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What's Inside **Monsoon**

42  Ramadhan Mubarak
Ramadhan ...

22  Living in Fear ...

28  ... concept of Globalization

39  Sex, Love and Meditation

Monsoon Health 9

Margosa 24-25

GTA Square 36-37

Waterloo News 32-33

Monsoon Film Review 46

Elections Canada - 2008

The Battle Begins...

"I am a very young man and I am not in the mood to think about losing or retiring"
- Prime Minister Stephen Harper

"We have a plan and a vision which we can leave for a better country for our children and grand children"
- Liberal Leader Stephane Dion

"Stephen Harper has announced that he is quitting his job as Prime Minister. I am applying for that job."
- Jack Layton, NDP Leader

By Siva Sivapragasam

The battle for power in Parliament Hill, Ottawa has begun with the big guns booming on the campaign trail across Canada.

When Stephen Harper triggered a Federal Election for October 14, it was an year ahead of the scheduled date. Although Polls research indicates an edge for Harper's Conservative Party over the Liberals, the Prime Minister himself has admitted that it is going to be tough election. Party leaders have already started running their campaigns and pledges with messages tailored to appeal to the voters. No doubt, the current economic storm will dominate the election platforms. The major slump in the U.S and it's effect on the Canadian economy, loss of jobs, high energy prices, a high Canadian dollar affecting exports and manufactured goods are some of the hot issues that would come up on election debates. These would be some areas on which the Opposition will target their attack

on the Conservatives.

The plus points for the Conservative Government are the tax cuts they have introduced, added childcare benefits, new immigrant programs, tougher laws on criminal activity etc. NDP Leader Jack Layton has promised Canadians "a change not for the past 25 months but for the past 25 years". Green Party Leader Elizabeth May was earlier left out of the party leaders televised debates but has been included now due to mounting pressure.

The Party standings in Parliament at the time of dissolution were as follows:

| | |
|---------------|-------------|
| Conservatives | - 127 seats |
| Liberals | - 95 |
| Bloc | - 48 |
| NDP | - 30 |
| Independent | - 4 |
| Vacant | - 4 |

October 14 will be another date on which Mr. Citizen Canada becomes an important personality when he decides who will govern him for the next four years.



Stephen Harper - Conservative Party Leader from 2004. Became Prime Minister in 2006. Graduated in 1978 at the top of his class with a 95.7% average. Obtained B.A. Degree from the University of Calgary in Economics. Married Laureen Teskey and has two Children-Benjamin (12) and Rachel (9)



Stephane Dion - Liberal Leader from 2006. Became Leader of Opposition in the same year. Graduated from Universite Laval Political Science and later obtained a Doctorate in Sociology. Married Janine Kreber and has one child Jeanne.



Jack Layton - Became Leader of NDP in 2003. Studied Political Science at McGill University. Now Married to Olivia Chow, an MP. and has two children from previous marriage to high school sweet-heart Sally Halford.



Elizabeth May - Became Leader of the Green Party in 2006. She is a Lawyer who graduated from Dalhousie Law School in 1983. Has one daughter - Victoria Cate who is 17 years old.



UN says unable to leave Sri Lanka's war-torn north

The United Nations says its aid staff are unable to comply with a Sri Lankan government order to quit the war-torn north of the island because of protests by local civilians.

Thousands of men, women and children have been protesting outside UN and other international aid agency offices in Kilinochchi since Sep 12th to stop aid workers from leaving.

The rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have warned against the pullout, saying it would cause a "humanitarian crisis."




Some 160 thousand people have been displaced in the past few months in the districts of Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi as the government steps up its offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels.

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Investing in Ontario Act Delivers \$1.1 Billion for Municipal Infrastructure

The McGuinty government is investing an additional \$1.1 billion in municipal infrastructure to improve roads and bridges, expand public transit and build other municipal projects.

The investment is expected to create as many as 11,000 construction jobs in the short term and make Ontario's economy more competitive in the long term.

The increase in infrastructure funding comes as a result of the government passing the Investing in Ontario Act, 2008. Because of that Act, the government's surplus above \$600 million for the 2007-2008 fiscal year was able to flow to municipalities to fund infrastructure projects.

Today's announcement was triggered by the release of the 2007-08 Public Accounts, which show a \$600 million surplus for the past fiscal year.

Investing in infrastructure is part of the McGuinty government's five-point economic plan to build a stronger economy.

QUOTES

"By investing in infrastructure in every Ontario community, we're creating jobs for families and

making our communities stronger," said Premier Dalton McGuinty.

"The Investing in Ontario Act is a balanced approach that will stimulate our economy by investing in municipal infrastructure while being prudent by paying down a portion of the accumulated deficit," said Dwight Duncan, Ontario Minister of Finance.

"Through this investment, the McGuinty government is taking another step forward in our relationship with our municipal partners. Municipal leaders now have the ability to choose their next infrastructure project, and to move that project forward," said Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Jim Watson.

QUICK FACTS

"This year, the Investing in Ontario Act, 2008 and regulation direct a portion of provincial surpluses to municipalities for infrastructure needs, such as improving roads and bridges, expanding transit and upgrading social housing.

"Every municipality in Ontario will benefit. \$1.1 billion in capital grants will be paid to municipalities and \$600 million will go towards reducing the province's accumulated deficit.

"In 2007, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce did a sur-



vey of Ontario economic leaders and found "91% of those surveyed indicated that infrastructure was the most critical issue to be addressed today."

"The 2007-08 Public Accounts were released today, and present the audited financial statements of the province, provide financial highlights of the past fiscal year, and report on performance against the goals set out in the 2007 Budget.

"With today's announcement, in 2007-08 the McGuinty government invested a total of \$9.9 billion in infrastructure to improve the province's highways, public transit, municipal roads and bridges, hospitals, places to learn and other public assets. Of that, \$3.5 billion has gone towards municipalities for infrastructure.

RBC NOW OFFERING TELEPHONE SERVICE IN ANY LANGUAGE

More than 2,600 translators standing by round-the-clock

To help ensure that Canadians from diverse backgrounds can address their financial affairs in their preferred language, RBC is offering a multi-language telephone service that can assist clients in more than 150 languages.

RBC's new multi-language telephone service makes available a network of more than 2,600 specialized interpreters to help with day-to-day basic banking inquiries such as opening an account, paying bills or requesting foreign exchange information. Customers call one convenient number at 1-800-ROYAL 1-1 to access the RBC agent-assisted service, and within minutes can be chatting with an interpreter via a three-way confidential conference call.

"We're always looking for ways to make it easier for customers to do business with us," said Mark Whitmell, director, Cultural Markets. "Now with a multi-language telephone service, customers of diverse backgrounds can make the call on their terms. This is really about helping our customers feel welcome, comfort-

able and confident by enabling communication in a language of their choosing."

Through word-of-mouth alone, the service introduced in April has been averaging about 500 calls per month, with the most common language requested being Spanish, followed by Russian, Vietnamese, Mandarin and Korean. This new service complements RBC's dedicated phone line (1 888 ROYAL 9-8) set up for Chinese speaking clients, which offers service in Cantonese and Mandarin and fields more than 20,000 calls per month. RBC Direct Investing also offers telephone trading and customer service in Cantonese and Mandarin at 1 800-667-8668.

These and other services for newcomers are featured on RBC's newly redesigned website dedicated to new Canadians (www.rbc.com/canada), which is available in English, French and simplified Chinese and receives more than 70,000 visitors a month. The site, first launched in 2005, provides newcomers with relevant and tailored information to give them the confidence they

need to make financial decisions at every stage of their transition to Canada - before they arrive, as they get settled and as they plan for their future.

As part of this new redesign, customers can now locate a branch where three or more people speak their language at maps.rbc.com. In addition, by visiting findingyourhome.ca, new Canadians can insert the postal code of their desired neighborhoods and compare locations based on a number of key criteria, such as the cultural composition of the area, the average housing price, average income of residents, as well as available schools, services and hospitals.

This month the bank also released through its branches and website new step-by-step fact sheets in 14 languages, introducing Canadian products and services from the perspective of a newcomer. RBC has been reinventing itself over the past few years to better connect with new immigrants by introducing a variety of products and services designed to help newcomers transition, explained Whitmell.

NEW RBC WICKET CRICKET COMMUNITY FUND CALLS FOR APPLICATIONS

\$50,000 fund takes successful in-school program to the community

The new RBC Wicket Cricket Community Fund, which will support programs and projects to make the sport more accessible to Canadian youth, today began accepting grant applications for 2008.

"Cricket is one of the fastest-growing sports in Canada," said Mark Whitmell, director, Cultural Markets, RBC. "When we launched the RBC Wicket Cricket program earlier this year, 1,300 classrooms registered for equipment and resources to help introduce and teach the sport to an estimated 35,000 school children. Building on that success, the new RBC Wicket Cricket Community Fund will extend our support beyond the classroom and fill a need at the community level by providing funding to establish youth cricket programs."

Community organizations may be eligible for an RBC Wicket Cricket Community Fund grant if they provide a safe and welcoming environment for cricket; build awareness for the sport within their community; show strong community management with solid participation; and/or, demonstrate innovation in program delivery.

"With the support of the new RBC Wicket Cricket Community Fund, organizations like ours can



reach out to promote cricket to youth in and beyond schools, and involve more kids in the game," said Hugh Brodie, president of Pirates of the St. Lawrence Cricket Club in Montreal.

Grants will range from \$500 - \$1,000 each, up to a total of \$50,000. Funding will be based on budget and need, preference will be given to programs or projects that are at the grassroots level, focus on young people 4 - 17 years of age, have the potential to improve the game of cricket in their communities, and show evidence of long-term sustainability.

Whitmell noted that RBC created the Fund to help promote, develop and grow the sport of cricket which is an integral part of the cultural heritage and identity of many Canadians and new immigrants, as well as enabling them to coach and play a sport many enjoyed prior to coming to Canada. This program is part of RBC's ongoing efforts to build deeper connections with multicultural communities in Canada.

Grant applications will be accepted until October 31, 2008. For more information about the RBC Cricket Community Fund, or to apply for a grant, please visit: www.rbc.com/cricket.

Paul Calandra, Conservative Candidate for Oak Ridges-Markham starts His Campaign

Paul Calandra and his team starts door to door to campaign on Sunday, September 7th. Picture shows, Paul and one of his team, when they assembled briefly at Bur Oak and Williamson Road.



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From the Publisher's Desk ...

October 1 - International Day of Older Persons

The world is getting older. In the next 50 years, the number of older persons will nearly quadruple, growing from about 600 million to almost 2 billion people. Today, one in every ten is 60 years and older. By 2050, one out of every five will be an older person, and by 2150, one third of the people in the world are expected to be 60 years of age or older, according to data from the United Nations.

In all countries and in developing countries in particular, measures to help older people remain healthy and active are a necessity, not a luxury.

Ageing is a privilege and a societal achievement. It is also a challenge, which will impact on all aspects of 21st century society. It is a challenge that cannot be addressed by the public or private sectors in isolation: it requires

joint approaches and strategies.

According to HelpAge International, a global network working since 1983 to improve the lives of disadvantaged older people, says over 100 million older people live on less than a dollar a day.

Older people face particular threats from the world's increasing number of conflicts and natural disasters, but are not often identified as a vulnerable group.

In emergencies older people encounter several key issues and concerns. They include Mobility, Health, Livelihoods, Psychological and social effects, Isolation and gender.

As communities flee, many older people, particularly the housebound, can be left behind without support. Most non-governmental organisations (NGOs) emphasise primary health-care

programmes that target children and women, but neglect older people. When communities return home, older people typically face difficulties in accessing land and other scarce resources. The feelings of loss, trauma, confusion and fear that are familiar to all people in emergencies can be even more damaging for older people. For older people in emergencies, isolation sharply increases the levels of risk. Although refugee populations tend to include a lot of older women, age and gender barriers are more likely to exclude them from decision-making and resources than older men.

Monsoon Journal joins the international humanitarian community in calling for attention to the welfare of seniors around the globe. The Monsoon Journal calls for special attention to the plight

of seniors affected by conflicts.

Case in point - In Sri Lanka, older people in Tamil North-East of the country continue to face misery due to internal displacement. The Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) live in open areas in the North and some in welfare centres in the East. According to the physiatrist in Sri Lanka's Eastern town Batticaloa's Teaching Hospital - M Ganesan, "most of the patients from these welfare centers who come to the hospital are mentally affected patients and are mostly older people".

During this time of International Day of Older Persons, The Monsoon Journal joins hands to make the lives of older persons active, healthier and happier by drawing attention and supporting relief programmes targeted for the seniors.

**Toronto International Film Festival
"Kanchivaram" (A Tamil Film)**

- A Review By Siva Sivapragasam

**"This film is of artistic value and not merely aimed for box office hit"
- Film Director Priyadarshan & actor Prakash Raj talk to "Monsoon Journal"**

"Kanchivaram is a film which took us a fairly long time to produce and our aim was for film-goers to rate it as a film of artistic value" was the joint comment by it's popular Film Director Priyadarshan and veteran Actor Prakash Raj, when asked by "Monsoon Journal"'s Editor Siva Sivapragasam for a comment on the film at the reception hosted for the Director and stars by the Canadian Tamil Congress after the film was showcased at the Toronto International Film

story centers around a poverty stricken textile weaver Vengadam from Kanchipuram, a city famous for its Kanchivaram silk sarees. Vengadam has a dream to weave the best silk saree for his only daughter Thaamarai to wear it on her wedding day. Being poor, he has no money to spend for the silk threads needed for this and much against his conscience he steals the threads on a daily basis from his factory, stuffing the balls of thread in his mouth to go undetected.



Actor Prakash Raj at Elgin Theatre



Director Priyadarshan at Elgin Theatre



At Elgin Theatre after the Premiere screening

Festival. "Kanchivaram" was picked as an award winning film and was shown to a packed audience at the Visa Screening Room (Elgin Theatre) recently in connection with Toronto's International Film Festival-2008. The film was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience, a majority of whom were from the mainstream communities.

Set against a background of rural India during the colonial times, the

Meanwhile his wife Annam dies and daughter Thaamarai is looked after by him. One day, he is caught stealing the thread, gets beaten up and is sent to jail. He is released from prison to see his daughter who is gravely ill. He returns home to find Thaamarai bedridden and almost dying. His dream is shattered, and unable to see her suffering he decides to end her life, Vengadam feeds her with rat poi-

son mixed with rice and she dies. Vengadam collects the hidden unfinished silk saree from the barn and drapes Thaamarai's body with it. The story ends here.

There is a central theme that runs through the film which depicts the exploitation of the poor weavers by the rich owners of the textile factories in India. The British colonial masters who ruled India at that time also exploited the economic benefits to their advantage and this gave room for the spread of communist ideology which is shown in the film through a communist party worker who comes to the village and teaches Vengadam and his fellow workers the ideals of Communism.

Prakash Raj, the veteran actor who usually plays the role of a villain, very brilliantly portrays the character

of Vengadam with the different facial emotions displayed for different sequences in the film. Shreya Reddy takes the role of his wife Annam and does an equally excellent portrayal ably supported by Shammu, a new comer to the screen and a resident from Florida who plays the role of daughter Thaamarai. The audience is treated to some nostalgic scenes of pre-independence India and the life of the people in the rural districts such as long distance bus rides, the role of the policeman in villages, temple festivals etc.

"Kanchivaram" is a tragic story about the price we pay for the promises we make.

"Kanchivaram" is a film worth seeing - more than once.

Photo Courtesy: Gana

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Monsoon Newsline

'INDIAN SECURITY ADVISOR, M.K. NARAYANAN, WAS LUCKY THAT HE DID NOT END UP DISAPPEARING IN SRI LANKA'

Indian Security Advisor, R. K. Narayanan, was lucky that he did not end up disappearing. Indian authorities should thank Lord Shiva that no abductors in white vans bothered to abduct the dark skinned security adviser while he was walking on Colombo's streets without being in the possession of a national identity card (NIC) or a police registration sheet, said Leader of Sri Lanka political party Western Political Front (WPF), Mano Ganesan, in a statement recently.

It was reported that India's security advisor Narayanan risked his personal safety by walking back to his hotel after getting off close to the Slave Island area in Colombo, while in Sri Lanka to attend the SAARC summit. Mr. Ganesan said Narayanan also

faced the risk of a white van abduction. This is because he was walking on Colombo's streets without a Sri Lankan national identity card and a police registration sheet and did not speak any Sinhala.

"Generally Tamils and dark skinned strangers in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo are not given time for explanations if they do not carry the all important NIC and Police registration at all times," charged Ganesan. He said any 'Tamil' looking person under suspicion is bundled away in an offensive manner in Colombo.

"There can be some clever academic denials. But I am aware of this reality by all means as the Member of Parliament for Colombo," he said.

He said Narayanan walked



India's national security advisor M.K. Narayanan

because he had to meet with his Prime Minister. He walked to his hotel situated opposite Galle Face green from Slave Island which is a white van area where many alleged disappearances of mem-



Mano Ganesan MP

bers of the Tamil community had been reported.

Mano Ganesan is in the forefront of those seeking an end to the abductions, disappearances and extrajudicial killings that afflict Sri Lanka.

In December 2007, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced Mano Ganesan as the Runner-up for the first annual Freedom Defender's Award.

Recently Mano Ganesan was questioned by the Sri Lanka Terrorist Investigation Department (TID) as Sinhala Nationalistic forces in Sri Lanka continue to accuse him of having 'links' and acting as an 'agent' of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Expressing his concern over this 'questioning', the US Ambassador in Sri Lanka Robert Blake said the US government would be closely monitoring the situation, according to premier Tamil daily of Sri Lanka, Virakesari.

