area had already fled through fear of heavy fighting. He said people had begun to flee the area after a bus bomb killed almost 20 civilians, including

school children, on January 29 this year.

He said the heavy rains and flooding in the area were an additional problem.

The shrine at Madhu is a well-known pilgrimage site for Catholics. But now the statue of the Virgin Mary which they travel to venerate has been taken away to a new location for the first time in more than 400 years.

Sri Lanka's Minister of Highways & Road Development, Jeyaraj Fernandopulle, was killed in a bomb blast at the public playground in Weliveraya, located in the Gampaha district of Western Province, around 8:00 a.m. Sunday April 6th.

13 persons were killed and 60 wounded in the attack that took place while the minister was waving a flag to start off a marathon race in connection with the Tamil and Sinhala New Year celebrations. 16 of the wounded have sustained serious injuries, Police said.

The 55-year-old minister, who is also the chief government whip of the Sri Lankan parliament, has been elected to Sri Lankan parliament for five consecutive terms.



He was fluent in Sinhala, English and Tamil languages and functioned as a propaganda spokesman for the current Sri Lanka government.

An Attorney-at-Law, Fernandopulle began his political career in 1970.

He is survived by wife Dr. Sudarshani of Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo and two children.

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# Monsoon Features

By S. Sri Krishnan

Uttarkhand is often called "the Land of Gods" or "Abode of Gods" because of the presence of a multitude of Hindu pilgrimage spots. Most notably the four abodes;

**The Gangotri.**

**The Yamunotri.**

**The Kedarnath and**

**The Badrinath.**

Uttarakhand was known as Uttaranchal (from 2000 to 2006) until recently a part of Uttar Pradesh. It became the 27th state of the Republic of India on November 9, 2000. It is a region of outstanding natural beauty. Most of the northern parts of the state are part of Greater Himalaya ranges, covered by the high Himalayan peaks and glaciers, while the lower foothills were densely forested till denuded by the British log merchants and later, after independence, by forest contractors. Recent efforts in reforestation, however, have been successful in restoring the situation to some extent. The unique Himalayan ecosystem plays host to a large number of animals including bharal (Himalayan blue sheep), snow leopards, leopards and tigers, plants and rare herbs. Two of India's mightiest rivers, the Ganga and the Yamuna take birth in the glaciers of Uttarakhand, and are fed by myriad lakes, glacial melts and streams in the region.

**Gangotri altitude approximately 3050 metres.**

Gangotri the origin of river Ganga is located near the Indo-Tibetan Border. It attracts thousands of Pilgrims and tourists every season. For devotees and tourists the gates of the temple are opened between the months of May and October. It is closed during the rest of the year as it is covered by snow. The physical source of the holy river is at



Gaumukh, 18 kms further uphill, along the Gangotri Glacier. Several pilgrims trek upto the source to offer prayers either on foot or on ponies.

According to mythology, Goddess Ganga - the daughter of heaven, manifested herself in the form of a river to absolve the sins of King Rishi Bhagirath's predecessors. She came to be called Bhagirathi at

## Uttarkhand "The abode of Gods"



her legendary source. A shrine for King Bhagirath is located very close to the river Ganga or Bhagirathi.

Along the right bank of Bhagirathi stands the shrine of Gangotri dedicated to the Goddess. Perched at a height of 3050 mts. It was constructed in the early 18th century by a Gorkha Commander, Amar Singh Thapa. The Goddess is moved to Mukhba, her winter abode (12 kms downstream) during the off season.

**Yamunotri-altitude approximately 3235 meters.**

The present temple was built by Maharani Gularia of Jaipur in the 19th century. In 1923, the temple was destroyed by an earthquake, but subsequently rebuilt. It is a place of paramount religious importance to



Hindus. Here a holy dip in the tank filled by hot springs, and cooking rice in its water are part of the rituals. Situated at an elevation of 3235 metres above sea-level, the shrine of Yamunotri is one of the 'four dhams' of Uttarakhand. The source of



Yamuna lies about 1 km. ahead at the altitude of about 4421 metres. The approach is extremely difficult and pilgrims therefore offer pooja at the temple itself. The temple can be reached by bus or private car up to the Village of Hanumanchatti, which is still 13Kms from the temple. From there a 5Km ride in jeeps is necessary to reach another village called Janki Chatti. The last 8Km can only be covered by ponies or walking along a very difficult climb up mountain slopes.

There are hot springs close to the temple, a bath in them is very refreshing after the tedious 13 kms trek.

**Kedarnath-altitude 3580meters**



The shrine of Kedarnath is very scenically placed, and is surrounded by lofty, snow-covered mountains, and grassy meadows covering the valleys. Immediately behind the temple, is the high Keadardome peak, which can be sighted from great distances. The sight of the temple and the peak with its perpetual snows is simply magnificent. Kedarnath is amongst the holiest pilgrimages for the devout Hindu. It is set amidst the stunning



mountainscape of the Garhwal Himalayas at the head of the Mandakini River. Kedar is another name of lord Shiva, the protector & the destroyer. Shiva is considered the embodiment of all passions - love, hatred, fear, death & mysticism which are expressed through his various

forms.

Lord Shiva manifested in the form of Jyotirlingam or the cosmic light. Kedarnath is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas. This ancient and magnificent temple is located in the Rudra Himalaya range. This temple, over a thousand years old is built of massive



stone slabs over a large rectangular platform. Ascending through the large gray steps leading to the holy sanctums. Inscriptions in Pali are found on the steps. The present temple was built by Adi Shankaracharya. The inner walls of the temple sanctum are adorned with figures of various deities and scenes from mythology. Outside the temple door a large statue of the Nandi Bull stands as guard. A conical rock formation inside the temple is worshipped as Lord Shiva. The temple, believed to be very ancient, has been continually renovated over the centuries. It is situated at an altitude of 3,581 mt. Buses and private vehicles can only reach the village of Gaurikund which is still 14km from the temple. The last 14 km up the mountain slope have to be trekked by Ponies or walking along the unpaved and rugged path.

At the approach of winter in the month of November, the holy statue of Lord Shiva, is carried down from the temple to the village of Ukhimath, and is reinstated at Kedarnath, in the first week of May. It is at this time, that the doors of the temple are thrown open to pilgrims, who flock from all parts of India, for a holy pilgrimage. During its closure the shrine is submerged in snow and worship is performed at Ukhimath.

**Badrinath altitude 3130Km**  
**ABODE OF LORD VISHNU**

Cradled in the twin mountain ranges of Nar and Narayan is the holi-



est of the four main shrines, Badrinath along the left bank of river Alaknanda. With the splendid Neelkanth mountains (6597m) as the backdrop, it is an important destination on the sacred itinerary of every devout Hindu. Once the spot was carpeted with 'badris' or wild berries.