Karunanidhi appeals to PM on fishermen attack issue

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M Karunanidhi on Sunday Sep 7th appealed to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to take up with Sri Lanka, the issue of attacks on fishermen of the state and request them to instruct their Navy to exercise restraint and refrain from firing at them.

"In spite of assurances given by the government of India, fishermen of the state feel insecure and are reluctant to carry out fishing in Indian seas for fear of attacks by the Sri Lankan navy without any warning," he said in a letter to the Prime Minister.

"It will not be out of context to mention that every time a shooting incident takes place near the International Maritime Boundary Line, the Sri Lankan Navy immediately denies occurrence of any such event," he said.

Though the Prime Minister had raised the issue with the President of Sri Lanka at the recent SAARC summit, 10 fishermen of Nagapattinam were apprehended on August nine. Besides, fishermen were fired upon on September four at Kodiakarai, injuring one.

From January 2006 to date, 27 incidents of firing had occurred, in which eight fishermen were killed and 24 injured. "The backgrounds of all fishermen dead or injured revealed that they were innocent," Karunanidhi



said. He said the protests of the Tamil Nadu government and the Centre with Sri Lanka had not yielded any results.


Karunanidhi alleged that the Sri Lankan Navy was not reciprocating the goodwill shown by the Indian Coast Guard and Navy in dealing with Sri Lankan fishermen, apprehended for fishing in Indian waters.

The incidents were continuing unabated and fishermen putting out to sea for fishing have been continuously complaining about the "inhuman treatment" meted out to them by the Sri Lankan navy, he said.

[PTI]



Telugu mega star Chiranjeevi launched a new political party 'Parja Rajam' in the temple town of Tirupathi in Chitose District of Andhra Pradesh on August 26. See in the photo is Chiranjeevi, right, addressing his fans at the launch. (Photo: Mohanrao Jaffer/Scaps India)



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Monsoon Newslines

Bhutto's widower wins presidency

Asif Ali Zardari, the widower of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, has won a sweeping victory in Pakistan's presidential election.

The election was called after Pervez Musharraf resigned rather than risk being impeached.

Mr Zardari faces severe economic problems and a rampant Islamist insurgency that are threatening Pakistan's stability.

During the voting a bomb killed at least 15 people near Peshawar city.

The president is elected by secret ballots in the national and four provincial assemblies.

Mr Zardari won 481 votes out of 702, far more than the 352 votes that would have guaranteed him victory, leaving his two rivals trailing far behind.

by forging a large coalition and using it to peacefully unseat President Musharraf.

Mr Zardari is one of Pakistan's most controversial politicians.

For years he has been hounded by allegations of massive corruption - although he has never been convicted.

Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif took his PML-N party out of the governing coalition last week, accusing Mr Zardari of breaking key promises.

Many in Pakistan fear the country is facing a return to an old-style politics of confrontation at a time when urgent action is needed to improve the economy and deal with a raging Islamist insurgency.

Juggling demands

Mr Zardari is seen as pro-Western and supportive of



his car, although he was not in it at the time officials say.

The other candidates for the presidency were Saeeduz Zaman Siddiqui, a former judge who had the backing of Mr Sharif, and Mushahid Hussain Sayed, who was nominated by the PML-Q party that supported Mr Musharraf.

In the Islamabad parliament, members of the upper house, the Senate, were due to vote first, followed by the lower house.

Pakistan's four provincial assemblies of Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan and the NWFP had a similar schedule.

However, voting in the NWFP capital, Peshawar, was delayed when a 5.6 magnitude earthquake hit the area and neighbouring Afghanistan, prompting deputies to flee the assembly building.

The provincial assemblies are given equal weighting with 65 votes each. In the three assemblies which do not have 65 deputies, the value of each deputy's vote is adjusted by a mathematical formula.

There is only one round of voting and whoever has most of the 702 votes wins.

Courtesy: BBC



The daughters of the Late Benazir Bhutto celebrate the victory of their father Zardari as the President of Pakistan.

WHO VOTES FOR PRESIDENT?

Total votes: 702

National Assembly 342 votes

Senate 100 votes

Four provincial assemblies 65 votes each

Winner needs simple majority of votes

In Sindh province, Mr Zardari won all 65 votes. In North West Frontier Province (NWFP) he got 56 out of the 65 votes. In Balochistan province he won 59 of the 65 votes.

By contrast he only won 22 out of 65 seats in Punjab province, the heartland of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's PML-N party.

The two daughters of Mr Zardari and Ms Bhutto hugged friends in delight in the gallery of the national assembly as the results became clear. Members of Mr Zardari's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) declared the result to be a "victory for democracy".

Controversy

Mr Zardari was thrust into the centre of political power by the killing of Ms Bhutto last December after which he became head of the PPP.

The BBC's Barbara Plett in Islamabad says that in recent months Mr Zardari has shown skill

Washington's self-declared war on terror. He will have to juggle the demands of the United States, Pakistan's powerful army, and strong anti-American sentiment in the country.

Our correspondent says Mr Musharraf tried to do that and failed. She adds that Pakistanis hope that Asif Zardari will have more success, but they see little in his past to encourage them.

The fortunes of the Bhutto-Zardari family have fluctuated dramatically.

Mr Zardari spent years in prison while Gen Musharraf ruled Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto was assassinated at an election rally in December. Her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was hanged during the military dictatorship of President Ziaul Haq.

A further reminder of the dangers of public life in Pakistan came on Wednesday when gunmen attacked the motorcade of the prime minister. Two bullets hit

Indian industrialist Birla passes away

Well-known Indian industrialist K.K. Birla died in his Calcutta home recently. Birla was ninety years of age at the time of his death. He was Chairman of the Hindustan Times Newspaper

Group and also Chairman of several other business organizations. He is survived by three daughters while his wife pre-deceased him a month ago.

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India Rushes Medical Help to Flood Victims in Country's East

Authorities in eastern India are rushing medical help to thousands of people displaced by flood waters, in order to keep disease from spreading.

India's health secretary said 300 tons of medicine, millions of chlorine tablets, vaccines and teams of doctors were being sent to relief camps in the state of Bihar.

Officials say hundreds of cases of diarrhea and other water-borne diseases are already being reported in government-run shelters, due to water contamination.

Flood waters have receded in some areas, prompting some villagers to return to their homes today, despite government warn-

ings that the swollen Kosi River could overrun its banks again.


Authorities say many of the areas will likely remain flooded until the monsoon rains taper off in November.

The flooding began two weeks ago when the Kosi River burst its banks in neighboring Nepal, causing river water to spill into India.

Tens of thousands of people have also been displaced in north-eastern India's Assam state, Nepal and Bangladesh. Officials say the floods have killed at least 80 people -- a figure they expect to rise.

South Asia's monsoon season runs from June to September.

[VOA]



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Monsoon Newslines

The Latest 'Great Game' Involves Indian Ocean

by Gavin Rabinowitz

Hambantota - This battered harbor town on Sri Lanka's southern tip, with its scrawny men selling even scrawnier fish, seems an unlikely focus for an emerging international competition over the energy supply routes that fuel much of the global economy.

An impoverished place still recovering from the devastation of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, Hambantota has a desolate air, a sense of nowhere, punctuated by the realization that looking south over the expanse of ocean, the next landfall is Antarctica.

But just over the horizon runs one of the world's great trade arteries, the shipping lanes where thousands of vessels carry oil from the Middle East and raw materials to Asia, returning with television sets, toys and sneakers for European consumers.

These tankers provide 80% of China's oil and 65% of India's -- fuel desperately needed for the two countries' rapidly growing economies. Japan is almost totally dependent on energy supplies shipped through the Indian Ocean.

Any disruption -- from terrorism, piracy, natural disaster or war -- could have devastating effects on these countries and, in an increasingly interdependent world, send ripples across the globe. When an unidentified ship attacked a Japanese oil tanker traveling through the Indian Ocean from South Korea to Saudi Arabia in April, the news sent oil prices to record highs.

For decades the world relied on the U.S. Navy to protect this sea lane. But as India and China gain economic heft, they are moving to expand their control of the waterway, sparking a new, and potentially dangerous, rivalry between Asia's emerging giants.

China has given massive aid to Indian Ocean nations, signing friendship pacts, building ports in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, and reportedly setting up a listening post on one of Myanmar's islands near the strategic Strait of Malacca.

Now, India is trying to parry China's moves. It beat out China for a port project in Myanmar. And, flush with cash from its expanding economy, India is beefing up its military, with the expansion seemingly aimed at China. Washington and, to a lesser extent, Tokyo are encouraging India's role as a counterweight to growing Chinese power.

Among China's latest moves is the billion-dollar port its engineers are building in Sri Lanka.

The Chinese insist the Hambantota port is a purely com-

mercial move, and by all appearances, it is. But some in India see ominous designs behind the project, while others in countries surrounding India like the idea. A 2004 Pentagon report called Beijing's effort to expand its presence in the region China's "string of pearls."

Relations between China and India are at their closest since a brief 1962 border war in which China quickly routed Indian forces. Last year, trade between India and China grew to \$37 billion, and their two armies conducted their first joint military exercise.

Still, the Indians worry about China's growing influence.

"Each pearl in the string is a link in a chain of the Chinese maritime presence," India's navy chief, Adm. Sureesh Mehta, said in a speech in January, expressing concern that naval forces operating out of ports established by the Chinese could "take control over the world energy jugular."

"It is a pincer movement," said Rahul Bedi, a South Asia analyst with London-based Jane's Defense Weekly. "That, together with the slap India got in 1962, keeps them awake at night."

B. Raman, a hawkish, retired Indian intelligence official, expressed the fears of some Indians over the Chinese-built ports, saying he believes they'll be used as naval bases to control the area.

"We cannot take them at face value. We cannot assume their intentions are benign," said Raman.

But Zhao Gancheng, a South Asia expert at the Chinese government-backed Shanghai Institute for International Studies, says ports like Hambantota are strictly commercial ventures. And Sri Lanka says the new port will be a windfall for its impoverished southern region.

With Sri Lanka's proximity to the shipping lane already making it a hub for transshipping containers between Europe and Asia, the new port will boost the country's annual cargo handling capacity from 6 million containers to about 23 million, said Priyath Wickrama, deputy director of the Sri Lankan Ports Authority.

Wickrama said a new facility was needed because the main port in the capital, Colombo, had no room to expand and Trincomalee port in the northeast was caught in the middle of Sri Lanka's separatist war. Hambantota also will have factories on-site producing cement and fertilizer for export, he said.

Meanwhile, India is gearing its military expansion toward China, and has set up listening stations



Indian Ocean Sea Lanes

in Mozambique and Madagascar, in part to monitor Chinese movements, Bedi noted. It also has an air base in Kazakhstan and a space monitoring post in Mongolia -- both China's neighbors. India has announced plans to have a fleet of aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines in the next decade and recently tested nuclear-capable missiles that put China's major cities well within range. It also is reopening air force bases near the Chinese border.

Encouraging India's role as a counter to China, the U.S. has stepped up exercises with the Indian navy and last year sold it an American warship for the first time, the 17,000-ton amphibious transport dock Trenton. American defense contractors -- shut out from the lucrative Indian market during the long Cold War -- have been offering India's military everything from advanced fighter jets to anti-ship missiles.

"It is in our interest to develop this relationship," U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said during a visit to New Delhi in February. "Just as it is in the Indians' interest."

Officially, China says it's not worried about India's military buildup or its closer ties with the U.S. However, foreign analysts believe China is deeply concerned by the possibility of a U.S.-Indian military alliance.

Ian Storey of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore said China sent strong diplomatic messages expressing opposition to a massive naval exercise India held last year with the U.S., Japan, Singapore and Australia. And Bedi, the Jane's analyst, added "those exercises rattled the Chinese."

India's 2007 defense budget was about \$21.7 billion, up 7.8% from 2006. China said its 2008

military budget would jump 17.6% to about \$59 billion, following a similar increase last year. The U.S. estimates China's actual defense spending may be much higher.

Like India, China is focusing on its navy, building an increasingly sophisticated submarine fleet that could become one of the world's largest.

Though analysts believe China's military buildup is mostly focused on preventing U.S. intervention in any conflict with Taiwan, India is still likely to persist in efforts to catch up as China expands its influence in what is

essentially India's backyard. Meanwhile, Sri Lankans -- who have looked warily for centuries at vast India to the north -- welcome the Chinese investment in their country.

"Our lives are going to change," said 62-year-old Jayasena Senanayake, who has seen business grow at his roadside food stall since construction began on the nearby port. "What China is doing for us is very good."

[Courtesy: Associated Press ~ Associated Press writer Christopher Bodeen contributed to this report from Beijing]

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Monsoon Newslines

Five years... and still sitting pretty

DEVAYANI OF KOLANGAL FAME

She is television's popular face. Devayani tells CHITRA SWAMINATHAN about her serial success, marriage and motherhood

It's 11 in the morning. The sun is searing. When you reach the bungalow tucked inside a nondescript lane in Nesappakam, the crew is scurrying to get a shot ready. Shooting for the serial 'Manjal Mahimai' (Kalaigarn TV) is on. After

a few minutes of waiting, you see the door of the caravan parked in the compound, open. The protagonist of the serial, Devayani in a deep red sari, long tresses cascading down her back, steps out with her make-up man and hairdresser in tow.

You can't miss that lustrous complexion and endearing coy smile. Post-partum (she delivered her second daughter Priyanka seven months ago); she is almost back to her slender self. Losing no time, Devayani starts posing in the manner of a pro and the photographer happily goes on a clicking-spree.

"I think you have taken pictures for the next ten years," jokes the reigning queen of Tamil television as she invites you into her caravan for the interview. She leans back on the cushioned seat and talks about her run in the film industry, marriage, motherhood and serial success. Professionally, the transition is complete - from a teeny-weeny girl in fluttering skirts, to a sari-clad, demure heroine, to a woman with grit and gumption.

Abhi (her character in 'Kolungal') as she is more popularly known today, is delighted by the overwhelming response of viewers and the respect and recognition television has fetched her. "I am like a part of every family. I haven't received such adulation doing films," she says excitedly.

Thankfully, life is about second chances. Otherwise, Devayani would have been unaware of her acting potential. "In the film industry, most heroines can only dream of roles like Abhi. Once they marry, they have to call it quits or be content playing sister or mother."



Straddling two worlds Devayani: Photos : S.S. Kumar

Television offers came to her before marriage. "I didn't give it serious thought then because I was busy doing films. But now, the small screen has helped me strike a beautiful balance between work and home. I am happy with my screen roles and also being there for my husband and children," says the quintessential girl-next-door.

The moment she read the script of 'Kolungal', Devayani knew she was going to play Abhi, the tough middle-class girl who fights her way through odds and comes up trumps in life.

"I was never comfortable doing glamorous roles. I prefer a minimalist look. When director Agathiyan asked me if I could play a simple sari-clad heroine in his film 'Kadhal Kottai', I said a loud 'yes'. This hit film announced my arrival in Kollywood."

Born in Mumbai in a Konkani family with no film connections, Devayani started her career with a Hindi movie that was a non-starter. "The co-producer of the film was known to our family and offered me the lead role of a Pahadi girl (from Himachal Pradesh). He thought I looked like one. I was tempted to give it a try though my parents were not for it. The film never released. Later, I got offers to do Malayalam films. Again I thought, why not? One project led to another (read Tamil films) and before I knew I had entered showbiz."

Coming back to "Kolungal". Hasn't it been tedious to play Abhi for the past five years? "Not at all. The immense scope the character offers makes it exciting. There are new twists and turns in the story

every other day. Besides, the unit is like a big, extended family. We have lots of fun during the shoot. I had both my babies during the making of 'Kolungal'," she laughs. "So it's an emotional bond too."

How much of a hands-on mom is she? "When I'm at home all my time is spent with the children. Mornings are particularly hectic. Besides taking care of the little one, I have to get my elder daughter Iniya ready for play-school. I drop her everyday at school. I also often take them out in the evenings."

The affable actor created a flutter in the industry when she suddenly tied the knot with "good friend" and director Rajakumaran. "Nobody knew about our affair. We would hardly meet. The love-talks were restricted to the phone. It was he who proposed first. Though I took some time to say 'yes', I am happy I did. He is an easy-going person and extremely supportive," coos Devayani.

All in the family

Her caravan has a good stock of DVDs. Between shots Devayani catches up on films, usually old Tamil and Hindi films.

Daughter Iniya is a big fan of Shah Rukh Khan and has watched "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai" several times.

Husband Rajakumaran will make his acting debut with "Thirumathi Tamizh" for which he is currently shooting with Kirti Chawla.

Her brother Nakulan (one of the four boys in Shankar's "Boys") is making his acting debut in "Kaadhalil Vizhundhein".

Courtesy: THE HINDU

India's Expanding Media, Entertainment Industry Moves Into Regional Languages



By Anjana Pasricha

Star India is launching a new TV entertainment channel in Bengali - a language spoken in the east of the country. Star also plans to start TV channels in five other regional languages in the coming months.

Star India is owned by media giant, News Corp, and was the first foreign broadcaster to enter India. So far, its main focus in India has been on English and Hindi speaking audiences.

But like other media groups, Star wants to expand into a largely untapped market for entertainment and news in local languages. It plans to invest \$100 million in the regional language TV channels.

India has as many as 20 official regional languages. And in recent years, an expanding economy has raised both incomes and literacy in small towns and rural areas. Millions of people, who mainly speak the local language, now have access to television. Others are turning to regional newspapers for the latest headlines.

As a result, regional audiences have been steadily growing in size.

Atul Phadnis, chief executive of consultancy group mediaE2E, says the boom is being sustained by a massive increase in advertis-

ing revenues generated by regional markets. He says television channels in particular are grabbing a larger slice of advertising money.

"Earlier what would typically happen that the regional market would typically garner close to 30 percent of the viewership share, but would only get 15 percent of the revenue share," said Phadnis. "So there was clearly an imbalance. Today that situation has improved considerably. Regional language channels get upwards of 25 percent of overall market share of ad [advertising] revenues."

Television channels beaming in local languages initially offered greater entertainment content. But of late, several media groups have launched news channels in regional languages.

However, it may not be an easy run for all media groups. Star television, for example, faces tough competition from local companies like Zee Entertainment and Sun, which have made huge inroads into regional markets.

A recent report by consultants PricewaterhouseCoopers says India's media and entertainment industry is the fastest growing in Asia, and is attracting many global collaborations. It estimates the industry will grow to \$32 billion by 2012.

[VOA]

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Monsoon Health



A Dose of Laughter ... taken as needed

By Mithura Anandarajah, PT
Registered Physiotherapist

It could start out as a simple smile, expand to a chuckle and end with a full hearted guffaw. You could be doubled over, clutching your sides with tears streaming down your face. It may sound like a delicate gurgle or a heaving hyena. Any which way, laughter is a human quality that is not necessarily just an expression of joy. In fact, laughter is good medicine not only for our soul but also for our body.

If you're looking for an easy way to increase your lifespan, improve your immune system, reduce your chronic stress then look no further than the act of laughter. Laughter impacts our body in a physical, chemical and social/emotional level.

At a physical level, the simple act of laughter and the convulsions it often includes, help to move lymph fluid around our body. Lymph is an integral part of our immune system and does not

have a separate pump like the blood circulation system. The movement of lymph helps to boost our immune system and clear out the wastes. At a cellular and organ level, laughter also helps to improve the oxygenation in our body. Simply by intaking the gulps of air as we double over in amusement, we are adding oxygen. Oxygen is our most important energy source. The presence of oxygen also helps to destroy cancer cells.

Laughter improves our circulation. While you are adding oxygen to the system, the physical act of laughter helps to distribute it throughout the body. You may also be getting a great work out. Your abdominal and facial muscles are contracting; the harder you laugh, the more the work out is. There are times after a hearty guffaw, when you actually feel pain and fatigue.

At a chemical level, laughter

both directly and indirectly adds hormones to our body. Chemicals in the brain like neurotransmitters are enhanced; growth hormone, antibody-producing cells are increased.

Besides the physical and chemical well-being of our body, the act of laughter is an expression of joy. It is infectious and can spread joy to those around you. Laughter adds perspective to different stressful situations. Adding humor helps to lessen the stress and negativity of the situation. Laughter connects us with others and helps them achieve the positive effects of it.

Laughter is beneficial, easily accessible and free. Its impact in our lives can only enhance our state of well-being. Find humor in the little things; laugh with your friends and family. Start with a smile or perhaps a chuckle and end doubled over, clutching your sides. It's all good.



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The Branch at Morningside & Milner provides efficient retail and business banking services five six days of the week. The trained and skilled staff speak ten different languages to cater to the needs of the multi cultural neighbourhood.

Speaking to "Monsoon Journal" at the Anniversary Celebrations, Ms. Lisa Gallacher remarked that the Morningside & Milner Branch has been rated as # 1 among the new Branches opened by RBC across Canada.

According to the Branch Manager Mr. Mohan Sundaramohan who has several years of Banking experience with RBC, the Branch at Morningside & Milner is always ready to serve it's clients and will accommodate the growing needs of the community at the Branch.

Events at the Branch over the year were as follows:

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Branch activities commenced officially with the Ribbon cutting ceremony on March 7, 2007. The Branch was officially opened with the ribbon cutting ceremony officiated by Jennifer Tory - Royal Bank's GTR President, Lisa Gallacher - Vice - President, Scarborough Markets and Mohan Sundaramohan - Branch Manager. Over 125 guests from different walks of life - Professionals, Business persons, Media and customers of the Bank were present at this function.

Grand Opening Ceremony

This event which took place on June 23rd, last year was attended by over 2,000 persons from the community who came to enjoy the fun. The event was graced by the presence of Jennifer Tory - RBC's Greater Toronto Region Regional President, Lisa

Gallacher - Regional Vice- President, Scarborough Markets, Mohan Sundaramohan - Branch Manager, Jan Lum - Manager, Client Care and other members of the Branch Team.

Olympic Torch Video Taping Function

It was winter time when the above event took place and it was an event of video-taping of a runner bearing the Olympic Torch for RBC Annual Meeting was shot opposite the M & M Branch. Becky Kellar, a three-time Olympian was present to sign autographs for members of the hockey team and volunteers.

Compliments

I congratulate RBC for it's long-time presence providing financial services at local and international levels. I would also like to applaud the diversity reflected in the RBC team

Derek Lee - M.P. Scarborough-Rouge River

On behalf of the Board of Directors, members and our Advisory Board, I am pleased to congratulate you on completing your first year of operation at the Morningside & Milner Branch of the Royal Bank of Canada. You represent a very important partner in the success of the Chamber. We hope to be part of your success in the future too.

**- Gary Anandasangaree - President,
Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce**

RBC Royal Bank Morningside & Milner Branch has been offering a full range of Banking services to the diverse and growing needs of the Sri Lankan community in this area. The Bank has been supporting events of the Sri Lankan community and has associated itself with events organized by the Canada-Sri Lanka Business Council.

**- Louise Roberge - President,
Canada Sri Lanka Business Council**

RBC Royal Bank, Morningside & Milner Branch has been serving the growing needs of our community in the area which has a high percentage of members of the South Asian community. The Branch has been providing high quality to members of our community. An added incentive is that some members of the staff at the Branch speak languages spoken in Pakistan.

**- Andy Merchant, President
Canada Pakistan Business Council**

Comments

Last June, RBC officially opened it's doors at our new Morningside & Milner Branch. Since then, the Scarborough community has continued to provide us with tremendous support and make us feel incredibly welcome. Branch Manager Mohan Sundaramohan and the Morningside & Milner Team appreciate the opportunity to work with you as clients, and take immense pride in serving the financial needs of this community and in being part of this community and meeting it's unique needs. We feel very grateful to have been welcomed so warmly by this community, with it's vibrant social, cultural and business spirit. We look forward to continuing to work with you as clients, as partners, as friends, and as members of the community.

**- Jennifer Tory - Regional President
Greater Toronto Region, RBC, Royal Bank**

Thank You for supporting the Morningside & Milner Branch

Over the past year, we are committed to investing in our community by providing solid financial advice for clients ranging from making their first home purchase, getting their first bank account to starting a new small business. We continue to support a wide range of local charitable organizations ranging from: Boys and Girls Club of East Scarborough, Scarborough General Hospital to Habitat community, just to name a few. We are dedicated to build a strong and vibrant Scarborough.

**- Lisa Gallacher - Regional Vice-President
Scarborough Markets, RBC Royal Bank**

Since the opening of our new Branch, we have had a steady flow of customers from our neighbourhood visiting our Branch for their Banking needs. We provide efficient retail and commercial banking services to our clients. We have a fully equipped and trained staff who are conversant in ten different languages to serve the needs of the multi-ethnic community in our neighborhood. I extend my thanks to my staff team for the support they extended to me for providing excellent services to our customers. I also wish to thank all guests to our Ribbon cutting ceremony, Grand Opening event and also for participating in the summer events held last year. RBC is always there to better serve it's clients and to accommodate the growing needs of the community.

**- Mohan Sundaramohan - Branch Manager
RBC Royal Bank, Morningside & Milner Branch**

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Team Profile

Mohan Sundaramohan
Manager
Janet (Jan) Lum
Manager Client Care
Amoor (Theva) Thevathasan
Senior Account Manager, Business and Personal
David Bastiampillai
Account Manager
Khadija Mirza
Account Manager
Anju Chopra PFP
Financial Planner
Herrick K To o CFP, CIM, FCSI
Financial Planner-IRP
Yingtai (Alicia) Jiang
Account Manager
Vincent Sinnadurai
Sr Account Manager - Mortgage Manager
Mike Ahilan
Sr Account Manager - Mortgage Manager
Kuljith Riyat
Account Manager - Mortgages



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Morningside / Milner Branch



Grand Opening of Morningside / Milner Branch



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Kashmiri Hindus in Toronto Rally and Demand Political Empowerment of Displaced Community



Indo-Canadian Kashmir Forum (ICKF) and Kashmiri Overseas Association of Canada (KOAC) held a successful rally in Toronto, Canada outside Indian Consul General's office highlighting the plight of the aboriginal people of Kashmir, the Kashmiri Hindus and Sikhs, who were driven out of the valley by armed Islamic fundamentalists in January 1990. Demonstrators holding placards and banners expressed their concern over Government of India's indifference towards their plight and demanded that they should be given the Internally Displaced Peoples (IDP) status that will pave the way for their political empowerment in the state legislature. These Kashmiri aboriginals continue to live in refugee camps in Jammu, Udhampur and Delhi regions and are scattered all over the country and the Government of India continues to call them "Migrants" in official documentation. The placards highlighted the ethnic cleansing aspect of Hindus and Sikhs by Islamists and reiterated that they were forced to leave the land of their ancestors at gunpoint and that they did not leave on their own accord as the word "Migrants" would suggest.

Reiterating their demand of safe return to Kashmir with honor and dignity, volunteers and activists chanted slogans, Vande Matram, Bharat Mata Ki Jai, Kashmir Se KaniyaKumari Tak Bharat Aek Hai, etc. to assert that aboriginal Kashmiris were the founding members of 8000year old Indian civilization.

The ICKF President, Dr. Ashok Koul, in his speech towards the end of the rally expressed hope that the government of India will address the demands of Kashmiri Hindus and reserve legislative assembly seats for the displaced community while in exile. He also suggested that all Muslims in

the valley do not support fundamentalist views and these included Kashmiri Sufis, Gullar-Bakarwals of the Valley, Shias and a lot of other educated Sunnis. ICKF President also condemned the role of certain Kashmiri separatist and pseudo-secularist politicians from the valley in engaging in false propaganda including Jammu Kashmiri Liberation Front (JKLF) and Hizbul-Mujamidin (HM), both Islamic terrorist organizations, and their supporters living in Canada. ICKF and KOAC supporters also expressed hope that Government of India will truly reestablish the secular traditions of the state and treat each and every citizen equally rather than indulge in vote bank politics and refrain from implementing policies to appease the Islamists and anti-national politicians. This will hurt the union of India in the long run.

ICKF and KOAC Board of Directors Contact:

Ashok Koul

President

Indo-Canadian Kashmir Forum (ICKF)

PO Box 46125, 2339 Ogilvie Road,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1J 8M0

Tel. (613) 371-2105

Fax (613) 744-7574

ICKF was established in 1993 to inform the world community of the oppression against Kashmiri Pandits that led to their forced exile from Kashmir due to the influx of fundamentalist Islamic terrorism. ICKF wishes to raise awareness of the human rights violations suffered by the Pandit community, many of whom are still living in makeshift 'refugee' camps in Jammu, India. The organization seeks the return of Kashmiri Pandits to the Kashmir valley with guaranteed security and freedom to exercise their religious faith and cultural way of life without fear or intrusion. For more information, please call Ashok Koul.



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Monsoon Newsline

Mother Teresa, born Anjezë Gonxhe Bojaxhiu (Aug.26, 1910 - September 5, 1997) was an Albanian Roman Catholic nun with Indian citizenship who founded the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata (Calcutta), India in 1950. For over forty five years she ministered to the poor, sick, orphaned, and dying, while guiding the Missionaries of Charity's expansion, first throughout India and then in other countries.

By the 1970s she had become internationally famed as a humanitarian and advocate for the poor and helpless. She won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 and India's highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, in 1980 for her humanitarian work. Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity continued to expand, and at the time of her death it was operating 610 missions in 123 countries, including hospices and homes for people with HIV/AIDS, leprosy and tuberculosis, children's and family counseling programs, orphanages, and schools.

Following her death she was beatified by Pope John Paul II and given the title Blessed Teresa of Calcutta.

Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was born on August 26, 1910 in Skopje, now the capital of the Republic of Macedonia. She was the youngest of the children of a family from Shkoder, Albania, born to Kolë and Dranfile Bojaxhiu. In 1919 her father, Kolë Bojaxhiu fell ill and died when Anjeza was about eight years old. After her father's death, her mother raised her as a Roman Catholic. In her early years Agnes was fascinated by stories of the lives of missionaries and their service, and by age 12 was convinced that she should commit herself to a religious life. She left home at age 18 to join the Sisters of Loreto as a missionary. She never again saw her mother or sister.

Agnes initially went to the Loreto Abbey in Ireland to learn English, the language the Sisters of Loreto used to teach school children in India. She arrived in India in 1929, and began her novitiate in Darjeeling, near the Himalayan mountains. She took her first religious vows as a nun on May 24, 1931. At that time she

Mother Teresa

by Raymond Rajabalan

chose the name Teresa after Therese' de Lisieux, the patron saint of missionaries. She took her solemn vows on May 14, 1937, while serving as a teacher at the Loreto convent school in eastern Calcutta.

Although Teresa enjoyed teaching at the school, she was increasingly disturbed by the poverty surrounding her in Calcutta. A famine in 1943 brought misery and death to the city; and the outbreak of Hindu/Muslim violence in August 1946 plunged the city into despair and horror.

Missionaries of Charity

On September 10, 1946, Teresa experienced what she later described as "the call within the call" while traveling to the Loreto convent in Darjeeling for her annual retreat. "I was to leave the convent and help the poor while living among them. It was an

order. To fail would have been to break the faith." She began her missionary work with the poor in 1948, replacing her traditional Loreto habit with a simple white cotton chira decorated with a blue border, adopted Indian citizenship, and ventured out into the slums." Initially she started a school in Motijhil and soon she started tending to the needs of the destitute and starving.

"Make us worthy, Lord, to serve those people throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands, this day, their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give them peace and joy" -

Mother Teresa

order. To fail would have been to break the faith." She began her missionary work with the poor in 1948, replacing her traditional Loreto habit with a simple white cotton chira decorated with a blue border, adopted Indian citizenship, and ventured out into the slums." Initially she started a school in Motijhil and soon she started tending to the needs of the destitute and starving.

Teresa received Vatican permission on October 7, 1950 to start the diocesan congregation that would become the Missionaries of Charity. Its mission was to care for, in her own words, "the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, and all those

people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone." It began as a small order with 13 members in Calcutta and today it has more than 4,000 nuns running orphanages and charity centers worldwide and caring for refugees, the blind, disabled, aged, alcoholics, the poor and homeless, and victims of floods, epidemics, and famine.

In 1952 Mother Teresa opened the first Home for the Dying in space made available by the City of Calcutta. She renamed it Kalighat, the Home of the Pure Heart. Those brought to the home received medical attention and were afforded the opportunity to die with dignity, according to the rituals of their faith; Muslims were read the Quran, Hindus received water from the Ganges, and Catholics received the Last Rites. Mother Teresa soon opened

a home for those suffering from Hansen's disease, commonly known as leprosy, and called the hospice Shanti Nagar (City of Peace) The Missionaries of Charity also established several leprosy outreach clinics throughout Calcutta, providing medication, bandages and food.

As the Missionaries of Charity took in increasing numbers of lost children, Mother Teresa felt the need to create a home for them. In 1955 she opened the Children's Home of the Immaculate Heart, as a haven for orphans and homeless youth.

The order soon began to attract both recruits and charitable donations, and by the 1960s



had opened hospices, orphanages and leper houses all over India. Mother Teresa then expanded the order throughout the globe

International charity

In 1982, at the height of the Siege of Beirut, Mother Teresa rescued 37 children trapped in a front line hospital by brokering a temporary cease-fire between the Israeli army and Palestinian guerrillas. Accompanied by Red Cross workers, she traveled through the war zone to the devastated hospital to evacuate the young patients.

Mother Teresa traveled to assist and minister to the hungry in Ethiopia, radiation victims at Chernobyl, and earthquake victims in Armenia. In 1991, Mother Teresa returned for the first time to her homeland and opened a Missionaries of Charity Brothers home in Tirana, Albania.

By 1996, she was operating 517 missions in more than 100 countries. Over the years, Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity grew from twelve to thousands serving the "poorest of the poor" in 450 centers around the world.

Declining health and death

Mother Teresa suffered a heart attack in Rome in 1983, while visiting Pope John Paul II. In 1991, after a battle with pneumonia while in Mexico, she suffered further heart problems. She offered to resign her position as head of the Missionaries of

Charity. But the nuns of the order, in a secret ballot, voted for her to stay. Mother Teresa agreed to continue her work as head of the order. On March 13, 1997, she stepped down from the head of Missionaries of Charity and died on September 5, 1997.

In 1971, Paul VI awarded her the first pope John XXIII Peace Prize, commending her for her work with the poor, display of Christian charity and efforts for peace. She later received the Pacem in Terris Award (1976). Since her death, Mother Teresa has progressed rapidly along the steps towards sainthood, currently having reached the stage of having been beatified.

Miracle and beatification

Following Mother Teresa's death in 1997, the Holy See began the process of beatification, the second step towards possible canonization. This process requires the documentation of a miracle performed from the intercession of Mother Teresa.

In 2002, the Vatican recognized as a miracle the healing of a tumour in the abdomen of an Indian woman, Monica Besra, following the application of a locket containing Mother Teresa's picture. Monica Besra said that a beam of light emanated from the picture, curing the cancerous tumor. The beatification of Mother Teresa took place on October 19, 2003, thereby bestowing on her the title "Blessed."

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Canada Newsline

Dr. John Wright named permanent President and CEO of The Scarborough Hospital

Selection follows exhaustive Canada-wide search

After an exhaustive process involving candidates from across the country, the incoming Board of Directors of The Scarborough Hospital has unanimously recommended Dr. John Wright as the hospital's new President and CEO.