The revered shrine is still alive with myriad legends from mythology. Its sanctity is emphasised in the ancient scriptures as "There are many sacred spots of pilgrimage in the heavens, earth and the nether world, but there has been none equal to Badri, nor shall there be".



Situated 297 kms from the holy town of Rishikesh and about 600 kms from Delhi Unlike Yamunotri and Kedarnath, Badrinath is accessible by buses and private vehicles. Considered to be amongst the most pious of the eternal Hindu shrines of Kedarnath, Badrinath, Gangotri and Yamunotri..

The present temple is believed to have been built by Adi Guru Shankaracharya - an 8th century's philosopher-saint.

The Temple has been renovated several times due to damage by avalanches. The present structure is 15 mtrs high and has a gilded cupola. The chief priest of the temple is a Namboodripad Brahmin from Kerala. The temple is divided into three parts - the sanctum sanctorium, the darshan mandapam where the rituals are conducted and the sabha mandapam where devotees assemble.

At Badrinath one can witness one of the greatest wonders of Nature in the Hot water springs of Taptakund on the banks of river Alaknanda. The temperature of the water in this Kund is 55 degree centigrade whereas the normal temperature in this region for most part of the year at 9-10 degree centigrade to sub-zero levels. Before visiting the temple the pilgrims take a holy bath in the Taptakund.

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# Monsoon Features

## S.J.V.Chelvanayagam - A great man with a greater Vision

By: Raymond Rajabalan

**This article is being published to commemorate the birth anniversary of late S.J.V. Chelvanayagam, the founder and the leader of the Federal Party in the early fifties.**

"He died like Moses himself without reaching the Promised Land but the vision he saw, he leaves behind as the heritage and challenge to his people." - Rt. Rev D.J. Ambalavanar said at the funeral of Thanthai Chelva, April 1977.

**This single sentence alone speaks volumes to the greatness of a man who was loved by everyone from all three communities in Sri Lanka, even by those who did not agree with his political views.**

"Throughout the ages the Sinhalese and Tamils in the country lived as distinct sovereign people till they were brought under foreign domination. It should be remembered that the Tamils were in the vanguard of the struggle for independence in the full confidence that they also will regain their freedom. We have for the last 25 years made every effort to secure our political rights on the basis of equality with the Sinhalese in a united Ceylon"

"It is a regrettable fact that successive Sinhalese governments have used the power that flows from independence to deny us our fundamental rights and reduce us to the position of a subject people. These governments have been able to do so only by using against the Tamils the sovereignty common to the Sinhalese and the Tamils."

**"I wish to announce to my people and to the country that I consider the verdict at this election as a mandate that the Tamil Eelam nation should exercise the sovereignty already vested in the Tamil people and become free"** was the statement by S.J.Chelvanayagam after winning the by-election for the Kankasanturai Parliamentary seat, held belatedly on 7 February 1975, two years after he had resigned the seat to seek a mandate for Tamil Eelam.

A man who fought for the rights of the oppressed minorities by non-violent means frustrated by failure of various negotiations and pacts done with successive Sinhala leaders was forced to change his stand towards the end of his political career, advocating for an Independent Tamil homeland.

"What was Mr. Chelvanayagam's achievement?"

To quote - Late Rt. Rev.S. Kulendran, Bishop of Jaffna, Church of South India:

About 450 years before the Christian era the Carthaginian armies invaded Italy and defeated

the Romans in every battle but Cincinnatus, the Roman Dictator would not give up. And the Roman Senate passed a resolution thanking him, because 'he had not despaired of the republic'. The logic was 'if he did not despair, why should we?'

The Tamils of Ceylon, in like manner, looked upon this gaunt and haggard man, stricken by disease, who could hardly walk and could hardly speak above a whisper, who through a life of continued failure and disappointment, yet had not despaired; and they asked themselves, the question, 'if he did not despair, why should we?'

This was Chelvanayagam's achievement:

**He taught the Tamils of this country to believe in themselves."**

S. J. V. Chelvanayagam known as Thanthai Chelva was the founder president of the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK), co-president of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), above all the undisputed beloved leader of the Tamils threw away his mortal framework and has gone to the land of no return. He passed away three decades ago on April 26, 1977 nearly a month after the freedom loving Tamils celebrated his eightieth year of birth. Though he is no more, yet his lofty ideals remains permanently etched in the hearts of Tamils.

The wonder in Mr. Chelvanayagam was that though he was very old and in declining health he was not classified as a person who had outlived his usefulness. It was strange but true that even contradictory forces in the country valued his presence in Tamil politics as the main unifying factor.

In fact the death of Samuel James Velupillai Chelvanayagam, as his full name goes, removed from the political scene, a fatherly figure who was respected, loved, admired and venerated by all irrespective of their political ideologies. Many leaders were respected and admired but only few have been venerated. Mr. Chelvanayagam ranks foremost among them.

**Politics is a dirty game but it must be said to his eternal credit that he purified it to a very great extent.**

When many politicians formulated policies to suit the next election, Mr. Chelvanayagam thought and acted in a manner that would give an everlasting solution to the future generations. That's why he was not classified among the ordinary politicians.

He was an ascetic, a saint, and a statesman of colossal stature. In fact he was a leader who could not be bought over for the plums of office.

He spoke less and wrote less, but his thoughts were profound. Every word he uttered was meas-



Chelvanayagam, Amirthalingam & Mangayarkarasi

ured and was meaningful. His concern was more for the content of the words than for the beauty of words. A leader must lead and never be led. In keeping with this concept he led the Tamil masses and he was never led by them. But as a true leader, he was always conscious of the aspiration of the masses. He read their pulse in a perfect manner.

Mr. Chelvanayagam really entered politics in his late forties, in the year 1947. His hold on the Tamil masses and the respect he earned from non-Tamils and his political opponents continued undiminished. That speaks for the quality of the man.

The Sinhala political parties and the Sinhala masses, though, opposed to his political philosophy, felt his continued presence necessary to prevent Tamil "extremists" taking an upper hand.

The Tamil youths of today remember with deep gratitude his political vision and prophecy. We fear to think as to what would have happened to the Tamils if he had not entered the political scene in the late forties to guide them. It won't be considered an exaggeration to say that if he had not taken to politics not only the Tamil rights but even the Tamils as an entity would have ceased to exist.

Ceylon has witnessed the birth of innumerable politicians but it is not difficult to count on one's fingers the number of statesmen produced by this island. Mr. Chelvanayagam ranks foremost among the statesmen Ceylon has produced. After Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan and Sir Ponnampalam Arunachalam, a political vacuum was created, and it is to the eternal credit of Mr. Chelvanayagam that he filled this void in a most able manner for nearly thirty years.

Though Mr. Chelvanayagam may not have attained such eminence as Ramanathan & Arunachalam brothers, yet he stands unique for his political vision, sagacity and honest conviction. It was a Herculean task he had to perform to convince the Tamils of the dangers that were in store for them. The Tamils are now convinced as to

what political philosophy they should adopt if they are to survive in this country as a separate entity preserving their language, culture, civilization and their way of life.

As to how much our Sinhala brothers are convinced about our problems and as to how far they are prepared to concede our rights remain a debatable point. But it is beyond doubt that all Sinhalese are now convinced that there is a gigantic Tamil problem and that it should be solved if there is to be real peace, harmony and progress in the country. Mr. Chelvanayagam stood for a federal constitution for more than 25 years as the ideal solution for the multi-lingual and multi-national problems facing the country.

He pursued this policy with the sincere hope of changing the hearts of the Sinhalese leaders. After having agitated for this goal and after the repeated disappointments on talks and pacts he had with the successive Sinhala governments, he came to the irrevocable decision of having a sovereign Tamil state-Tamil Eelam State, as the only solution left for the Tamils if they have to live with self respect in this country.

This was not an easy decision. For Chelva it was a very painful decision knowing quite well the consequences that would flow from implementing same.

Mr. Chelvanayagam was by no stretch of imagination an orator. Oratorical skill was something unknown to him. But where brilliant orators and legal luminaries could not succeed, he succeeded immeasurably. When he spoke in an inaudible feeble voice measuring each word and pausing in between words, the audience tuned their ears to grasp the meaning of what he said because each word he uttered conveyed deep and profound thoughts. It was really a treat to listen to his speech and watch the reaction of the audience.

In his personal life he was simple. His residence at Tellipallai, Jaffna, and his rented house in Colombo revealed his simplicity. Anybody could meet him at any time and explain their problems. His

patient hearing and above all his natural smile had a magnetic and a soothing effect on all who came in contact with him.

In Sri Lanka many enter politics with little wealth but end up amassing a great fortune during their political careers. Mr. Chelvanayagam's case was just the reverse. As a leading civil lawyer he was very wealthy when he entered politics, but at the time of his death it can be said without contradiction that his wealth was at its lowest ebb. That speaks volumes for the enormous sacrifices he has made for the cause he championed.

Mr. Chelvanayagam who was a man of few words deep thought was an outstanding civil lawyer. Unlike some lawyers who for their love of words have lost their cases, Mr. Chelvanayagam was extremely careful in choosing his words. In fact every word was measured and uttered. If he was ever guilty of anything when choosing his words it was more the case of understatement than overstatement. It was often said that he used Biblical language. At the negotiating table he was at his best.

He was a hard bargainer who never yielded on fundamentals. The Banda-Chelva pact was a classic example of his grasp of the essential. Though Mr. Chelvanayagam was very often compared with Gandhi for his political honesty it would not be wrong to compare him with Jinnah for his grip and determination and or his unyielding attitude on fundamental issues. Typical of an able civil lawyer he knew how and where he should lay the stress.

Among the Tamil leaders only a very few have emphasized the preservation of the traditional homeland as an essential ingredient for the survival of the Tamil community. Mr. Chelvanayagam excelled in this thinking far above all leaders. "What the body is to a soul is the land to a linguistic group". It is necessary for its self-expression.

This undeniable truth had been repeatedly emphasized by Mr. Chelvanayagam and the Tamils are now much more conscious of this issue than any other issue that is facing them.

Mr. Chelvanayagam was a rare phenomenon in Ceylon politics, a type of which may not appear in the future. Whether anyone agreed with this political philosophy or not it is readily accepted that his impact is permanent in the political sphere of this country. Mr. Chelvanayagam was essentially a man of peace. He liked to find solutions to problems in a peaceful manner.

But certainly he did not desire the peace that prevails in the graveyard. He wanted peace with honour. He was a political prophet nay a messiah who had shown the Promised Land to the Tamils.

## Arajen's demo in Bridal Dressings

Arajen beauty centre's demo on bridal dressing and makeup was held on Sunday March 31st, at Canada Selvasannithi Temple in Scarborough.

Models posing with Arajen's founder Mrs Sasi Naren.

Group shot - all participants with guests.

Photos by - Gnane's Digital touch.



## The Scarborough Hospital Consultation Round Table on Governance Launched

A new web portal, known as The Scarborough Hospital Community Consultation Round Table, was officially launched today. The round table is a web site where visitors can find out information on the consultation process at The Scarborough Hospital, review governance resource documents and share ideas for the hospital's future.

"We've embarked on a fairly significant process at The Scarborough Hospital," explains Rob Devitt, Supervisor of The Scarborough Hospital. "We're going out and looking at board governance in the broadest possible sense - what works worldwide? What are the best practices?" Some of that research can be found on the web portal, and it is being added to on a regular basis.

"We're also looking closer to home, at what works in Scarborough," says Devitt. "We're consulting with the board members from agencies and organizations in Scarborough and

across the Central East LHIN to find out what works best in their organizations and this community."

Consultation meetings will also be held with key informants - active members of the community, including local politicians and members of community associations. Feedback is also being solicited from the public at large through the web portal.

"Board members will need the skills to govern a complex organization, but will also need to ensure that they are addressing the unique characteristics of this community," explains Devitt. "Finding that balance, and ensuring that the community has meaningful methods to provide feedback is critical. We need to find structures that will facilitate an open, honest and meaningful exchange of ideas, and ultimately help us provide the best possible hospital services to this community."

The web portal can be accessed through the hospital's

website ([www.tsh.to](http://www.tsh.to)) or directly at [www.tshconsult.org](http://www.tshconsult.org). The Scarborough Hospital is currently recruiting prospective board members; the role description can also be found on the hospital's website or the consultation portal.

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH), Canada's largest urban community hospital, delivers innovative, high quality patient care, advocates for our community's health and wellness issues, and is a leader in research, teaching and learning. TSH is a regional treatment centre for dialysis and is renowned for its sexual assault care centre and mental health programs. Affiliated with the University of Toronto, TSH is also a referral centre for vascular surgery, pacemakers and corneal implants.

For more information:  
Anne Marie Males  
Director, Public Affairs  
The Scarborough Hospital  
416-438-2911 ext.6790  
[amales@tsh.to](mailto:amales@tsh.to)

## Fundraising Program for Schizophrenia Society by Yogathon

The Schizophrenia Society of Ontario is happy to be presenting its third annual Yogathon on Saturday May 10th at Toronto's trendiest location -the distillery district- the site of British Commonwealth's oldest distillery south of front off Parliament Street. Did you know that Parliament gets its name as it is the site of Canada's first Parliament?

The Yogathon raises funds for

early intervention programmes available to youth at risk of mental illness. If you talk to anyone of number of Psychiatrists' serving our community they will confirm the severe trauma of the unfortunate youth who get this disease and the suffering of the families of these youth trying to cope with this situation.

All day Yoga event with some of Canada's top Yoga teachers is a unique concept-it's a union of

Hatha Yoga with Karma Yoga .Karma Yoga is Yoga of action and selfless service. This is the call to participants to raise money for this cause and come and enjoy a day of yoga. 100 % of all donations are tax deductible.