"Dr. Wright's lifelong commitment and skills in the medical profession, his unwavering integrity and commitment to excellence, his strength in dealing with the community and government, and his passion to improve the quality of health care in Scarborough, will make a meaningful positive difference for all those that touch The Scarborough Hospital," says Michael Mueller, incoming Chair of the TSH Board of Directors.

Dr. Wright says he is honoured by the appointment, and excited about the opportunity to work with a brand new Board.

"I have the utmost respect for the staff, physicians and volunteers here, and for their incredible commitment to patients and the many communities we serve," says Dr. Wright. "There have been

many positive changes since I arrived here last November, and I look forward to building on that momentum."

When Dr. Wright joined TSH on an interim basis last November, the hospital had one of the worst Hospital Standardized Mortality Ratios (HSMR) in the GTA. "Thanks to some very hard work by a terrific team of healthcare professionals, we are now one of most improved hospitals in the province," says Dr. Wright.

And while improving HSMR data for the hospital has been a priority for Dr. Wright, it was just one of many projects he initiated during his term as interim president and CEO.

"I am very proud that we now have a draft Code of Conduct. I'm proud of the great strides we have made with respect to our relationship with the community. And I'm proud of the work being done to improve TSH through our employee opinion surveys and community consultations," he says.

Moving forward, Dr. Wright says a great deal of work still



remains to be done, a deciding factor in his decision to remain at the helm of TSH.

"Our community consultation surveys and our employee opinion surveys have told us that our staff, physicians and community members care about the same basic issues, namely quality of care and patient safety," Dr. Wright says. "I look forward to working with our new Board of Directors as we focus on these issues."

Dr. Wright's selection as President and CEO followed a rigorous recruitment process led by

Run For The Beat to raise money for TSH

Walkers and runners of all ages and abilities will be lacing up for the TSH Run For The Beat on Sunday, October 26, 2008, featuring a 5- and 10K Run/Walkathon to raise funds for capital equipment at The Scarborough Hospital.

Join us for live entertainment, a barbecue, snacks and refreshments, and a "Beat" After Party at L'Amoreaux Park, across from our Grace campus.

Children 12 and under are encouraged to dress up as their

favourite music or pop star for a chance to win prizes.

The event runs from 7:00 a.m. to noon.

The registration deadline for the TSH Run For The Beat event is October 22 at noon. For more information please contact Valerie Culham, Community Development Officer at The Scarborough Hospital Foundation, at 416-431-8200, ext. 6662, or Lisa Alves, Special Events Assistant at 416-431-8200, ext. 6661.

Rob Devitt, Supervisor for TSH.

"We interviewed some high-calibre candidates, and in the end, our Board felt Dr. Wright possessed the talent and vision to continue leading TSH into the future," Devitt says. "He has done an outstanding job over the past nine months, and has demonstrated his ability to achieve positive results."

A gastroenterologist, Dr. Wright was the Vice-President of Medical Affairs at the University Health Network when he was seconded to TSH last November.

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.

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Monsoon Living



by PK

Missoni is an Italian fashion house based in Milan. It is famous for its unique knitwear, made from a variety of fabrics in colourful patterns. The company was founded by Ottavio ("Tai") and Rosita Missoni in 1953.

History

Tai Missoni was born in 1921 in Dubrovnik, then part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes and formerly known as Ragusa. His father, Vittorio Missoni, was an Italian sea captain (and son of a Friulano magistrate transferred in the then Austrian-ruled Dalmatia) and his mother, Teresa de' Vidovich Countess di Capocosto e Ragosniza, was a Croat-Italian noblewoman. Before WWII he was an international athlete, but spent most of the war as a POW in Egypt. After the war he set up a workshop with his friend Giorgio Oberweger, making wool tracksuits. His "Venjulia" tracksuits were adopted by the Italian team at the 1948 Olympics in London, and Tai himself qualified for the final of the 400m hurdle race. At Wembley he met Rosita Jelmini, daughter of a family of shawl makers in Golasecco in the province of Varese.

They married in April 1953, and set up a small knitwear workshop in Gallarate, not far from Rosita's home village. In 1958 they presented in Milan their first collection, called Milano-Simpathy, which was the first to bear the Missoni label. The business prospered, with the support of legendary editor Anna Piaggi, then at Arianna. On a trip to New York, Rosita met the French stylist Emmanuelle Kahn in 1965, which led to a collaboration and a radical new collection the following year. Their fame was assured in April 1967, when they were invited to show at the Pitti Palace in Florence. Rosita told the models to remove their bras, supposedly because they were the wrong colour and showed through the thin lamé blouses. The material became transparent under the lights and caused a sensation. The Missonis were not invited back the following year, but the business went from strength to strength, building a new factory in Sumirago in 1969. With their designs being championed in the US by Diana Vreeland, editor of Vogue magazine, they opened their first boutique there, inside Bloomingdales.

The early 1970s saw Missoni reach the peak of their influence in the fashion world. Tai Missoni then became more interested in other projects, everything from designing costumes for La Scala, to designing carpets and tapestries. Rosita has admitted that in the 1990s she lost interest in fashion, before handing over to her daughter Angela in 1998. Rosita now is responsible for

DESIGNER PROFILE MISSONI

overseeing the design of all home projects.

Ottavio Missoni was Sindaco (Mayor) of Libero Comune di Zara in Esilio.

Brands

Aside from the main Missoni line, the company has diversified into a variety of luxury goods. Missoni Sport was initially licensed out but production and marketing was brought in-house in January 2002 and has since been discontinued. M Missoni is a less expensive line introduced in 1998, manufactured and distributed by Marzotto (now Valentino Fashion Group S.p.A). It has achieved remarkable success in being able to reach a larger number of consumers and is now being sold at



premier department and specialty stores across the world.

The Missoni Home collection has its roots in furnishing fabrics produced in 1981 in collaboration with Rosita's family firm. They launched their first perfume in 1982, although that product has nothing to do with the license now held by Estée Lauder.

In November 2005, Missoni and the Rezidor Hotel Group signed an agreement to create Hotel Missoni, a lifestyle hotel chain. The first locations were announced in March 2006 in Kuwait, Edinburgh and Dubai. The first property, the Hotel Missoni Kuwait will open in a luxury mixed-use development on the seafront in the third quarter of 2008, with Edinburgh following later in the second quarter of 2009. Not much is known about the Dubai property, but it is expected to launch sometime in 2009 or 2010. Further properties are currently rumored for London (United Kingdom), Paris (France), Miami (United States of America) and Kiev (Ukraine).

Style

Missoni knitwear is known for its multitude of patterns such as stripes, geometrics, and abstract florals, in a kaleidoscope of colours. They are also known for the liberal use of many different fabrics such as wool, cotton, linen, rayon and silk.

Family



The three children of the founders play a large part in the business. Vittorio (born 1954) is the Marketing Director, Luca (born 1956) is responsible for the design of the menswear collection, and Angela (born 1958) is Creative Director for womenswear.

Luca's daughter, Jennifer Missoni, is an actress who has appeared in Off Broadway theatre productions, and in episodes of Damages and the Law & Order series. Angela's daughter, Margherita, is also studying in New York to be an actress. She is the unofficial "muse" of the Missoni collection and the face of their two perfumes.

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Measure Your Waist-To-Hip Ratio

A woman's waist shouldn't measure more than 35 inches, regardless of her height or weight, as too much abdominal fat can increase your risk of heart disease. "Ideally your waist size divided by your hip size should be 0.8 or less", says personal trainer Sanchia Dennehy, from the Laboratory Spa and Health Club. Measure your waist at its smallest point, then your hips from the middle of your hip bone around your widest part, if its more than 0.8, cut out the mid afternoon crisps.

Check Your Nails

"Revealing a lot more than how much you spend on manicures, your nails can indicate if something's wrong with another part of you body," explains Dr Catti Moss. Thin, flat, spoon-like nails can be a sign of iron deficiency. The fix: eat more red meat or an iron boost. If you're a vegetarian, eat wholemeal bread, fortified cereals, dark green leafy veg and dried fruit. Flaky, split

nails could be the result of a lack of essential fatty acids (omega-3s), so eat oily fish, linseeds and walnuts. White spots on your nails mean you have zinc deficiency, so have more poultry, wholegrains and seafood.

Ab Crunches

This test reveals how fit you are by assessing how many sit-ups you can do. Don't cheat: bend your legs at 90-degrees with your feet resting on your friend's ankles to keep your body in alignment. Place your fingers by your temples and make sure your elbows touch your knees each time you sit up. "Anything above 30 without stopping is healthy and indicates the rest of your body in good shape," says Dennehy. If you're struggling start exercising for three half-hour sessions a week.

Check Your Breath

"If your breath suddenly starts to smell bad (ask a good friend!),



it can indicate anything from too much coffee or not enough water to bum disease," explains Alison Wyndham, owner of Wyndham Centres, a group of alternative Physiotherapy clinics. "It usually means poor digestion, or a digestive-enzymes imbalance caused by not eating the right foods." To correct this eat more probiotic foods with live bacteria (such as live yogurt or yogurt drinks) and try an acidophilus supplement to

help balance your gut. Poor digestion can lead to low energy levels, weight gain and allergies, so it's vital to catch any imbalances early on.

Monitor Sleep Patterns

One in three people in Canada suffer from some kind of sleep disorder, often linked to stress, asthma, tinnitus and indigestion, However says Wyndham, not



many people realise it could be a blood-sugar problem. "Your blood sugar is at its lowest in the middle of the night so if you wake at this time, your chances of nodding off again are lowest. Eating small, regular meals every two to three hours until half an hour before bed can help. If you wake during the night, sip fruit juice as it will lift your levels and help you get back to sleep."

Touch Your Toes

Even yoga virgins should be able to do this without bending their knees. If you can't, your lack of flexibility may lead to mobility problems and can increase your risk of injury, says Dr Christane Northrup, author of Women's Bodies & Women's Wisdom. To increase your flexibility, after taking a bath sit with your legs outstretched and ease forwards from your hips (not rounding your back), aiming to hold your feet. Bend your knees at first if you have to. Do this three or four times a week.

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Monsoon Newsline

CPJ: "Publishing a magazine should not constitute an offence"

CPJ: "Publishing a magazine should not constitute an offence"

Statement by Committee to Protect Journalists

The Committee to Protect Journalists condemns the Colombo high court's recent indictment of journalist J.S. Tissainayagam on terrorism charges for articles he published in 2006.

Sri Lanka's Terrorist Investigation Division arrested Tissainayagam, the editor of news Web site OutreachSL, and five of his colleagues within a few days in March 2008. Three of the group were released later that month, according to the Sri Lankan Free Media Movement. Tissainayagam and two others, OutreachSL manager N. Jasiharan and his wife, remain in custody without charge. It is not clear if Jasiharan and his wife have also been indicted.

Today's charges against Tissainayagam cite a magazine, North Eastern Monthly, which the journalist edited in 2006, according to his lawyer, M.A. Sumanthiran, who spoke with CPJ by telephone this morning. Two charges relate to articles



[J.S. Tissainayagam, an ethnic Tamil senior journalist and columnist (L), walks handcuffed as prison officers escort him to the High Court in Colombo August 25, 2008-pic: Reuters Alertnet, Buddhika Weerasinghe]

Tissainayagam wrote for the magazine. The journalist's lawyer told CPJ that the government said the articles incited communal disharmony, an offence under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. A third charge says he furthered an act of terrorism by collecting money from NGOs to publish the magazine, he told CPJ.

Tissainayagam, an ethnic Tamil, is also a columnist for the Sri Lankan weekly The Sunday Times.

Free Media Movement spokesman Sunanda Deshapriya told CPJ that North Eastern Magazine was a known as a pro-Tamil English-language publication that was not considered pro-Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, he said. It closed down over a year ago.

"We condemn J.S. Tissainayagam's long detention and harsh charges for publishing a magazine, which should not constitute an offence," said Bob Dietz, CPJ Asia Program Coordinator. "This is the latest step by the Sri Lankan government to intimidate journalists who write about security issues."

Tissainayagam pleaded not guilty today because he does not believe he committed a criminal act, Sumanthiran told CPJ. He was denied bail and will go to trial on September 18, the lawyer said.

Rajiva Wijesinha, Sri Lanka's secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, denied to Human Rights Watch on August 12 that Tissainayagam had been detained for criticizing the government. "Some of their publications were designed to embarrass the Sri Lankan government through false accusations," Wijesinha said of Tissainayagam and "his business associates," according to the text of the letter, which is published on the Web site of the Sri Lankan permanent mission to the UN in Geneva. He does not name the business associates in the letter.

Tissainayagam's Sunday Times column, written from a Tamil viewpoint, frequently tackled issues sensitive to the Sri Lankan government, including security issues. One of his final columns before his arrest was titled "Child soldiers: What the govt. report did not report."

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Monsoon Newsline

Silent protest in solidarity with civilians in Vanni



University of Jaffna students and staff gathered for a silent protest against the isolation of civilians in Vanni on Tuesday Aug 19th, a media report said.

"We express our deep felt sympathy and support to the thousands of Internally Displaced Persons in the Vanni mainland and our strong condemnation against the Sri Lanka Government for continually unleashing severe military and aerial offensives on the people of Vanni," the President of Jaffna University Students Union (JUSU) said in his introductory speech at the beginning of the protest which began at 10:00 a.m.

"The Jaffna University society is observing this silent protest, at a time when freedom of speech and freedom of expression are denied to the residents of Jaffna peninsula," the JUSU representatives said.

"The government has systematically and very effectively cut off all connections between Vanni and the outer world to carry on its scheme of annihilating the people in Vanni in the dark in its next phase of an offensives onslaught," the JUSU representatives further said.

The Vice-chancellor Prof. N. Shanmuglingan, Faculty Deans, lecturers, administrative staff and students in their hundreds observed 15-minutes absolute silence at Kailasapathy Auditorium, which has become the venue of 'Silent' plays and prayers.

The hall lacked space to accommodate all the participants. Hundreds of students stood outside the hall and participated in the protest. The lectures and other activities in the University were suspended from 10:00 a.m for an hour.

Vinayaga Chaturthi, the annual festival of lord Ganesh

By K.T. Kumaran

Ganesh Chaturthi is observed on the Tamil calendar month of Aavani (August) on Chaturthi thithi day during the waxing moon period falling after the dark moon (Amagasai). Typically, the day falls sometime between August 20 and September 15.

Pillaiyar is worshiped on Chaturthi day by performing archana with 21 arugampul (Bermuda grass) and prayers chanting Vinayagar ashtothram.

Kozhukattai neivedhyam (offering of food to Lord) tops the delicacies on Vinayaga Chaturthi. Kozhukattai, the steamed dumpling made of lentil, coconut and jagery filling spiced with cardamom is then given as prasadam to devotees on Ganesh Chaturthi day.

Ganesh Chaturthi is observed with special poojas, prayers and festivities at temples and Ganesh shrines across Sri Lanka and around the globe.



Pic courtesy of Virakesari, by Hatton Addt'l correspondent

Lord Ganesh is the "first god" of all rituals, daily chores and activities for believers and devotees and many others alike. Everything begins with a prayer celebrating Lord Ganesh. He is the supreme god of wisdom, prosperity and good fortune.

"He has sweetly graced me, with joyous compassion", says Sangam era poetess Auvaiyar, in Vinayagar Agaval.

Indian historian Ramachandra Guha says, "...dancing little statue of the Hindu god Ganesh is my mascot", even though "he is not a believer".



Special Festivities were held at Vanaraja Vinajagar Temple, Hatton, Sri Lanka on Wednesday Sep 3,2008 observing Vinayaga Chaturthi

World Health Organization issues alert on Vanni shortages

The humanitarian situation in Vanni continues to be complicated by serious food, drugs and fuel shortages, The World Health Organization (WHO) said in the 'Health Action in Crises' update for the period through August 24th. Assessments of conditions in Vanni and other affected areas by WHO:

- o The situation in the northern

Vanni district is tense due to intense clashes between Sri Lanka military and the LTTE. The fighting has pushed more than 20,000 people to seek refuge in Kilinochchi and Mannar during the recent weeks, bringing the total number of reported IDPs to more than 217 000.

- o The delivery of supplies such as drugs, supplementary foods

and fuel to communities in LTTE-controlled areas is difficult. Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation continues to be complicated by serious food, drugs and fuel shortages. District health facilities are suffering substantial medicine, personnel and fuel shortages.

- o Small-scale dengue and dysentery outbreaks were reported in Ampara, Kilinochchi, Batticaloa and Jaffna but inaccessibility and lack of human resources have caused much under-reporting.

Weak liquidity at Vanni banks adding to woes

Managers of Sri Lanka bank branches in Vanni fear of severe liquidity shortfall in their branches. They brought their concern on the cash crunch to the attention of the authorities at a recently held essential services meeting held in Kilinochchi.

A recent report about the meeting in Thinakkural, a Tamil daily published from Colombo says bank managers have been avoiding trips to Vavuniya to collect the needed cash for their branches in fear of the 'deep penetration unit' attacks inside Vanni along the way.

There was already restrictions in place on the amount of cash available for Vanni branches. The weak liquidity has forced the banks in Vanni to limit the amount

of funds available for individuals at these branches.

People in Vanni are facing shortages of all essential items, a weak liquidity at the banks is adding to their woes.

The displacement has caused shortages for vegetables and fresh produce in places where numerous people have taken refuge for safety, according to Thinakkural.

Farmers have been fleeing several hamlets abandoning fields and crops.

Vegetables grown in areas where people have taken refuge for safety are insufficient to meet the needs of all internally displaced people, adds Tamil daily Thinakkural.