For more info please go to [www.yogathon.ca](http://www.yogathon.ca)  
< <http://www.yogathon.ca> >  
or call the event coordinator Yogi Tambiraja @416 850 5989.

## Human Rights Conference at Ryerson University

### A Common Language links different ethnic communities, says Media Consultant...

By Arjunan Arasaratnam

A common language like English will link different communities and create a sense of equality among them in a multi-racial society and the best example of this is the success story of Singapore, said Mr. Siva Sivapragasam, a Media Consultant with over 30 years Journalistic

years. He related the human rights violations, displacement of people from their traditional homes and disappearances which are continuing even today. Prof. Chandrakanthan remarked that the Tamils should not be referred to as a minority race but should be regarded as a community with a national identity and entitled to a



Picture shows the team of Panelists for the Conference-(Left to Right), Prof.J. Chandrakanthan, Prof. Amin Khan, Media Consultant Siva Sivapragasam and Community Activist Samy Appadurai

experience when he addressed a Conference on Human Rights at the Ryerson University recently. The conference was hosted by the Tamil Students Association of the Ryerson University. The other panelists for the conference were Prof. J. Chandrakanthan, Prof. T. Amin Khan and Mr. Samy Appadurai.

Mr. Sivapragasam traced the history of the ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka which led to the war and

land of their own.

Prof. Amin Khan touched on the question of Human Rights and how these violations come about. He also attempted to uncover the causes for the war in Sri Lanka. He referred to the importance of national identities and how different communities like to preserve their language, religion, and culture.

Mr.Samy Appadurai, who had authored books on the Sri Lankan



Section of audience

remarked that Human Rights violations are the direct result of the war. According to him, the introduction of Sinhala as the only official language in 1956 was the fundamental cause for the present crisis as it brought about an inequality between the two races in education, holding of Public offices and difficulties of day to day official correspondence for the Tamil speaking community.

Prof. Chandrakanthan referred to the experiences the Tamil population underwent in Jaffna due to the war over the last twenty-five

Tamil Diaspora traced some of the problems faced by the Tamil population and also referred to the abuses which had resulted in the violations of human rights.

A short documentary film of a visit of Sandra Jordan, a journalist to Sri Lanka was shown to the audience. Her visits to Jaffna, Eastern parts of Sri Lanka and the capital Colombo reveal the causes for the escalated war and spotlights Human Rights violations, Disappearances and the internal displacement of the people.

# Taslima Nasreen remains confined to a room at an undisclosed location

By Sanal Edamaruku  
President, Rationalist International

India has granted visa extension to exiled Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen for six more months. For now, the nightmare of an ill and desperate Taslima being forcefully expelled from her adoptive home of seven years to start another odyssey into an uncertain future is over. "All I want to do is live peacefully in this country. I have nowhere else to go," wrote Taslima in an open letter. When the showdown began and time was running out, Rationalist International started a campaign and appealed to the Prime Minister of India. Within three days, our appeal was supported by more than three thousand eight hundred letters from India, USA, Canada, Australia and all over Europe. Under public pressure by Taslima's many supporters, the Government of India allowed her to stay.

The success, however, is tarnished. While staying in India, Taslima Nasreen's life will - according to a statement from the Foreign Ministry - be restricted to the "status quo". And that is what horrifies her. The "status quo" describes a rather inhuman situation. It is nearly three months now that the Government of India keeps Taslima Nasreen in complete isolation at an undisclosed location near Delhi. Nobody, not even she herself, knows her whereabouts. Guarded by some officials, she has not even been allowed to meet close friends. Her only connections to the outer world are mobile phone and laptop.

I am in regular phone contact with Taslima. She feels her life has turned a never-ending nightmare. "I am like the living dead: benumbed; robbed of the pleasure of existence and experience; unable to move beyond the claustrophobic confines of my room", she writes in a letter. Under the pressure of her enforced

isolation, her health is deteriorating. Being a physician herself, she felt alarmed about her symptoms some weeks back and request to see a cardiologist. After several days, some anonymous and obviously unqualified physician gave her a medication that nearly killed her. She had to be rushed into the Intensive Care Unit of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi. After first signs of improvement, she was swiftly taken back to the isolation of her room in nowhere.

Her ordeal began on 21st November 2007. That day, the government of the Indian state of West Bengal forced her to leave within minutes her house in Calcutta, where she had been living and working since more than seven years peacefully and unchallenged. They claimed that they could not protect her against the wrath of some Muslim fundamentalist groups and forced her to leave the state by flight - hidden under a veil. She was not able to take anything with her but her mobile phone and her laptop.

Taslima Nasreen's forceful deportation from West Bengal was clearly a move to appease Muslim fanatics in the hope they could influence the Muslim "vote bank". Precisely, she was used as a lightning protector at the very time of mass protest against the state government's confiscation of Muslim owned farmland for an industrial mega project in Nandigram. Taslima Nasreen had been victim of the Left Front government's preemptive submission to fundamentalist demands earlier. Some years ago, they banned her book *Dwikhondito*, but the ban was finally lifted by the Calcutta High Court.

On the fateful 21st November, Taslima landed in Rajasthan. After one day, the Rajasthan state government shunted her off to Delhi, where she spent several uncertain



days in the Rajasthan House, before the Indian central government took charge of her. Then she was spirited away and never seen again. Even when the French President Sarkozy, ahead of his India visit in January, expressed the wish to personally present Taslima Nasreen with the coveted Prix Simone de Beauvoir on the day of the French author's 100th birth anniversary, Delhi turned the proposal down.

Taslima Nasreen is desperate to escape her isolation cell. She yearns for the day of her return to Calcutta. After fleeing from Bangladesh in 1994 to escape fatwa and death threats by Muslim fanatics, she lived in Sweden, Germany, USA and France, before she moved to Calcutta in 2000. She made West Bengal her adoptive home, as it shares language and culture with her native country. Only here, if not in Bangladesh, she feels at home and is able to write. "I am a Bengali within and without; I live, breathe, and dream in Bengali", Taslima writes about her life in West Bengal. If the West Bengal Government and the Indian Government in Delhi have their say, she may never be able to return to her life and work in Calcutta.

"I am only breathing. I don't think I am alive like you are. Can anybody live like this? It was beyond my imagination that in a secular democracy like India, such a thing could happen to a writer," writes Taslima.



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## Monsoon Kids Corner

### Color Me Competition -3

Dead Line for entries:  
Apr 25, 2008

Entries have to be made on original paper; photo copies not accepted.

The Winner will be selected and posted in the May issue.

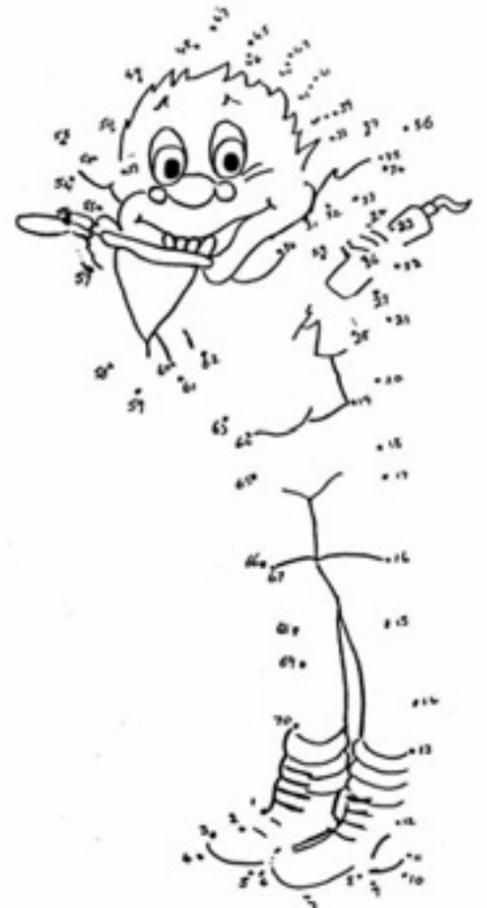
Please mail to:  
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Winner for March 2008  
Color Me competition-2  
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# Monsoon Events



The Waterloo Region Small Business Centre is hosting a one-day business training workshop for artists and cultural industry entrepreneurs at Kitchener City Hall on Saturday, April 19th called "Arts, Business, Creativity...The ABC's of Success".

Arts, Business, Creativity will include:

- workshops for arts-based businesses
- tradeshow exhibition (limited booths available)
- arts social—wine & cheese with live music
- continental breakfast and lunch
- ...and more!

**Jeremy Dueck**

Small Business Liaison Officer

Waterloo Region Small Business Centre

**Ph: 519-741-2221**

**Fax: 519-745-1522**

## TiEQ uest 2008

TiE Toronto's signature Business Venture Competition, attracted 90 ventures, a new record for the annual event. 4 teams will then vie for the top honours, which includes the Ontario Entrepreneurship Trophy, given by the Government of Ontario. The culmination of TiEQ uest 2008 will be the Gala Awards dinner, which will be held on April 12, 2008 at Toronto Board of Trade, 1 First Canadian Place. Toronto O.N. Bob Geras, President, LaSalle Investments, Chicago. Bob has been successfully investing in early stage companies for over 45 years. He was

named "Renaissance Man of Entrepreneurship" by Chicago Sun-Times.

Awards dinner is at a special price of \$75 for TiE Toronto Members and \$125 for non-members. This is a great opportunity to network with successful entrepreneurs, past winners, fund managers and other business leaders. TiEQ uest awards dinner is generally well attended, so please make your plans early. Registration and online payment can be made at [www.tietoronto.org](http://www.tietoronto.org).

TiEQ uest 2008 mentors, judges and sponsors attend the awards dinner as guests of TiEQ uest. If you are one of these, simply RSVP indicating your participation to [tiequest@tietoronto.org](mailto:tiequest@tietoronto.org) or Fax 416 964 8517 to reserve your seat.

**Info: Suresh Madan, CFA**

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### Third Annual TAMIL STUDIES CONFERENCE "BEING HUMAN; BEING TAMIL: PERSONHOOD, SUBJECTIVITY AND IDENTITY" TRINITY COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

On behalf of the Tamil Studies Conference at the University of Toronto, I am very honored and pleased to invite you to our Media Meet and Greet. It will be held on April 18th 2008 at Trinity College in the Combination Room. I hope you can join us that evening to talk to the coordinators and organizers to get more information about our conference over some wine and appetizers.

What: Media Meet and Greet

When: April 18th 2008

Time: 6PM

Where: Trinity College

6 Hoskin Avenue, Toronto, Ontario. Canada M5S 1H8

**Media Contact:**

Gowry Siva, Over Coordinator

Tamil Studies Conference

[gowry.sivpathasundaram@gmail.com](mailto:gowry.sivpathasundaram@gmail.com)

For more information about the conference, please visit our

website at [www.tamilstudiesconference.com](http://www.tamilstudiesconference.com)

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# Rev. Dr. George Uglow Pope M.A. D.D

By: Kumar Punithavel

It is one hundred years since he passed away on 8th February 1908. Rev George Uglow Pope was born on the 24th April 1820 in a hamlet in Prince Edwards Island, Nova-Scotia, Canada. His parents migrated to England when he was an infant. In 1839 at the age of nineteen, he went to South-India to do evangelical service. He spent up to half a century of his life in South-India. In preparation for his carrier he started to learn Tamil on his eighteenth birthday. This student in Tamil ended up a scholar in Tamil, Sanskrit and Telugu.

Being a strict disciplinarian Rev. Dr. G. U. Pope was always in trouble with others. Of him the comment made by then Bishop Caldwell was; 'The chief drawback to his success was the severity of his discipline which led, after a succession of petty rebellions, to his withdrawal'.

His service to Tamil language is monumental. He published great works such as Tholkapiam, Nannool and made classical Tamil easier for fruitful study of classics.

He always believed that one should learn literature of different languages. As he observed in the preface of his translation of Thiruvassagam; 'For no literature can stand alone'. This made him to translate many Tamil literatures into English. The long list of books he had contributed to the treasure of the English literature is given at the end of this essay.

His appreciation of the Tamil language amply shown in the preface he had written to Thirukkural; 'Tamil is a sophisticated unique language, with a rich vocabulary. It is the mother of all South Indian languages, Tamil literature was designed to create high moral standards, ethical codes and Thirukkural is a great example of that. It is in a land of people with very high ethical codes and who nurture human discipline that such moral books are created and could be created. Thirukkural is as clear as an unpoluted spring. Yes! Thirukkural, the unique book, has come to remove the impurities of this world. 'Within a short time of my learning Tamil, I commenced translating Thirukkural, for the benefit of Europeans. It took several years to complete the translation and I offer my gratitude to God for the final result'.

Though a strong believer in Christianity, his service to Tamil and Saivism defy reckoning by weights and measures. One could see the noble heart which was beyond religions bounds. This, one could see in reading the passage below extracted from his preface to the translations to the great "Thiruvassagam";

I date this on my eightieth birthday. I find by reference, that my first Tamil lesson was in 1837. This ends, as I suppose, a long life of devotion to Tamil studies. It was not without deep emotion that I thus bring to close my life's literary work.