Amputee among kidnapped by White Van squad

Relatives have lodged complaints with Police and Deputy Minister P. Radhakrishnan, of two kidnappings by the 'white van squad' on Friday, August 15th.

They are 34 and 49 years old and fathers of young children; one of them an amputee after a 1995 auto accident. They hail from Nellyyadi and Pungkuduthivu from North of Sri Lanka but are longtime residents of Colombo and Watala, a report in Tamil Daily Thinakkural said.

Rohini Balakumar of 70/2 New Chetty Street has complained her husband Selvarajah Balakumar (34), a native of Nellyyadi has gone missing after he was kidnapped by two Sri Lanka navy soldiers on a motorcycle and an armed Tamil group dressed in civil clothes riding the white van without a license plate.

She said the two navy soldiers came to their house around 9:30 in the morning on Friday, assaulted and dragged her husband before handing him over to the group in the white van. At this same address, Markandu Vadivanathan was kidnapped on August 22nd, 2006 and missing since then, even though a ransom of 35 lakhs was paid, Thinakkural added. 49-year-old disabled person, Christhotharan Francis was abducted on August 15th, the same day as Selvarajah Balakumar from his residence located along Jayanthi Mawatte in Wattala-Hunupity junction during the night. A complaint in this regard was made to the Kiribathgoda police station by his wife yesterday.

Christhotharan Francis, a native of Pungkudithivu worked in

Saudi Arabia and became disabled after an accident in 1995.

His wife Veronica Christhotharan said a youth arrested in Vavuniya was also brought along and premises around the house and lavatory were dug during a search by around 10 persons. They came to the house in a white van, an auto and a blue truck, and gruesomely assaulted Veronica Christhotharan's disabled husband, Thinakkural report says.

Deputy Minister P. Radhakrishnan has said Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayake was informed of the kidnappings. The Minister added, of the 210 persons kidnapped this year, 1 person has been shot dead, 22 persons being held in Police stations and Boosa and no information is yet available on the other 121 persons.

Monsoon Newslines

Sri Lanka Army puts public to work fortifying with fallen palmyrah

In the recent weeks several transformers in Jaffna peninsula are getting fortified with Palmyra logs, according to a recent report in Thinakkural, a Tamil daily published from Colombo.

Palmyrah trees are being felled on a large scale for the fortifying purposes by Sri Lanka Army and general public is being put to 'work', to build the fortifications, the newspaper said.

New security arrangements around transformers were introduced in Jaffna recently, as several were damaged due to being fired upon by unknown persons.

Thinakkural added disappointment is expressed on behalf of the general public, as people from the area and passersby are taken at random and put to 'work' with numerous delays, curtailing the daily routines of those civilians.

At least in one location, Sirupitty, 3 youths were stuck by



Palmyrah trees are being felled on a large scale by Sri Lanka Military

electricity and injured while setting up the fortification.

The Sri Lanka Palmyrah Development Board and private initiatives over the years have seen an active palmyrah replanting scheme. Felling the trees indiscriminately is negating the initia-

tive, members of civil society said.

Palmyrah tree and matured palms supply basic essentials to Jaffna citizens in several ways. They serve as valuable timber for construction of dwellings after its utility period which is more than hundred years.

LTTE calls Trincomalee air strike 'successful'

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has claimed that the 'Air Tigers' carried out a successful air strike on the Eastern Headquarters of the Sri Lanka Navy located in the inner harbour of Trincomalee on Tuesday Aug 26th at 9:15 p.m, according to media reports.

The LTTE also said their aircrafts safely returned to the base after carrying out the mission.

However, Sri Lanka Government media has said the LTTE air raid was 'aborted'. It also said the intended LTTE target may have been 'the base itself and the Jetliner troops carrier'.

Excerpts of report in Daily News.lk:

The aircraft had come in from the Mullaitivu side and was detected by the SLAF radars. The Security Forces activated the air defence mechanisms.

Anti-aircraft fire and tracer bullets ripped through the night sky, residents said. To



The sources said the main targets could have been the base itself and the Jetliner troops carrier which leaves Trincomalee for Jaffna with hundreds of Forces personnel. The ship movement was not affected. The aircraft withdrew from the area after anti-aircraft measures were activated.

Meanwhile an Independent Colombo based news website - Lanka Dissent said '6 naval per-

sonnel were killed and 24 injured in Air Tiger attack'.

The first LTTE air raid was on August 11th 2006 when two planes flew over Palaly and dropped a few bombs. In 2007, air attacks were carried out in locations near Colombo. The strike on Trincomalee harbour on August 26th was the 6th air attack carried out by LTTE.

Special units at hospitals in Sri Lanka's North for medical care of soldiers

New separate units for medical care of wounded Sri Lanka Army soldiers at the war front is to be opened at all Hospitals in the North, Tamil daily Virakesari's website reported recently.

President Mahinada Rajapakse has issued special directives to the Ministry of Health in this regard. The urgent measures

were taken at a meeting President had at the Temple Trees with senior officials of the Ministry of Health this morning, to discuss the numerous shortcomings at the medical facilities in the North.

Health Ministry officials have been asked to import all needed medical equipment and medicines for the Northern hospitals for

medical care of soldiers without any delay, according to Virakesari.

The Hospitals in Sri Lanka's North were under neglect for a long time under various embargos and restrictions; and the plight of the civilians were ignored by Sri Lanka government, civil society sources in Jaffna said.

Buddhist monk desecrates Hindu temple in Colombo



Desecration of Amman Statue at Colombo Hindu Temple

Grandpass Police took a Buddhist monk and two others into custody after they allegedly broke devotional statues at the Muthumari Amman Temple, at De Mel Mawatte. Police made the arrests at 2 AM on Sep 4th.

Complaint was lodged at the Grandpass Police about the Buddhist monk and two others from a nearby Buddhist Vihara climbing on the main kopuram [monumental tower, usually ornate, at the entrance] of the temple and braking the statues, according to a report on Colombo Tamil daily Virakesari's website.

Annual festival of Muthumari Amman Temple, at De Mel Mawatte, Grandpass was held on Sep 3, 2008.

Special consecration (Kumpaapisheakam) celebrations were held that day marking completion of recent renovations at the temple. During the night that followed, the Buddhist monk and three of his associates got into the temple through the roof and smashed the newly built Amman statue, Vishnu statue, Ramar statue and Sivalingham.

Grandpass is a borough in Colombo, capital city of Sri Lanka.

Devotees profiled for church entry by Sri Lanka military

In an act being dismayed as ethnic profiling, Sri Lanka military didn't allow Tamil catholic devotees to attend services at the renowned Madhu shrine, but allowed Sinhala Catholics only.

Tamil Catholic devotees were deprived from taking part in the special mass of blessing from Our Lady of Madhu on Friday August 15th, Tamil daily Thinakkural reported.

Thinakkural report further said, around 500 Sinhala Catholic devotees along with three Sri Lankan ministers were escorted by the Police to take part in Friday's blessings in Madhu. However, Tamil speaking devotees who were present at Madawachchi were refused entry by the Police.



This year, The Annual Madhu feast is not being held due to the prevailing conditions in the surrounding area of the Madhu shrine.

Monsoon Newsline

Sri Lanka's Tamils Live in Fear of Security Forces

by Ravi Nessman

People in the poor, mainly Tamil neighborhood in Colombo described it as a harrowing day.

It was 5 a.m. on a Wednesday when police started knocking on doors. They searched hundreds of homes, then forced thousands of men, women and children to get dressed and walk through the narrow streets lined with soldiers to a nearby sports field. Over the next six hours, authorities questioned, photographed and videotaped the neighborhood's inhabitants.

Still, few of those rounded up expressed surprise at the intrusion.

Members of Sri Lanka's minority Tamil community say police raids, harassment, arbitrary detentions and even abductions have become routine in recent years as violence has escalated in the 25-year civil war between the government, dominated by the Sinhalese majority, and the Tamil Tiger militia fighting for a separate state in the island's north and east.

"They think every Tamil-speaking person is a terrorist. They want to control us," said Sanjeevi Ramiah, 47, one of the few residents of the Kimbulla Ela neighborhood willing to speak publicly about the July 2 raid.

While Tamils and human rights advocates complain about police excesses, most agree this Indian Ocean island nation is faced with a serious threat from the rebels.

The Tigers have been blamed for deadly attacks over the past year that have spread fear across the capital, Colombo, in the south. A June bombing on a crowded suburban bus killed 21 people, two days after a blast targeting the railroad in the city narrowly missed a passenger train.

"No one suggests for the moment that there should not be security measures and precautions," said Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director of the Center for Policy Alternatives think tank. "At the same time, we need to be a lot more serious in finding the balance between democratic rights and human rights and the right security measures. We can't alienate an entire community, an entire section of the citizenry."

Emergency regulations renewed by parliament each month give the government wide-ranging powers to arrest terror suspects and detain them indefinitely.

With each new attack in the capital, the complex web of checkpoints, road closures and random searches tightens. And many Tamils say their lives grow

harder.'

They say police assume they sympathize with the rebels' fight for a homeland for ethnic Tamils and single them out at checkpoints and during searches on buses.

Many are routinely detained on minor infractions or for no reason at all, according to residents and human rights groups. Those who fled the northern war zone, where the rebels control a de facto state, say they risk arrest for not registering with police or for having overnight guests without police authorization.

In June 2007, authorities briefly expelled more than 300 Tamils from Colombo boarding houses before the Supreme Court forced them to back down.

Following a pair of bombings in November, the government detained more than 2,000 Tamils in a mass arrest sweep, a common tactic after major attacks. It released nearly all of them days later after a groundswell of criticism.

In addition, nearly 200 Tamils have "disappeared" from the capital in recent years, said Mano Ganesan, an opposition parliamentarian who heads a group that catalogues the disappearances. The government denies any connection to the phenomenon.

"The root cause of this is the unresolved ethnic issue," Ganesan said, referring to the historic tension between the country's mainly Hindu Tamils and the mainly Buddhist Sinhalese. A Sinhalese nationalist movement arose after Sri Lanka's independence from Britain in 1948. The civil war began after a 1983 rebel ambush killed 13 Sri Lankan soldiers and sparked an anti-Tamil riot in the capital that human rights groups say killed more than 2,000 people.

Keheliya Rambukwella, a government minister and its chief defense spokesman, acknowledged Tamils were singled out for scrutiny in Colombo, but only because rebel attackers - who have killed members of all ethnic groups - routinely hid among the capital's large Tamil community.

"It is not a bed of roses. You have to undergo certain kinds of inconveniences," he said. "I really don't think it is discrimination. It is for their own good."

Tamils, just 18 percent of the country, make up as much as one-third of the capital's population, according to officials. And they are an important part of the fabric of Colombo. Some are doctors, lawyers or other wealthy professionals. Some, such as Rambukwella himself, are even government ministers.



Residents of Kimbulla Ela, a poor Colombo neighborhood also known as a hotbed of drug crime play cricket in one of the narrow streets in Colombo, Sri Lanka on July 16, 2008. AP Photo/ Gemunu Amarasinghe



Members of the minority Tamil community say police raids, harassment, arbitrary detentions and even abductions have become routine during the recent escalation in the 25-year civil war between the government, dominated by the Sinhalese majority, and the Tamil Tiger separatists

While upper class Tamils are rarely inconvenienced, the majority of Colombo's Tamils are poor or lower middle class and feel powerless in the face of the mainly Sinhalese security forces.

Most of Colombo's Tamils have no connection with the Tamil Tiger rebels based hundreds of miles north of here or with their war. Still, many are finding it hard to get jobs because of suspicion, and some have stopped speaking Tamil on trains and buses, especially amid the post-attack security sweeps.

Veteran human rights activist Nimalka Fernando accused the government of "ethnic profiling" and said it was further polarizing an already divided country.

One man, who declined to give his name out of fear of retaliation by the security services, said police arrested him in February after someone he had worked with years earlier was found at a house where a bomb prematurely exploded.

The 28-year-old man from the rebel heartland of Killinochchi described a dreadful night of abuse, with police handcuffing him, stripping him, beating him and demanding he admit he was a rebel sleeper agent.

His wife complained to the

would grab him again, he said.

The residents of Kimbulla Ela said the dawn raid on their poor Colombo neighborhood, also known as a hotbed of drug crime, was the second in two months.

Hundreds of soldiers in the streets funneled roughly 3,000 people to the neighborhood football field to answer questions about how long they had lived in the area and why they were there, residents said. Many missed work after waiting as long as six hours without food or water to be interviewed, said one man, a 31-year-old shop worker, who declined to be named out of fear of arrest.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said authorities were looking for rebel agents and weapons caches, had raided other neighborhoods as well and were not singling out Tamils.

"There were so many threats to Colombo and the vicinity, therefore we had to carry out search operations," he said.

Ramiah, the resident of Kimbulla Ela who spoke publicly, said he appreciated the government's need to provide security, but insisted it was targeting the wrong people. Scores of residents of his neighborhood have been swept up in blanket arrest raids and none has turned out to be rebels, he said.

"They have to do security, definitely. We want to help them with that," he said. But, he added, "This is not real security."

[Couresty: Associated Press, August 31, 2008]

Annual Nallur Kumaran chariot festival

Chariot Festival at Nallur Kandaswamy Temple was held on August 29th.

Though the crowd of devotees was comparatively less than the previous years during the Cease Fire Agreement period, people kept coming from morning through noon, according to media sources in Jaffna.

The annual festivals during the

few years after the 2002 'cease-fire' were held in a grand scale but the festival is subdued this year due to the unsettled security situation and the strictly enforced curfew prevailing in Jaffna peninsula.

The Temple situated on the outskirts of Jaffna traces its origin back to A.D 948 and has emerged as one of the most revered Hindu shrines in Sri Lanka.



Nallur Kanthan, God of love, beauty and knowledge exerting his charm on devotees, Aug 29, 2008. Picture courtesy of: Virakesari.lk - Vannarponnai Correspondent

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Margosa Credit Union Grand Opening of First Branch in Toronto on 6th September 2008 - 'Nurturing Our Community'

By Siva Sivapragasam

Margosa Credit Union, the first of its kind to meet the financial needs of the Sri Lankan community officially launched their first Branch in Toronto on Saturday 6th September amidst a vast & mixed gathering of Business persons, Parliamentarians, community Leaders and members from the Media.

As the Sri Lankan community completes more than 25 years of residency in Canada, it is but fitting

and a co-incidence that a financial institution to meet the needs of the community has become a reality. This has been achieved due to the tireless efforts of a team of supportive and enthusiastic individuals who had a vision for the future of the community. Their commitment towards the task and dedication towards a goal has been fruitful in drawing investment for this great venture.

Canadians of Sri Lankan descent have been a resourceful and vibrant community playing a vital

part in the rich and cultural mosaic of the province of Ontario. Adding to these achievements of the community is the launch of Margosa Credit Union which becomes another feather in the cap for the community.

No doubt, Margosa Credit Union will enrich the vibrancy of the Sri Lankan community and thereby the economic prosperity of the province of Ontario. Margosa needs the support and backing of the community to make the Union grow strong.



Mr. V.S. Thurairajah-Director, Margosa Credit Union and Chairman Community Relations for Margosa with Mr. John McKay-Federal M.P. for Scarborough Guildwood



Seated Left to Right- Mr. Siva Sivapragasam- Chief Editor-Monsoon Journal, Mr. M.V. Theagarajah - Director, Hattori National Bank, Sri Lanka, Dr. S.T. Ariaratnam - Chairman, Margosa Credit Union, Mr. Stanley Arnold-President & CEO, Margosa Credit Union



Ms. Margaret Best-M.P.P. Scarborough Guildwood addresses the guests at the function. Others in the picture are George Thambithurai-Secretary, Margosa Credit Union, Hattori National Bank-Sri Lanka, Mr. Stanley Arnold - President & CEO, Margosa Credit Union and Mr. Warren Kanagaratnam, Director-Margosa Credit Union



Mr. Victor Santhiapillai, Director & Chairperson for Investor Relations, Margosa Credit Union hands over a Certificate of Appreciation to one of the investors - Mr. M.V. Jeganathan



Mr. Mohan Perera-Director, Margosa Credit Union with Mr. M.V. Theagarajah, Director Hattori National Bank, Sri Lanka



Kanchana Uthayakumar, Office Administrator - Margosa Credit Union, answering telephone calls at her desk

Photo Courtesy: M.V. Jeganathan & Dasan



Message from the Chief Guest, Hon. Minister Margaret Best, M.P.P.

On behalf of the Government of Ontario and as Member of Provincial Parliament of Scarborough-Guildwood, I extend my congratulations to staff and customers of the Margosa Credit Union Limited on the opening of its first branch in Scarborough.

Canadians of Sri Lankan and South East Asian descent are a valuable part of the rich cultural mosaic of our great province and country and have a proud history in Canada. The unique traditions and history that you bring to Ontario enhance the vibrancy of our society.

Endeavours and establishments such as the Margosa Credit Union Limited enrich the province of Ontario economically and socially. We recognize the invaluable contributions the Sri Lankan and South East Asian communities bring to our province and the riding of Scarborough-Guildwood.

Please accept my warmest regards and best wishes for a most memorable celebration.

Margaret Best, M.P.P.
Scarborough-Guildwood



Message from the Chairman:

I consider it a great honour and an obligation to fulfill the expectation and Trust that the Board of Directors, Incorporators, and our Members have given me. I took up this role as Chairman with the Knowledge that I am joined by a very strong group, who make up the Board of Directors. We have one common goal, which is to work towards the growth of Margosa, enrich our Member's Financial well - being and to keep our Credit Union strong and well into the future.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all our members, at the opening of our First Branch. You all have been the driving force behind the creation of this great Institution. We do recognise that, and we hope that you will continue to support and help us grow, so that we will become the envy of the others.