Some years ago, when this publication was hardly projected, one evening, after prayers, the writer was walking with the late Master of Balliol College in the quadrangle. The conversation turned upon Tamil legends, poetry and philosophy. At length during a pause in the conversation, the Master said in a quick way peculiar to him, 'You must print it'. To this the natural answer was, 'Master! I have no patent of immortality, and the work would be very long'. I can see him now, as he turned round, while the moonlight fell upon his white hair and kindly face, - and laid his hand upon my shoulder, saying, 'To have a great work in progress is the way to live long. You will live till you finish it'. I certainly did not think so then, though the words have often come to my mind as a prophecy, encouraging me when weary; and they have been fulfilled, while he has passed out of sight.

Rev. G.U. Pope returned to England after forty-two years of distinguished service in South-India in 1882. On his return he accepted the professorship at Oxford University, to teach Tamil and Telugu. He received the coveted Gold Medal given once in three years for meritorious service and to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1906.

His magnum opus, the translation of Thiruvassagam appeared in 1900. On the preface to this book he mentions 'with this my long life of Tamil studies has come to an end'.

Rev. G. U. Pope delivered his last sermon on May 26, 1907. In forwarding a copy of his last Sermon preached in Balliol College Chapel on May 26, 1907, Dr Pope

writes on the Christmas eve in his autograph which will interest all Indian lovers of this Tamil veteran scholar and servant;

26 Walton Bell Road,  
Oxford, Dec 25, 1907  
My dear friend,

In the heart of this last sermon, lie truths that harmonize with all that is best in Thiruvassagam and Sivanyanam (Siva-gnana botham)

I am very old. May the father bless you and yours.

Ever truly your friend  
G. U. Pope.

He had expressed his desire to J.M Nalla Samy Pillai the editor of 'Siddhantha Deepika' by a letter written on October 20, 1900, requesting that after his death, the epitaph on the headstone should be 'A Tamil Student', and at least a portion of the cost to erect such a headstone should come with donations from wealthy influential Tamils.

He was laid to rest on his demise on 12th February, 1908, at Saint Sepulcher Cemetery, in Oxford. True to the desire of the noble soul the epitaph reads as; George Uglow Pope D.D of south India sometime lecturer in Tamil and Telugu in the University and Chaplin of Balliol College, Oxford, born 24th April 1820. Died 11th February 1908. This stone has been placed here by his family and by his Tamil friends in South India in loving admiration of his long labours in the cause of oriental literature and philosophy'.

Books written by Rev U. G. Pope:-

\* Thiruvassagam-English Hymns 1-10

\* Thirukkural English Translation and commentary- by Rev Dr. G. U. Pope, Rev. W. H. Drew, Rev. \* John Lazarus and Mr. F. W. Ellis

\* The Tiruvassagam, sacred Utterances of the Tamil poet, saint

and sage.

\* Naladiyar of four Hundred Quatrains in Tamil.

\* Sacred Kural of Thiruvalluvar Nayanr English Translation

\* A compendious Tamil English dictionary

\* A compendious English Tamil dictionary

\* Catalogue of the Tamil books in the library of the British Museum

\* Tamil poetical Anthology with Grammatical Notes and Vocabulary

\* A Tamil prose reader: Adopted to Tamil Hand book

\* A Handbook of the ordinary dialect of the Tamil language

\* A first catechism of Tamil grammar

\* Extracts from the Tamil Purraporul venba-malai and the purrapannuru

\* Tamil Poetical Anthology - with Grammar Notes and Vocabulary

Email:

kumarpunithavel@yahoo.com

Continued from Page 12

## Designer Profile

### P - PEARL

Wella has introduced two new shades to its in-salon Colour Touch hair range. Sunlights Pearl and Relights Pearl Blue boost blonde highlights by depositing a pearl-like cool tone, so hair literally blings. 'It's a great way to boost summer highlights,' says Kylie's favourite colourist, Josh Wood at Real Hair.

### Q - QUICK FIX

'Mayonnaise instantly adds moisture to dry hair,' says Errol Douglas. 'Apply all over, concentrating on ends, leave for a few minutes and remove with shampoo for nourished, glossy hair.'

### R - ROOT LIFT

'When rough-drying, slide an open palm into sections of the hair, close fingers together, then lift the hair for easy access to the roots,' says Zoe Irwin, creative director at Headmasters. 'Blast with a dryer in an upward motion. For extra oomph, apply Wolumactive Amplifying Perfecting Mousse by Kerastase beforehand.'

### S - SALON COLOUR

If your planning a change in colour, go to a professional to avoid tears! 'This summer, the trend for hair colour is very natural, metallic tones, from bronze through to rose gold and ending in platinum,' says Josh Wood. 'These tones are treaded through the hair to create amazing shine and reflections.'

### T - TRICHOTILLOMANIA

'This is hair loss caused by chewing and pulling on your hair,' says Philip Kingsley. Help heal self-inflicted split ends with Concentrated Split End Capsules by Mark Hill.

### U - UV PROTECTION

When it comes to your hair, sun makes for frazzle. 'Highlighting your hair with the sun's rays is just as damaging as bleach,' says Philip Kingsley. 'The sun weakens

the hair's protein structure and de-moisturises it. 'He suggests mixing SPF oil-free suntan lotion half and half with your usual hairspray. Organic Colour Save Shampoo by Daniel Galvin Junior is infused with UVB protection and helps protect your colour.

### V - VINEGAR

Former window cleaner and uber-stylist Sam McKnight knows a thing or two about shine. 'Everyone knows the way to shiny windows in vinegar; well, the same applies to hair,' says the Pantene spokesman. 'Rinse hair with raspberry vinegar as it won't smell so strong.' Jo Hansford advises lavender vinegar as a natural remedy for flaky scalps. Pro-V Ice Shine Serum, by Pantene offers great shine.

### W - WASHING-UP LIQUID

'I often wash models' hair with washing-up liquid,' says Sam McKnight. 'It removes grease, leaving hair squeaky clean.' Over-use will ruin your hair, so keep it to once a month.

### X - X-FACTOR

Hair stylist Nicky Clarke is on speed-dial for Sienna Miller and Jemima Khan. With his new collection of products, Red Carpet Style, including Strike a Pose Ultimate Strength Hairspray, it's your chance to shine. 'Celebrities aren't always born with amazing hair, but they have access to the right products,' says Clarke. My Close Up Perfect Creme De Luxe puts moisture back into dry hair. Build up the product - the dryer or longer your hair, the more you'll need - starting at the back and working round to the front.'

### Y - YES YES YES!

As in, Herbal Essences

### Z - ZEST

'Rinsing your hair with fresh lemon juice and water will encourage shine and make lengths look healthy,' says Frederic Fekkai. Johnnie Sapong advises blondes, 'If you're in the sun, squeeze lemon juice onto your hair to enhance the colour.'