Warm Regards,
Dr. S.T. Ariaratnam



Message from President & CEO

It is with great pleasure that I write this message on the occasion of the opening of the first branch of Margosa Credit Union Limited. We have come a long way since a few of us known as founding members got together in September 2005 and took up the challenge of forming a Credit Union for the members of the Sri Lankan Community. As of date we have 630 members on roll. 321 of these members have invested over 1.5 million dollars in shares. The investor's participation has been overwhelming and has motivated our members.

We have appointed a General Manager with several years of experience in the Credit Union. Together with the support of our active members and vigilant Board of Directors, we hope to make Margosa Credit Union a strong and vibrant Financial Institution.

Warm Regards,
Stanley Arnold



Message from General Manager

Greetings to the Sri Lankan Community. Credit Unions have played a significant financial role in the many ethnic communities across Canada. As General Manager, I invite everyone to visit Margosa Credit Union and to become an active member.

I have 28 yrs of experience in financial services, the last 13 with a large ethnic credit union in Toronto. Through the services of Margosa Credit Union, I look forward to assisting the members of the Sri Lankan community in reaching their financial goals.

Linus Zubrickas



Message from the Corporate Secretary

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you

all for the opening of our first Financial institution for Sri Lankans and South East Asians. The Board of Directors and the Incorporators have worked tirelessly in making this a reality. The response to our request to invest in Margosa shares was over-whelming with large participation from our communities. As Custodians of our Members money and Trust, Margosa will try to stay vigilant, bearing in mind the moral imperatives that co-operatives stand for.

With our General Manager who has many years of Credit Union Experience, Margosa will strive hard to tap the potential available in our communities. We will devise aggressive marketing and promotional strategies to create consciousness and loyalty among our members. We will create cost effective platform to increase accessibility and visibility of our products. Margosa will increasingly rely on technology to deliver fast, cost effective service in a more friendly environment.

Now it is left to our Members to become actively involved with Margosa by opening accounts. As Margosa takes its place among the Titans in the Financial Industry in Toronto, it is left to you all to stand together as one and make it grow.

Warm Regards
George Thambithurai



Message from Vice-Chair

Congratulations to the Margosa Credit Union.

As our community celebrates 30 years in Canada, the launching of Margosa Credit Union represents a new beginning in the renewal of our community's hopes, aspirations and dreams.

This landmark achievement could not have been realized without the commitment, dedication and support of all members of our community. I would like to extend my warmest personal regards to each and every one of you for the effort you have invested.

I would like to take this special opportunity to thank four highly dedicated and supportive individuals, each were instrumental in helping to establish the Margosa Credit Union.

First, Victor Santhiapillai, the Chair of Investment, who worked well beyond his call of duty to raise the capital within the time frame.

Second, Vinnasithamby Thurairajah, Community Development Worker, a tireless individual who selflessly dedicates his life to our community.

Third, George Thambithurai, Secretary, with his thoughtful and consistent commitment to advance the standing of our community.

Finally, Kanchana Udhayakumar, Office Administrator, who kept the lights on during the darkest of those gloomy days.

I dedicate this message of congratulations to

these four amazing people. Today, their hard work and dedication have come together to make our Sri Lankans proud to be a member of our community. Further, I invite the members of the Margosa Credit Union and its Board to join me in announcing my appreciation and applauding the wonderful contributions these key individuals have made to our community.

Last but not least, I extend my sincerest thanks to all those investors who trusted us with the custodianship of their retirement shelters.

Sree Kannuthurai



Message from the Chair for Investor Relations

It gives me great pleasure to send this message to the souvenir that is being brought out to mark this launching of Margosa Credit Union Limited. The challenge that was given to me in January was to raise 1.5 million by the end of June 30, 2008. Let me take this opportunity to thank all the members of our Board and some active incorporators, who gave me their whole hearted support in this project. We would have not succeeded in meeting the challenge thrown to us by the Financial Services Commission of Ontario without them. I am grateful to all our members and investors for their unstinted support. We will continue to ask for your support as we move forward to the next phase, which is our opening our doors for business.

With all Good Wishes,
Victor Santhiapillai



Message from the Chair for Branch Opening

The best ideas come when a group of people sit down to discuss different issues facing our communities. It was at one of these meetings that the idea to create a Credit Union for the Sri Lankan Community came up for discussion. The result is the Creation of Margosa Credit Union limited which would cater to all the financial needs of the Sri Lankan communities' resident in Toronto. Margosa was the result of a collaborative effort. Through Margosa, we hope to build not only a creative but also a United Sri Lankan society.

With Warm Regards,
Mohan Perera

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ABOUT PAUL CALANDRA

Paul Calandra is a hard working, practical conservative who grew up in Markham before settling on the family farm in Ballantrae, where he now lives with his wife Melanie and daughter Natalie (and their dog Phoebe).

Paul first engaged in the political process when he was only nine years old, delivering literature in his neighbourhood. His passion grew over the years and since then Paul has continued to work tirelessly to elect like-minded Conservatives to office at the Municipal, Provincial and Federal level. Most recently, Paul served as Campaign Manager in two federal elections and three provincial elections. He also served as a regional organizer for Stephen Harper's Leadership Campaign and Jim Flaherty's Provincial PC Leadership Campaign.

After completing full-time university studies, Paul opened and successfully operated two small businesses and managed a commercial, residential and agricultural real estate portfolio.

In 1995 Paul accepted a position with the Mike Harris government where he served as Chief of Staff to MPP Steve Gilchrist, former Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing, Chair of the Red Tape Commission and first Commissioner of Alternative Energy. His time in provincial government gave Paul the experience needed to become an effective Member of Parliament.

Currently, Paul works as a Commercial Insurance Broker in York Region.

Paul continues to serve the Conservative Party as a Member of the Board of the Oak-Ridges Markham Conservative Association and as Past-President of the Oak Ridges-Markham Provincial P.C. Association.

Paul also served as a member on the Board of: The Toronto Children's Safety Village, The Integrated Shoreline Management Plan, The Manson Environmental Review Committee, Highland Creek Heritage Day Advisory Committee, and Oak Ridges Trail Association.

**KEY ISSUES OF
CONSERVATIVE
PARTY OF
CANADA UNDER
HARPER
LEADERSHIP**

2008**LEADERSHIP****ACCOUNTABILITY****CHILD CARE****SOVEREIGNTY****TACKLING CRIME****LOWER TAXES****HEALTH CARE****ENVIRONMENT**

Paul and Prime Minister Hon. Stephen Harper



Paul with Federal Labour Minister Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn



Paul with Federal Finance Minister Hon. Jim Flaherty



Paul with his wife Melanie and daughter Natalie

Monsoon Features

Karygiannis Opens Campaign Office

TORONTO - The Honourable Jim Karygiannis, Liberal Candidate for Scarborough-Agincourt, today celebrated the opening of his Campaign Headquarters. Mr. Karygiannis was joined by over 500 volunteers, including a number of local federal and municipal politicians.

"I am running to represent you, my neighbours, in Ottawa. I believe the constituents of Scarborough-Agincourt deserve to be represented by someone who lives in the riding and understands the needs of the riding."

said Mr. Karygiannis. "This election is about two different visions for Canada - one is mean-spirited and regressive; the other, the one I believe in, is open and inclusive."

Mr. Karygiannis has been elected to represent Scarborough-Agincourt in six previous elections.

"On the international front, the Harper Conservatives has failed Canadians, and more importantly, the people of Scarborough-Agincourt." Mr. Karygiannis commented. "Their

response to international crises - conflict in Lebanon; floods in the Philippines; cyclones in Burma and earthquakes in China - has been abysmal. Harper has either not reacted at all or has shown that he and his colleagues don't know how to respond in a crisis."

Mr. Karygiannis represents one of the most ethnically diverse ridings in Canada.

Contact: Margot, Media Relations, Jim Karygiannis Campaign, (416) 321-2788



DELIGHTFUL PERFORMANCE AT TORONTO HINDU DHARMI C SABHA, ETOBI COKE



On Friday, August 1, 2008, the Toronto Hindu Dharmic Sabha presented an evening of Classical and Light Classical music. The program was attended by the devotees and music lovers.

The evening started with a presentation by Gauri Guha, renowned Indian classical vocalist. She acknowledged and honoured Pandit Samar Saha, an Internationally acclaimed Tabla Player, for his contributions in the field of Indian classical music. Pandit Mahendra Tiwari, the priest of the temple, presented the artistes as a Master of Ceremony.

Madhumita Saha from Kolkata, India, accompanied by

Ashok Dutta on Tabla presented several popular Bhajans, Thumri, Dadra, Ghazal and Geet.

Gauri Guha began her recital with Raga Shivranjani in Madhyalaya Jhaptal. Thereafter, she sang a Kabir Bhajan in Raga Charukeshi, a Drut Tintal composition in Raga Hansadhvani and concluded her performance with a Bhajan in Raga Mand. She was accompanied by Luna Guha on the Harmonium and Ashok Dutta on Tabla.

Both performances were highly appreciated by the audience. Luna Guha and Ashok Dutta provided excellent accompaniments.

Bharathanatyam Arangetram of Rebecca Raveendran

A grand performance of Bharathanatyam Arangetram by Miss Rebecca Raveendran, disciple of 'Natyarthaki' Smt. Vanitha Kugenthiran, presented by Kalaikovil Academy of Fine Arts on Sunday, August 17th, 2008 at Chinese Cultural Centre in Scarborough, Canada.

Rebecca was blessed and congratulated by Chief Guest, Smt. Vazhuvoor Sridevi Sindhil, Guest of Honour, Minister of Education, Mrs. Kathlyne Wynne, Special

Guest, Dr. Sabalingam Jothilingam (UK) and many others.

Rebecca has completed her 5th grade examination in Bharathanatyam and is preparing for her teachers grade. She has been learning Bharathanatyam for over 8 years but has been under the guidance of Guru Vanitha for 5 years. She is very aware and involved in her culture, not only in dance but other fine arts such as vocal and instrumental.



Bharatha Natya Arangetram of Santhalingam Sisters

An excellent performance of Bharathanatyam Arangetram by Santhalingam sisters, Shopiha & Luxchiga was held on Friday, August 22nd, 2008 at Chinese Cultural Centre in Scarborough, Canada.

She is the disciple of Smt. Kanchana Kirubakaran, Director of Narthana Chesthira

The Chief Guest for the event

was Mr. Ilayabarathi, Managing Director of CTBC and other special guests were Mr. R. Logendralingam, Chief Editor of Uthyan, Mrs. Meena Thavaratnam, Retired Senior Teacher of Urumpirai Hindu College. Also congratulatory message from Hon. Maria Minna, MP for Beaches-East York was presented by Mr. Ganesan Sugumar.



Monsoon Features

The Ever-Growing Concept of Globalization

Ms. Roberta Bondar, our beloved Canadian astronaut, flew on the NASA Space Shuttle Discovery in January 1992, for eight days, one hour and 44 minutes. While trying to locate our Earth from space, she must have felt overwhelmed, her vision changing to a new direction. When she was on Earth, like any of us, she likely felt tremendous pride in her family, her heritage and her Canadian values. Yet, when she stepped outside the bounds of our planet, Ms. Bondar must have felt even more like a world citizen. This type of thinking characterizes our idea of globalization.

Every fall, the birds of Siberia, Greenland and Iceland leave the northern hemisphere and fly thousands of kilometers south. In doing so, they cross the borders of many sovereign nations without passports or entry visas, and return when the warm spring air fills the skies. The fish in the seas do not restrict their moments within certain boundaries; territorial designations mean nothing to them. Even the thought of such things makes us smile; we consider them ridiculous. Nevertheless, a Canadian must fulfill certain requirements in order to travel to the USA, a fellow member of the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). Isn't this just as ridiculous?

Today, even the man on the street can talk, at least superficially, about global warming, the depletion of the ozone layer or the smog caused by automobile emissions. How the world has changed!

The great natural disasters, particularly those of the past few years, have likewise brought the attention of the average person to the fact that we are all, indeed, citizens of one world. What hurts one often hurts many or even all. The great tsunami that hit Asia a few years ago, with enormous loss of life, is one example. So is Hurricane Katrina, the tragedy that devastated New Orleans and its environs. The earthquake in Pakistan, the various genocides around the world that created millions of refugees, the drought in East Africa and the recent overwhelming tragedy of the earthquake in Sichuan, China, are just a few of these examples. People everywhere stepped out of their comfort zones and opened up their wallets to help. They felt the suffering of their fellow human beings, and an outpouring of caring and concern followed. This is also an example of globalization.

Despite all the trade barriers, the breaking up of nations and the establishment of iron walls,



the ideological conflicts and divisions, and the fanatical religious and ethnic wars, our world is becoming smaller and smaller. This process is destined to continue.

The modern technological and information revolution is responsible for this. Today, even in the most remote, underdeveloped parts of the world, people have cell phones and Internet access. Huge chunks of the middle class can afford to travel to previously undreamed of destinations. Money and commodities are traded internationally, often with a few key strokes, and multi-national corporations are found everywhere. Culture, too, has been greatly affected by the advances in technology and communication, whether people like it or not. Inexorably, across the globe people are coming closer and closer together as never before.

In the socio-political sphere, international organizations such as the United Nations and its subsidiaries, along with countless non-governmental organizations, are working together to solve important world issues that no single nation or bloc of nations can do alone. This, too, promotes globalization.

The industrialized nations are now co-operating to actively reduce global warming. These countries do not shoulder the burden in accordance with their responsibility for the current state of affairs. They simply put their shoulders to the wheel. Canada contributes far less to the damage being caused, whereas fast-growing countries like India and China still continue to use cheap sources of energy in a mass scale and pollute the air very significantly. Nevertheless, these countries' contribution to cleaning up our

planet is far less than their fair share. Generally speaking, the developing nations cannot afford the more expensive sources of energy at their current stage of development, so they continue to contribute to the negativity of the global environment. Their rural areas are quickly turning into urban areas, and demand for more energy is commensurate with this growth. Still, some of the developing nations are beginning to establish modern technological and industrial units using new equipment that will be less damaging to the environment. They have no choice if they, along with us, are to survive. If we do not take timely and aggressive protective methods to safeguard our world, in future 90% of the earth will be filled with ocean and the land mass will be reduced to 10% from the current level of 24%. Desertification will increase, and arable, habitable land will be reduced. Unless we do the right things now, as has been said so poetically in the past, there may be "water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink."

In terms of political organization, some parts of the world are decentralizing while others are forming alliances. The Soviet Union has broken up; so has the former Yugoslavia. Many predict that the United States, India, Canada, Sri Lanka and other nations will split up into smaller units in the future. On the other hand, East and West Germany have reunited, and so have North and South Vietnam.

Where are we heading? Human societies across the globe have established very close contracts over the centuries, leading towards globalization. The seed was planted many millennia ago, and some of the waves date back

30,000 years, when North America's First Nations' peoples apparently migrated here from Asia via a northern land bridge that no longer exists. Later on, the Greeks, Egyptians, Babylonians, peoples of the Indus Valley and the Chinese began trade relations and set up other forms of international co-operation.

Colonization marked another wave in the globalization process. The Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, British, French, Belgians, Germans and Italians colonized many areas around the world. Many "new" places were "discovered" by the European explorers. In addition to its negative aspects, colonization brought about uniform systems of government, education, taxation and trade, marking another stage in globalization. Indeed, it used to be said that when French caught cold, all of the French colonies throughout the world sneezed.

The Industrial Revolution in Great Britain was monumental in spreading globalization. It made work faster and easier, and greatly speeded up the rate of production, transportation and distribution. The Industrial Revolution also brought about dramatic social change. Machinery replaced a lot of unskilled labour, and, along with that, Great Britain was the first country to abolish slavery. The United States, Canada and other countries soon followed suit.

Then came World Wars One and Two, which divided much of the world into two groups. The colonial powers forgot their rivalries and joined together to defeat Germany, Japan and Italy.

The Cold War between the former Soviet Union and the United States marked the follow-

Samy Appadurai

ing stage of globalization. Along with these two superpowers were a number of non-aligned nations that did not want to be under either of those two umbrellas. The Indian Prime Minister, J. Nehru, did not create a powerful third bloc but did bring some of the neutral countries together on various levels.

As has already been mentioned, the current stage of globalization is marked by ever-growing advances in technology and communication. This process began in the 1980s and is intensifying every day.

The formation of the 25-member European Union is a prime example of what globalization can achieve. Originally aimed at becoming an economic union, far more wide-reaching changes have taken place. All member countries with the exception of Great Britain gave up their respective currencies and replaced it with the euro. Then common immigration policies were put into effect. NAFTA, on the other hand, can hardly stand up and walk. Why is this so? Perhaps, in the case of the European Union, most of the countries have attained similar status on the economic playing field while Canada and the United States have done likewise; both are highly developed, industrialized nations. The third partner in NAFTA, Mexico, on the other hand, is still a developing nation, with all the problems that this entails. And, in addition, the two northern member states of NAFTA have been fearful and mistrustful not only of Mexico, but of each other. Therefore, they have established many protectionist policies.

A very sinister movement has also brought the world together against a common threat: international terrorism. Many former enemies have joined in a global effort to counter this unpredictable threat, and much more international co-operation will undoubtedly develop to beat this insidious enemy. The civilized world refuses to be victimized by terrorist thugs and will do its utmost to eradicate them.

In addition, population imbalances are rapidly making our world smaller. Many of the developing nations cannot feed, clothe or educate their populations, and there is a massive push for those affected, whenever possible, to leave for the developed world.

Continued in Next Page ...