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# Recent Quotes on Sri Lanka

Compiled by Nadodi - Courtesy: Sangam.org

**Senator Leahy of the US pointed out that the Millennium Challenge Corporation suspended over \$11 million in aid intended for Sri Lanka, based on a statement by Freedom House that the serious rights abuses and excessive restrictions on freedom of speech and association by the GoSL merits the removal of the country from the list of eligible recipients of such aid.**

**Illegal Firearms Program Co-ordinator of South Asia Small Arms Network Ranjith Srilal Piyaratna [a Sinhalese] said that there are 2.3 million small arms in SL, of which 1.3 million are illegal (in a country of about 20 million), leading to an escalation of crime.**

**UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Manfred Novak** in a statement to the UN Assembly Third Committee said that torture is widely practiced in Sri Lanka.

**The UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Summary or Arbitrary Executions Philip Aston** has called on the UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council to act on Sri Lanka, as the situation in the country has worsened.

**UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour** who visited the island was taken on a conducted tour by the government, but was prevented from visiting areas controlled by the Freedom Fighters. In her final Press Conference she lamented the dire state of human rights in the island and called for independent monitoring. The Sinhalese Human Rights Minister blindly rejected the idea.

**Asian Human Rights Commission** issued a statement on lawlessness which said that within the policing systems higher officers ranging from IGP to ASPs have shown an irresponsibility that is alarming.

**33 community and city based organisations** have written to the International Committee Co-ordinating National Institutions for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Geneva not to lend credibility and legitimacy to the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka.

**Human Rights Watch in the USA** says that the breakaway LTTE group (the Karuna group, also known as the TMVP) has been given protection by the GoSL, even though it has forcibly recruited several hundred children and was involved in kidnappings of wealthy, predominantly Tamil, businessmen.

**Reporters Without Borders** has reported that the TMVP was acting as death squads.

**G. Luciani**, in an article in the Tamil Canadian website, quotes Articles 15, 16, and 17 of the first Geneva Convention and says that it is a war crime to remove the clothes of the 20 dead liberation fighters, both male and female, who were killed during the attack on the Anuradhapura airport and allowing the public to take photographs. The bodies were buried without being handed over to the Red Cross to be given to their headquarters as had been the practice. The bodies were buried by the army and it was reported that the magistrate had given an order to bury them. The magistrate later denied having done so! The Liberation Fighters under similar circumstances buried dead soldiers with full military honors.

**Lucia Withers**, Asia Program manager of the Coalition to Stop Child soldiers, said in London that forcible abductions from temples, playgrounds and refugee camps are taking place by the TMVP in army controlled areas.

**Senator Leahy of the US pointed out that the Millennium Challenge Corporation suspended over \$11 million in aid intended for Sri Lanka, based on a statement by Freedom House that the serious rights abuses and excessive restrictions on freedom of speech and association by the GoSL merits the removal of the country from the list of eligible recipients of such aid.**

**Paul Willms, ex-M.P. of the Netherlands**, urged the International Community to put in place sanctions on the GoSL for failing to deliver a reasonable proposal to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil Community for three decades, and to improve the deteriorating human rights records, aimed specially toward the E.U., India, and the US, to implement an even-handed approach and policy aimed at resumption of talks for a peace settlement.

**Human Rights Watch**, in a Nov. 7th 2007 letter to American House of Representatives Nita Lowey and Frank Wolf, states, "Since mid-2006 resumption of military operations, civilians has borne the brunt of the fighting. More than 1,000 have reportedly disappeared. Several hundreds of thousands have been displaced. In the past 18 months there has been a significant jump in abuses by government forces, such as indiscriminate shelling and extra-judicial executions and forced disappearances. In addition, there is evidence that Sri Lanka Govt. forces have stood by while pro-government armed groups have carried out abuses, including forcibly recruiting children into their forces. Members of the government security have long enjoyed impunity from prosecutions: there is little evidence that the govt. is bringing perpetrators of serious abuses to justice. It is important to note that the Department of State has publicly supported a strong UN Monitoring Mission and urged the Sri Lanka Government to meet the conditions in the Senate bill. (Note that, since this letter, news have appeared in the Daily Mirror of 10th November that the US has handed over a radar-based surveillance system and several rigid hull inflatable Boats to Sri Lanka.)"

Lanka.)

**Allan Rock, Special Rapporteur for UN Representative Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, said in a report to her that not only Karuna (a deserter from Liberation Fighters and now leading a paramilitary group) not only recruited children, but alleged that some sections of the armed forces aided Karuna in such recruitment.**

**World Bank Managing Director Graeme Wheeler** says that there is an alarming rate of killings, abductions, and disappearances taking place in Sri Lanka. He has also emphasized the need for a political solution soon.

**A Policy Report of the East/West Center- a Washington think tank** says "Political Buddhism and Sinhalese Buddhist Nationalism have contributed to national ideology that has been used to expand and perpetuate Sinhala Buddhist supremacy within a unitary Sri Lankan State, create laws, rules, and structures that institutionalised such supremacy; and attacks those who disagree with this agenda as enemies of the State."

**The International Independent Group of Eminent Persons (IIGEP)** appointed by the President to oversee the Commission Of Inquiry (COI) and appointed to probe abductions, disappearances, and extrajudicial killings of only a selected 15 incidents that took place since 2005, has criticised the performance of the COI.

The mandate of one year of the COI will expire at the end of November without resolving any of the incidents probed. The IIGEP also stated that the Attorney General's involvement in the panel of counsels to the Commission was a severe conflict of interest. The Attorney General has totally disagreed with this view.

The final report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry of missing persons says "Most of the disappearances have been caused by the army and police."

**The Members of Parliament of the East**, both Muslim and Tamils, protested to the Sinhala majority Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) that the captured areas of the East are being colonised with Sinhalese convicts, eg. plantations of the Cashew Corporation. They have also criticized the GoSLs decision to have development projects in the East managed by the security forces and police.

**Daily Mirror, Nov. 27th, 2007**

(a) **The UN** says that armed groups continue to operate in the Amparai District (government controlled area in the East) with harassments, intimidation of civilians and executions. Statement by the Inter Agency Standing Committee, (IASG) an UN umbrella group.

(b) **Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission** also last week expressed concern over continuing disappearances, killings and abductions in the eastern part of the country.

**Daily Mirror Dec. 4th 2007**

**The Director General of UNESCO Koichiro Matsuura** has condemned the government's air strikes on Voice of Tigers Radio Station, saying there can be no excuse for military strikes on civilian media. It also condemned mass arrests of Tamils in their thousands

**Daily Mirror Dec. 5th 2007**

**Amnesty International has urged government to repeal or revise Emergency Regulations** so as to bring in line with International Human Rights law and standards.

**Daily News Dec. 5th 2007**

**Minister and government Chief Whip Jeryaraj Fernandopillai** confirmed mass arrests of over 2,500 Tamils indiscriminately and without inquiry and that over 2,000 were released after inquiry.

**Sunday Times Dec. 9th 2007**

**UN Human Rights Commissioner Louise Arbour** made an appeal along with the New York based Human Rights Watch and the London based Amnesty International to set up UN field operations with a strong mandate to monitor the human rights situation. The government rejected the call.