Monsoon Features

Improvements to health care services to continue unhindered

- Court dismisses union application -

Rouge Valley Health System President and Chief Executive Officer Rik Ganderton today welcomed a court decision which allows the hospital to continue with its plans to improve mental health services in the community.

On Friday, the Divisional Court of the Supreme Court of Justice dismissed an application for judicial review from the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) which would have prevented the hospital from making changes to its mental health services.

"The decision means we can stay focused on providing the best care across our two community hospital campuses," says Ganderton.

The court also found that Rouge Valley had engaged its internal and external communities in consultations from June of 2007 through to the date of the court hearing on July 11, 2008.

The decision means Rouge Valley's timetable of improvements in mental health are not delayed or interrupted. As previously announced the improvements include:

- o Increasing expert mental health crisis intervention services from 12 hours a day (eight hours on weekends) to 16 hours a day, seven days a week at the Ajax and

Pickering campus;

- o Continue providing outpatient services at Ajax and Pickering campus. Outpatient care serves the vast majority of mental health patients and is recognized as an optimal treatment by mental health professionals across the province;

- o Continuing access to all mental health services, including emergencies, through the Ajax and Pickering campus;

- o Consolidating specialized mental health nursing expertise for inpatient care so that more hours of nursing care will be provided to those patients who require treatment on an in-patient basis;

- o Adding a further eight beds to general medicine at the Ajax and Pickering campus in order to improve patient flow and reduce wait times in the emergency department.

"We are firmly committed to the growth of Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering, where our huge three-year redevelopment plan is well underway," Ganderton adds.

"We will continue to work with our partners to expand and improve the range of services available to the communities of west Durham, while living within RVHS' funding levels provided by the Local Health Integration Network."

The Ever-Growing Concept of Globalization

Continued from previous page

Much of that world is unable to accept the unschooled masses; they are seeking skilled workers who can contribute to their industrialized economies. Therefore, refugees and would-be immigrants will do almost anything to be accepted into a First-World country. Meanwhile, the social climate of many such countries has been profoundly disrupted by the arrival of masses of people from the Third World.

The developed nations also want skilled immigrants to contribute to the growth of their respective economies as their birth rates continue to fall or remain stable. They are seeking those who have something to contribute, not those who will simply "take."

In addition, migrants from the Third World, whether educated or not, suffer culture shock when they arrive in First-World countries, and members of the mainstream culture often find these peoples' customs, beliefs and manners of dress extremely strange. It is very hard for newcomers to adapt, even in supportive societies like Canada. The second generation, however, adapts easily, which often leads to con-

flict between the parents who want to cling to traditional ways and the children who are being brought up in a different cultural milieu. This is particularly true in big cities where there are multi-racial populations and increasing intermarriage.

As we have seen, then, globalization has penetrated everyone's life, directly or indirectly, and no stone will remain unturned. Globalization is a process, not an end. As we have also seen, globalization has its positive and negative aspects, only some of which we have touched on here. Nevertheless, effective communication and respect for our fellow human beings have the power to make globalization an overwhelmingly positive force. Right-thinking people want only the good for themselves, their families and, indeed, the whole world. As the world gets smaller, our interdependency will certainly bring us together as global citizens, not drive us further apart.

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

Rouge Valley seeks volunteers for Community Advisory Group

- Group to help hospital strengthen community relationships -

- Group to help hospital strengthen community relationships -

Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) is today announcing another step in its plan to strengthen relations with the community. The hospital's board is creating a Community Advisory Group and is inviting dedicated volunteers to join this important effort.

This volunteer body will be an advisory group to the Board of Directors. The 12-member group will reflect the diverse communities and viewpoints that make up the Rouge Valley catchment area of east Toronto, Pickering, Ajax and Whitby.

"The contribution of the advisory group is an important component of RVHS' overall community engagement strategy," says Janet Ecker, chair of the RVHS Board of Directors.

"Staying closely connected to our community is important to our success as an acute care community hospital. And while it is something that we have worked hard at, we also recognize that we need to do a better job. The hospital's goal is to be the best at what we do, to provide our community with services that meet high quality standards.



Rouge Valley
HEALTH SYSTEM
FOUNDATION

Understanding and responding to the needs and concerns of our community is an important step in our plan to accomplish this. The Community Advisory Group will help us do that," adds Ecker.

Membership is open to the general public residing within the RVHS catchment area. Applicants cannot be a Central East Local Health Integration Network or hospital employee. Advisory group members will provide specific advice and feedback to the RVHS board and will stay connected to the community so that they can speak knowledgeably about local health needs and issues and assist the hospital in its communications efforts.

For more information on the RVHS Community Advisory Group, and to apply online to become a member, visit www.rougevalley.ca/community-matters. RVHS will be accepting applications until Sept. 19.

- Rouge Valley Health System
- The best at what we do -
RVHS is an excellent acute

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

For more information, please contact: David Brazeau, Director, Public Affairs and Community Relations

Minister of Industry kicks off local campaign in Markham-Unionville

(Markham-Unionville) The campaign to elect Duncan Fletcher as the Member of Parliament hit high gear this weekend with the opening of the Fletcher campaign office. On hand was high profile Minister of Industry, Hon. Jim Prentice.

The Minister lent his full support to the Fletcher campaign emphasizing the importance of having a community minded local Member of Parliament. Noting the diverse make-up of the area, he also emphasized that Markham-Unionville is an important part of the new Canada that the Conservative Party is determined to stand up for.

He went on to outline some of the measures that the Conservative Party have implemented in their short time in government, highlighting items such as the Chinese Head Tax apology and reparation, a more streamlined immigration system, lower



taxes and the Residential School apology to our first nations.

The Duncan Fletcher campaign invites the community to visit its office located at New Kennedy Square at 8360 Kennedy Rd. (inside the mall at the food

court).

For further comment, information on Duncan Fletcher or the Conservative Party of Markham-Unionville, please contact;

Ben Seto - Campaign Manager; (416)-859-6868

Monsoon Features

WORDS OF PEACE

The Primal Technology

The world has made great strides in technological development. Yet to many people, technology seems to be a double-edged sword. Inventions to make life easier may cause greater social unrest by widening the gap between the haves and have-nots. Nations race to develop greater weapons with the promise of establishing peace.

According to Prem Rawat widely known as Maharaji, that unstated promise of technology to bring us better conditions for peace in our lives remains unfulfilled, not because the technology is deficient, but because peace needs to begin with each person feeling it for themselves.

"Peace begins with every single one of us," he says.

Maharaji, who has been talking about finding peace within since he was a small child, is no stranger to today's technological advances. He makes his message available in more than 60 languages via satellite, DVDs, and the Internet, as well as live speaking engagements.

"I love technology," he says. "Technology is the fulfillment of what we thought would make this life better and better. Technology is there to accommodate the human imagination. And yet, parallel to all this technology, there have always been those who look for the satisfaction of the heart.

Peace comes from being in harmony with yourself. Peace comes from being fulfilled."

Around the world, professionals who have listened to Maharaji's message say that he has helped them discover for themselves, and within themselves, a peace independent of circumstances or level of technology.

A computer programmer and analyst for a Canadian engineering firm that develops remote-controlled, toll-road camera and traffic monitor systems. He says he learned about Maharaji's message through family members when he was still a schoolchild.

"I waited until I felt mature and independent enough to explore this possibility of peace for myself," he says.

Since he started listening to Maharaji in 1998, he says, he has found a simplicity and clarity within himself.

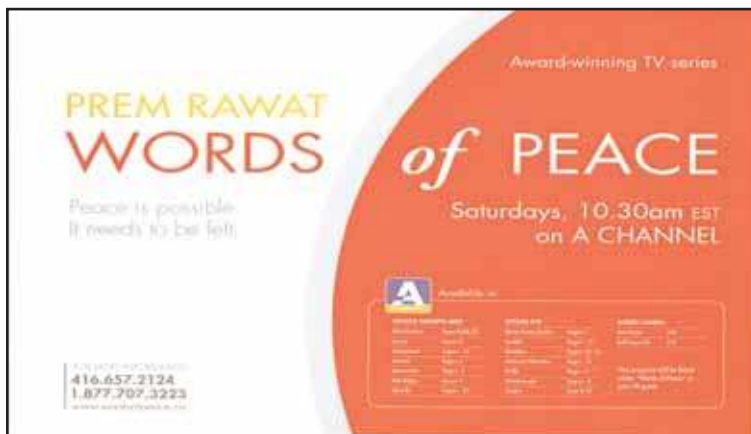
"I have a full life, both professionally and socially, but Maharaji and his inspiration and guidance help me take the right steps like a compass," He says. "I'm better able to understand my priorities in life, and I find many things in my life seem very simple."

"Technology is not good or bad. It's just a way of manipulating the world," says an aerospace engineer in the U.S. who says he has benefit-

apply my effort, I can feel an incredible love within, and I am grateful for that."

The journey toward inner peace, and ultimately world peace, begins within each individual. Peace can be found within each human heart. It is there, waiting, wanting to be felt.

"When I fail to see another being as I see myself," Maharaji says, "then wars will happen. When causes and reasons become greater than the sanctity of peace, wars will happen. When I fail to realize the value of being alive, wars will hap-



ed from Maharaji's guidance for more than thirty years. "It's people who make the difference in how technology is used and for what purpose.

"Through him, I know the important things to focus my attention on. Because of Maharaji, I know where peace within myself lies. He has helped me to listen to my heart and move in the direction of feeling peace."

A technology support engineer for a U.S. firm, says, "For me, peace is a feeling, and technology is a tool we use to facilitate our practical lives. Technology can facilitate the message of peace being made available, but peace is a very personal human experience and there is no substitute for it.

"Maharaji has shown me a remarkable way to connect with myself within, and he has shown this to me as a gift, from one heart to another. I guess you could call that the primal technology. It's all about love. He reminds me that as I

pen.

"Before wars begin outside, they begin on the inside first. The war on the inside is far more dangerous, because it is a fire that may never be quenched.

"When peace begins within me and it has taken hold of me, when I allow it to blossom, then peace for me is also possible on the outside, because I have felt it."

What is presented by Maharaji is not about a lifestyle, philosophy, religion or beliefs. It is also not about following someone, except perhaps your own self, in the nicest way possible.

For those who want to learn the practical techniques for discovering the beauty within, there is a self-paced preparation process on DVD free of charge.

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Creating Your Life the Way You Want It

Man has spent too much time trying to think about things to which he has no access. When you try to think about that to which you have no access, towards which you have no perception, all you can do is speculate. When you do excessive speculation without any fundamentals, it amounts to hallucination. Because of this, a large part of reli-

about some airy things? Let us start from the mundane - if your perception is beyond the senses, and food appears in front of you, you can simply know how this food will behave in your system. But this perception is more and more going away from human beings.

From something as simple as that to the ultimate possibility, the



Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

gion and spirituality in the world has become purely hallucinatory.

If you are really interested in knowing life in its depth, you must see how to enhance your perception. This moment, if you fall asleep, suddenly people around you will disappear, the world will disappear and you also disappear. You are still alive, everybody around is alive, the existence is on, but in your experience everything disappeared, because these five sense organs have shut down. Right now your whole perception of life is limited to five sense organs - seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting, touching. And these sense organs, in the very nature of things, can perceive only that which is physical.

Now the question of going beyond the physical arises in your life only when you are done with survival. You are not just interested in living a good life; you want to know the very source of life. So it does not matter whether you want to know the process of creation or you just want to live peacefully - what you need to do is enhance this perception to its ultimate level, to know the Ultimate, or at least enhance your perception to some level where your body, and mind, and emotion, and energy happen the way you want them.

See, anything that is not in your awareness does not exist for you; and only what you are aware of, you can handle and do things about. If you carefully examine, you will see a large part of you is not in your awareness. If you bring more and more of this into your awareness, you will see suddenly your life begins to happen on all levels the way you want it.

So 'Inner Engineering' means having an inner perception of life - a perception which is not limited to the five sense organs. When I say 'an inner perception', am I talking

inner perception would bring a completely new dimension into one's life. And all the activity that we are doing in our lives - whether you are a doctor, or you are a policeman, or you are an engineer, or whatever you are - fundamentally, your perception of what is right now in front of you decides the effectiveness of who you are, and how much you do on this planet.

People are always asking me, "Sadhguru, you're talking about so many subjects. Where do you get the time to read?" I say, "I don't read." What is there in front of me, I perceive it as it is and that is it. There is no need to carry the burden of knowledge on your head, if your perception is keen enough.

So perception can be raised to various levels through certain inner instruments. Is it very difficult? Can I rise beyond my senses? Do I have to withdraw to a Himalayan cave to do this?

There is no such thing; any human being who is willing to dedicate just a few minutes of his life per day can begin to know this. Because it is not sitting somewhere in the Himalayas, it is within you. What is within you is not inaccessible to you. You are just too busy and enamoured with what is happening outside; you never paid any attention to the inside. It is just lack of attention which has denied people this possibility.

If people develop this simple process of paying a little bit of attention to themselves, rather than expecting other people's attention to them, it would definitely change the fundamentals of their life in so many ways. I can show you millions of people, whose lives have been transformed in so many different ways by just spending fifteen to twenty minutes a day on this process. That is all it takes.

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A just settlement only will stop the war

A public meeting was held on the 17th of August by the Canadians for peace sponsored by SLDF, Karumaiyam and Nammoli at the Scarborough Village. The Main speakers were Mr. Ratnajeewan Hoole, the former Vice Chancellor of the university of Jaffna and presently at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, USA, Mr. John Argue Sri Lanka coordinator Canadian section of the Amnesty International and Baskaran editor of Nammoli.

The discussion was centered on four folds:

1. Condemning the planned

bombings in southern Sri Lanka targeting innocent people.

2. Condemning the killings of innocent people in Sri Lanka and the deprivation of their rights by the Sri Lankan Government.

3. Urging a well-deserved, respectable and reasonable political solution to the Muslim people of Sri Lanka. And

4. In order to stop all murders, kidnappings, human rights violations and the ongoing atrocious war completely, urging that all minorities of Sri Lanka should be offered a respectable, reasonable political solution.

Mr. Hoole reiterated that a negotiated federal settlement would give all communities, most of what they want and will avoid the continuing war.

It is the Sinhalese, who hold the keys to power and therefore the keys to a solution.

Hence all communities should jointly work hard to achieve peace.

Mr. Baskaran stated that Muslims do not have a specific territory but spreaded over Amparai, Batticalo, Trincomalee, Jaffna, Mannar and other areas. He urged they deserve, a

respectable and reasonable political solution as in Pondichery in India.

Mr. John Argue Sri Lanka coordinator, Canadian Section has visited Sri Lanka since 1984. He talked about the role of the amnesty international since 1970 to date on human rights violations in Sri Lanka and the campaign in defence of journalists. He also stressed that the responsibility for urging human rights protection for all human rights cannot be accomplished by one NGO, and so AI needs to work with other human rights and UN groups and

agencies.

Let me also be clear that bombing the LTTE into extinction is no solution either. The LTTE may be obliterated but without a political solution the reasons that caused the LTTE will still be there and give rise to another version of the LTTE. Indeed, a government that claims to bomb us to save us from the LTTE and give us democracy, cannot bomb the very people it claims to want to save into refugee camps, if not into total annihilation.



Speech given at Canadian Peace conference event



Mr. Ratnajeewan Hoole



John Argue

CTCC QUARTERLY MEETING

A Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce quarterly meeting was held recently at the Embassy Restaurant where Mr. Rocco Rossi, Chief Executive Officer of Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario was the key-note speaker. The central theme of Mr. Rossi's speech was on Heart Diseases among the South Asian community. He stressed that members of the South Asian community were more prone to heart diseases due to their life-style and the nature of their diet consumption. Seen here are pictures of Mr. Rossi, Gary Anandasangaree, President, CTCC and other members of the Chamber addressing the guests.

Photos by Ken Photo



The Hindu Society of the University of Colombo celebrated their Cultural Nite 2008 recently. Picture shows the lighting of the traditional lamp by the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Shanika Berigama and President of All Ceylon Hindu Congress Mr. V. Kailasapillai receiving the first copy of the Special Souvenir distributed at the function.

Waterloo News



Sri Abiramy Natayalaya's - Arabi Shureha - Arangetram Recital

The Bharathanaty Arangetram for sisters Arabi and Shureha Sivananthalingam was held in Chinese Cultural Center on August 16, 2008. Arabi and Shureha are disciples of "Adal Arasi" Smt. Senthilselvi Sureswaran and both dancers gave breathtaking performances during their recital.

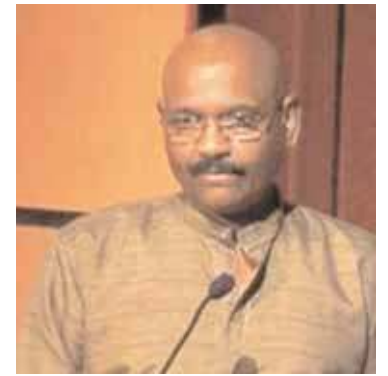
This was Sri Abiramy Natyalaya's Seventh Arangetram in province of Ontario. The Program started with combining Pushpangali, Virutham and Alarippu as one opening number. Then it was followed by Jathiswaram and Varnam. It was highly noticeable that the highlight of the Program was the thirty minute Varnam Arabi and Shureha danced. While dancing the Varnam we could see the

unique choreography of the guru and the dazzling performance by the students. After the intermission, the audience was delighted by two Keerthanam, Bharathiyar Song, Padam and Thillana. Highly expressive and innovative ideas were evidenced during the Bharathiyar Dance. In this dance, the story of women's liberation was portrayed very meticulously through different abinaya.