**Daily Mirror Dec. 10th 2007**

**The UN affiliated Inter Agency Standing Committee** said that humanitarian agencies have emphasized that the activities of armed groups in and around Internally Displaced Persons camps and return areas in Batticaloa have a negative impact on projects implementation.

**Reuters Dec, 10th 2007**

**Asian Human Rights Commission** said that "Human rights abuse have made Sri Lanka one of the most lawless places in the world and the government must do more to investigate them". It complained of what it called "the constant killing of people in police detention and the falsification of information to justify crimes committed by state agencies" Describing Sri Lanka's criminal Justice system as "dysfunctional", the group said "as long as this situation remains, life will remain a nightmare to all civilians in the country"

**AFP Dec 10th 2007**

**The Asian Human Rights Commission** urged immediate international scrutiny and action in Sri Lanka to prevent abductions and killings of civilians. It further said "Sri Lanka had the highest frequency of cases of disappearances in the world reported to the UN. The present situation requires immediate scrutiny and action on the

part of the UN and the International community."

**AFP Dec. 17th 2007**

**The international Red Cross** said one of its workers had been abducted and murdered in Sri Lanka's government controlled Jaffna peninsula-reportedly by the army intelligence unit.

**Daily Mirror Dec 18th 2007**

**Human Rights Watch** has said that the recent downgrading of Lanka's National Human Rights Commission by an International Committee highlights the need for independent international monitoring.

**Morning Leader Dec. 19th 2007.**

(a) **Human Rights Watch** said that the country needs international monitors to monitor human rights violations following downgrading due to lack of credible domestic institutions to address human rights violations.

(b) **The International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights** had reduced the status of the National Human rights Commission to an observer due to government encroaching on its independence, and concerns that the appointment of its commissioners was not in compliance with the Sri Lankan law and the commission's practice was not balanced, objective, and non-political.

(c) **Deputy Assistant Director Human Rights watch Elaine Pearson** said Sri Lanka lacks credible domestic institutions to address human rights violations, and the National Human Rights Commission failed to address the hundreds of violations in Sri Lanka over the past two years.

**AP Dec. 19th 2007**

**US lawmakers** have decided to bar all but a small amount of military aid to Sri Lanka till the Bush Administration has certified that the Sri Lankan has made certain improvements in its human rights practices.

**Daily Mirror Dec 19th 2007**

**The government has reduced the security granted to some Tamil member of Parliament as follows:-**

(a) Mr.S.Srikantha. From the Ministries Security Division , from 9 to 5

(b) Mr.T.Maheswaran From 18 to 2

(c) Mr.Mano Ganeson from 10 to 2.

The members had asked for additional security. (Note: Mr. Mano Ganeson was recently awarded the runner-up prize for the first Freedom Rights Defender's award from the US government. He is also the Founder of the Civil Monitoring Commission.)

**Morning Leader Dec 19th 2007**

(a) **The International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights** had reduced the status of the nation's (Sri Lanka) **Human Rights Commission** to an observer due to government encroaching on its independence, and concerns that the appointment of its commissioners was not in compliance with the Sri Lankan law and the commissioners' practice was not balanced, objective and non-political.

(b) **Human Rights Watch** said the Country (Sri Lanka) needs International Monitors to monitor human rights violations following downgrading (of the National Commission) due to lack of credible domestic institutions to address human rights violations

(c) **Deputy Assistance director, Human Rights watch Elaine Pearson** said that Sri Lanka lacks credible domestic institutions to address human rights violation and that the National Human Rights Commission failed to address the hundreds of violations in Sri Lanka over the past two years.

**Reuters Dec 19th 2007**

**The International Independent Group of Eminent Persons (IIGEP)** said that the President's office wrote to the commission that it was not necessary to probe the conduct of the Attorney General or his department regarding investigations relevant to the probe. It had also interfered with a commission probing civil war rights abuses and murders that included some blamed on state security forces

**Daily Mirror Dec 19th 2007**

**Sri Lanka has been ranked third** worldwide in the number of journalists killed in 2007, behind Iraq and Somalia. 110 were killed as against 96 in 2006 and 68 in 2005.

**Daily Mirror Dec 20th 2007**

**The IIGEP** said that there is failure of the commission to effectively probe the failings of the original police investigations into the cases under consideration, as well as difficulties encountered by the commission in securing cooperation and disclosure of information from the state officials and other persons.

The commission has so far not succeeded in identifying why the original police investigations failed to identify and prosecute the perpetrators of these serious crimes.

It reinforced the IIGEP's view that the inquiry's process falls short of international norms and standards. The commission's work lacks transparency and there continues to be a lack of full and timely disclosure of information to the IIGEP. Lack of independence, ineffective witness protection measures and shortcomings with investigations, persistent disregard for its recommendations by the government of Sri Lanka, and the COI, tend to render the IIGEP's continued role irrelevant, and urged the government to take immediate steps for implementing corrective action.



## **MRS. SELVARATNAM (SELVAM) GANESAN**

**SEPTEMBER 12, 1931 – MARCH 24, 2008**

The family is eternally grateful to all who paid their respects and attended the funeral services held in Toronto for our dear mother

### **Mrs. Selvaratnam Ganesan**

She was a gracious lady who single handedly brought up her seven children after the early demise of her beloved husband, the late Arumugam Ganesan (Bubby)

Dearest Mother of Wignesan (Wicky), Asokumar (Aso),

Sugumar (Sugu), Sivanesan (Siva), Rajini, Sulochana and Suresh.

Mother-in-law of Suhirtham, Christine, Sheela, Saharin, Sathiawan, Roy Mahesan, Chithra

Grandmother of Jonathan, George, Sera, Sanjay, Sofia, Gajan,

Rajiv, Lavaniya, Vithiya, Rebecca, Priya, Sudev and Sujitha

OUR SINCERE THANKS TO THE MEDICAL AND NURSING STAFF  
OF SCARBOROUGH GENERAL HOSPITAL (DIALYSIS UNIT) AND  
SCARBOROUGH GRACE HOSPITAL (WARD 3B), AND TO DR. PON SIVAJI

The family also extends their grateful thanks to the following

Chief Priest and Devotees of Sri Durka Hindu Temple;

Chief Priest and Devotees of Sri Varasitithi Vinnayagar Hindu Temple

and to the Minister of Health & Long Term Care Hon. George Smitherman;

Minister of Energy Hon. Gerry Phillips; Minister of Citizenship & Immigration Hon. Michael Chan;

Hon. Maria Minna, P.C., M.P.; Hon. John McCallum, P.C., M.P.; Hon. Jim Kariyaginnis, P.C., M.P.;

Derek Lee, M.P.; Yasmin Ratansi, M.P.

and the Sri Lanka High Commissioner to Canada His Excellency W.J.S. Karunaratne

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