The Orchestra consisted of leading talents from Toronto. In Nattuvangam- Director of Sri Abiramy Natyalaya, Smt. Senthilselvi Sureswaran. Vocal - Director of Varnam Institute of Fine Arts, Sri Varna Rameshwaran. Miruthangam - Director of Laya Brindham Fine Arts, Sri Rathiruban Paramsothy. Violin Sri A. Jeyadevan. Flute-

Director of Sruthi Music Academy, Sri T.N Balamurali. As master of ceremony, Mr. Thushi Gnana-piragasam spoke in Tamil and Miss. Sindhya Sivasithambaram spoke in English.

As Special Guest Speaker, Mr. Logendralingam of "Uthyan" Newspaper was able to connect to the dancing talents of the sisters during his speech. Guest of Honor Speaker "Kavi" Sri. Kandasamy master was able to say very uplifting blessing for the dancers. As the Chief Guest Speaker, Smt. Sridevi Sendhil (Grand Daughter of "Padmasri" Vazhuvoor Ramiah Pillai) from Chennai, spoke about the outstanding aspects of the Bharathanatyam in relation to this dance recital. Over 600 guests were present during this very successful Arangetram.



Guest Of Honors
Mr. Kandasamy



Special Guest
Mr. Logendralingam



MC - Mr. Thushi & Miss. Sindhya



Orchestra1 - The Musical Team



Vote of Thanks - Miss Arabi & Shureha

Student Wins Fellowship for Breast Cancer Research

Guelph:

A University of Guelph graduate student has received a \$55,000 fellowship from the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation - Ontario Region to study the role of diet during puberty in helping protect against breast cancer.

"I'm extremely excited," said Breanne Anderson, a new master's student in the Department of Human Health and Nutritional Sciences. "To know that others also recognize this research as very important and are choosing to invest in it is very encouraging." Anderson will study the effect of two omega-3 essential fatty acids - docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) - during puberty. DHA, one of the most important omega-3 fatty acids, is a major component of brain and eye tissue; EPA has anti-inflammatory properties.

Previous research has already linked mammary gland development during puberty to mammary carcinogenesis in adulthood, Anderson said. She will study the connection between omega-3 fatty acids and specialized cell

membrane structures known as caveolae. Caveolae have a role in regulating cell growth and death, which may be involved in mammary gland development.

"We already know that lipids are important components of caveolae," she said. "Now we want to study the role of two omega-3 fatty acids, DHA and EPA, during early development and determine whether they can help prevent breast cancer."

Using rodent models, Anderson and her adviser, Prof. David Ma, will first study the effects of a DHA and EPA enriched diet during different developmental time points on mammary gland development and caveolae structure and function. The models will include mice which are genetically engineered to produce omega-3 fatty acids, mice that will be fed EPA and DHA supplements, and a control group not fed EPA or DHA. "This will allow us to compare the effects of enriching EPA and DHA in the diet to a 'gold standard' genetic model," Anderson said.

Later, the researchers will introduce a mouse model that is



Chief Guest
Mrs. Sridevi Sendhil

predisposed to developing mammary tumours to determine whether the presence of omega-3 fatty acids during puberty leads to greater protection against cancer down the road.

The research is in the preliminary stages, but the goal is to provide a new direction for breast cancer prevention research by investigating the contributions of early development and diet, Anderson said.

Breast cancer remains the highest among all forms of cancer in women and is the second leading cause of cancer death in women.

"The knowledge to be gained from primary prevention research has the greatest potential to reduce the number of people who are diagnosed," said Beth Easton, director of allocations and health promotion at the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

"This type of research focuses on possible causes and risk factors for the disease and is a funding priority for the Foundation. We are proud to support Breanne Anderson's work which we hope will contribute to a greater understanding of how to stop breast cancer before it starts."

Ma added that his student is

"most deserving" of the fellowship award. "Breanne is a highly motivated student and I have no doubt that she will be successful in her graduate research."

Anderson, a 2005 U of G biomedical sciences graduate, was motivated to pursue graduate studies in breast cancer prevention research after working as a physician's assistant.

"I witnessed many patients diagnosed and dealing with breast cancer, as well as having loved ones affected by cancer, and that is what really pointed me in this direction."

Waterloo News



Mennonite Central Committee pledges \$1.1M in cyclone aid

RECORD STAFF, WATERLOO REGION

When Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar in May, it killed almost 100,000 people, left many more homeless and caused damage estimated at about \$4 billion.

The Mennonite Central Committee initially sent about \$100,000 in assistance to the country formally known as Burma and has launched a three-year aid plan worth \$1.1 million to help people recover from the cyclone.

"Three MCC workers visited Burma in July and said that the focus should now be on long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction," said Dan Driedger, the committee's Ontario Resource Development director.

"They said it's going to take a lot of work and time to get people on their feet again."

Cyclone Nargis, the worst natural disaster in Myanmar's history, struck the Irrawaddy Delta on May 2. Casualties estimates vary - some reports say as many as 100,000 people died in the cyclone. The delta is a densely populated agricultural region.

The cyclone caused damage estimated at more than \$4 billion, including \$2.3 billion in loss of income.

The committee, a relief

agency of North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches, was already working with other agencies in Myanmar when the cyclone struck.

So unlike other relief workers who couldn't get visas to enter the country, they already had visas and discovered how widespread the devastation was.

They heard harrowing tales of survival from locals.

One worker met a farmer who said he and his wife ran for higher ground with their children on their shoulders after the cyclone knocked the walls off their house.

After the initial \$100,000 for food, safe drinking water and temporary shelter, the committee decided help on a longer term was needed. A major part of the \$1.1 million will go toward distribution of power tillers, rice seed, fertilizer and cash assistance to farming families in the Irrawaddy Delta.

Psychological trauma is widespread, so another part will help people deal with the after-effects of the cyclone, Driedger said.

"There's no government support in that area."

For more information or to make a donation, contact the local office of the committee at 519-745-8458.

UW graduates win Google prize for a mobile phone application called "Ecorio"

Waterloo: A group of Canadian engineering students has won a \$275,000 US prize from internet search giant Google Inc. for a mobile phone application that lets users calculate and adjust their travel carbon footprint.

The group of five students was among ten groups named winners of the top prize of Google's Android Developer Challenge, which asked developers to come up with useful applications using Google's software platform.

Their program, Ecorio, gives users the ability to reduce their environmental footprint with tools that provide transit options for trips, allow them to invest in carbon reduction projects and share their tips with other users.

The Ecorio team comprises recent Waterloo engineering graduates Jeff Kao, Robert Lam, Taneem Talukdar and University of Toronto masters candidates Gary Pong and Jason Wong, who describe themselves on their website as five guys from Ontario who "think that this environmental thing might be for real."

"There are many people with lots of ideas on how we can live smarter, greener and sustainable



lives. Ecorio is one piece of that mosaic," they write.

Other applications that won top awards from Google included programs that help users find taxi cabs, scan product barcodes and personalize photos.

Google released Android, a free downloadable software development kit for mobile phones, in November 2007, with the goal of creating a common

platform that would make it easier for developers to create programs and for consumers to surf the web on cellphones.

They launched the contest at the same time, promising to give more than \$10 million in prizes.

The move was also seen as Google's first move to expand the reach of its search tools to mobile handsets.

Violin Maestro Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan Passes Away

Renowned violinist Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan, whose majestic bowing widened the circle of rasikas for Carnatic music, passed away in Chennai on Monday Sep 8th after a brief illness, The Hindu reported. He was 73.

He is survived by wife V. Bagirathi, sons V.R. Shekar, V. Srinivasan, V. Sridhar, V. Balasubramanian and daughter Bhanumathi Ramakrishnan.

Born on March 2, 1935, he trained under his father Ramaswamy Sastry. As a youngster, he accompanied stalwarts, including Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Maharajapuram Santhanam and Chittoor Subramanya Pillai. He also performed with legendary nagaswara vidwans such as T.N. Rajarathinam Pillai and Thiruvankadu Subramania Pillai.

He made a mark in classical music as well as film music, and made conscious attempts to make music more accessible to the common man.

His foray into the film industry began with A.P. Nagarajan giving him a break in 'Vaa Raja Vaa.' From then, he gave several magical numbers and super hits that are among the eternal melodies in Tamil films.

In the film 'Deivam,' he had all his playback singers including Madurai Somu



Violin maestro Kunnakudi R. Vaidyanathan.

Photo: S. Thanthoni

appear on screen.

His composition 'Marudamalai mamaniyae murugaiyya...' in Darbari Kanada made waves in the industry like not many songs have. Several other films such as 'Agathiyar' and 'Raja Raja Chozhan,' for which he scored music, were also phenomenal hits.

The internationally famed violinist Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan has performed numerous times at several venues and festivities in Sri Lanka and around the globe.

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Annual Tournament 2008, Rajaguru Martial Arts Academy, Canada

Annual Tournament 2008, 38th year Anniversary of Rajaguru in Martial arts, 15th Anniversary of Rajaguru Martial Arts Academy in Canada function details.



Grand Master Rajaguru was presented the BEST SAMARITAN AWARD



Chief Instructor Sriram was presented BEST ENTREPRENEUR AWARD



Rajaguru Martial Arts student ABIRAN KANDASAMY gets Grand Championship for the year 2008



Grand Master with all the Karate Students of RMAA



President of Varthaga Cholai, Mr Senthil being honoured by Grand Master



Grand Master honouring Geethavaani Radio Announcer and Artist Kanapathi Raveendran



Grand Master speaks about children and life

15th Anniversary of Rajaguru Martial Arts Academy in Canada and Annual Tournament 2008

Rajaguru Martial Arts Academy recently held their Annual Tournament 2008, Awards ceremony and their Head Quarters Dojo located on 3021 Markham Rd. Along with the awards ceremony, RMAA also celebrated 15 years of opening in Canada, and also marked So Shihan Rajaguru T. Ravindran's 38th anniversary of teaching and experience in karate (Martial Arts).

This event was attended by Uthayan Newspaper Founder and Editor Mr. Logendralingam as well as the founder of the "Thamizhan Vazhikaati" Business Directory, Mr. Senthil. 'Kalaiventhan' Kanapathy

Ravindran, a host on Geethavaani Radio and a Cine /Drama Artist, along with Cine/Drama Artist Ms. Ruby were also present.

The special guests handed out medals and awards to the students who achieved top positions in the tournament categories at this event hosted by International Chief Instructor Sriram Rangan.

The title of "Grand Champion" was awarded to Abiran Kandasamy, a first degree black belt, who won in the final sparring and Kata event.

Instructors Awards were also Awarded to Rajeev Kandaiah, Nirose David, Kayalini Tharmarat-

nam, Nithusha, Harish, Ajantharoban Mahendran, Thivyan Mahendran, Juran Thangavelathapillai, Abiran Kandasamy, Gopi Gugan, Ajeevan Kandasamy, Mareen Francis Saviour, Yogiswaran, Manojh Francis, Kukulothungan, Sajeesan, Manan, and Mayuran Jayakumar

So Shihan Rajaguru was also awarded a "Best Samaritan Award" and Shihan Sriram Rangan was awarded a "Best Entrepreneur" award by RMAA, Canada.

So Shihan Rajaguru spoke to the parents, students and guests about service to humankind. Here are some excerpts from his speech:

I would like to direct my attention to three points.

1) To face the entire world with, True Love, Calmness, Patience, Discipline and braveness

2) The challenges facing us as to protect our Humanity,

3) And the best practices that we want to pass on to our fast evolving Children.

My first message to all is "Enter the temple of True love" as you always enter to a holy place as a simple person.

Enter into the world means

enter into the worldly things, and you always enter as a person with expectation. The world reduces everybody to a short minded person, but True love raises everybody to become an emperor. True Love is a life changing transformation phenomenon.

Even if one heart has flowered towards you, or because of you, God has reached through that heart. Somebody looked towards you with love; in that moment God looked at you. If we spend the money we will get the happiness as well as sadness. With money we cannot attain the peace. That will be only reached through our soul.

Watch the eyes full of love, you will find God throbbing there, because it is always God who loves. To love is to feel the God.

Vision is an important way of transcending limitations, within and outside ourselves. In order to achieve the vision our thoughts must be good.

If we have good thoughts then our actions become good.

If our action is good then our life becomes good

If our life is good, then we will attain the peace

If we attained the peace then we will feel the God

The biggest asset to the parents are their children. The valuable asset for the children is education. To have the better knowledge learning for kids, there must be two important things. One is spiritual Meditation for mental fitness and another is Physical training for physical fitness.

I am proud to say that our nation people's better life (Peace of Mind) is my biggest asset in my life. Every parents wish is to see the children go in the right way in their life. That is what we provide through our Character of Love and Service, guiding them to follow Good Principles and Conscientious to become Good Citizen.

Finally he also mentioned, "Keep Love in one eye and Keep Service in another eye" because both eyes are important."

Mareen Francis Saviour, Sensei Ajantharoban, Sensei Thivyan and the other RMAA Development committee members organized this event with the support of Shihan Sriram Rangan.

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Leaving Canada? Do you have Registered Accounts?

If you are planning on emigrating from Canada, you probably have a million things on your mind. Besides packing all your belongings, selling your home and saying goodbye to friends and family you will need to think about your registered assets. What are my options for my Registered Retirement Savings Plan ("RRSP") when I leave Canada? What happens to my children's Registered Education Savings Plan ("RESP") when I emigrate? This article will help to explain some of the issues associated with registered accounts when emigrating from Canada.

RRSP Questions and Answers

What are my options for my RRSP when I leave Canada?

You do not need to unwind your RRSP upon emigration from Canada. Your RRSP can remain in Canada and the growth in your RRSP will not be subject to Canadian tax. However, the growth within your RRSP may be subject to tax from your new country of residence. If your new country of residence is the United States, you may elect to defer U.S tax on income earned in the RRSP until a distribution is made from the plan. Please note that you will be subject to Canadian withholding tax when money is withdrawn from the RRSP. This Canadian withholding tax may be eligible for a Foreign Tax Credit in your new country of residence.

Should I maximize my RRSP contributions prior to emigrating from Canada?

Prior to emigrating from Canada, you should maximize your RRSP contributions. This contribution is an eligible deduction for the part year you were a resident in Canada. If the contribution is made within the first sixty days of the following year that you emigrated, the contribution can still be applied to the part year you were a resident in Canada. For example, Mr. Hill emigrated from Canada on March 20, 2005. Based on Mr. Hill's 2004 Notice of Assessment, he has contribution room available of \$16,500. Mr. Hill has until

March 1, 2006 to make his contribution. (Sixty days from the end of 2005 – the year Mr. Hill emigrated from Canada). This \$16,500 contribution will be a deduction for the income he earned between January 1, 2005 and March 20, 2005 (beginning of the year until the date of emigration). If you do not make the maximum contribution prior to emigrating from Canada, you will be able to carryforward any unused contribution room, which can be used if you once again become a Canadian resident in the future.

Am I able to make RRSP contributions while I am a non-resident of Canada?

When you are a non-resident for tax purposes, you should not make contributions to your RRSP (taking into account the exception above) because, you will not be eligible for a tax deduction in Canada as you will not have any Canadian source income against which to claim the contribution. In addition, there may be adverse tax consequences in your new country of residence for making RRSP contributions.

What happens to my children's Registered Education Savings Plan ("RESP") when I emigrate?

Your children's RESP plan can remain in Canada while you are a non-resident. The RESP plan will continue to earn tax deferred income in Canada. Please note that the growth within your children's RESP may be subject to tax from your new country of residence.

Am I able to make RESP contributions while I am a non-resident of Canada?

When you are a non-resident, you are able to make RESP contributions. However, as long as your children remain non-residents of Canada they will not be eligible for the Canada Education Savings Grant.

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The shopping complex is the first of its kind to the South Asian commercial and professional services to expand their sales and services. This idea cropped up from the success that the Pacific Mall achieved in serving the business enterprises of the Chinese community in the Markham area.

The new GTA Square complex will serve as an ideal one stop shopping area to the highly residential population of the area and help both the businesses and the consumer to do business and their shopping needs under one roof. The location is easily accessible with a 24 hour Bus service. Several offices from the Law, Medical, Accounting, Real Estate fields have already opened.

Textiles, Computers, gift items, book sales are among the shopping stores that have taken units in the Mall.

There is ample parking facilities with visitor parking lots in the underground.. The Developer for the project is the famous King Edward Developments and the Architect is Louis Cheung who previously designed the Chinese cultural center and Monsheong Senior Home. He was nominated for the Best Designer Award in Scarborough for designing this complex.

The prices fore the units are reasonable and this will be a good opportunity for potential and prospective businesses and professionals to consider the purchase of a prime property in a prestigious location with all upgraded modern facilities. Seen here are some pictures taken at the Grand Opening.

Those interested should contact the property agent Home Life GTA at 416 321 6969.



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Monsoon Features

Meditation - a path towards utter freedom

SEX, LOVE AND MEDITATION

Prof. Saran Ghai

Billy Graham said - Sex is the most wonderful thing on this earth as long as God is in it. When the Devil gets in it, it's the most terrible thing on this earth.

When God created the world the first emotion he filled in everyone was love. Love is like a magnetic power, which always attracts. Repelling is only when the magnets are not in the right direction. Same is with love. If love starts diminishing from a relationship, there must be something wrong. Understand and organize emotions as expected by

and character.

Once I was travelling by a train from Toronto to New York. I had two co-passengers in my car who eventually were friends. After a while both started talking. There conversation was really interesting so I also started listening carefully. First one said, "I love all the women on this earth and want to have sex with each of them." The other one asked, "How many women want to have sex with you?" He said, "I don't know but that is what I think." The other one said, "Then keep on thinking, good for you." And he went to sleep. The whole night I was contemplating on their discussion. To me, the first person



simply does the act of sex. At first she could not reply but after a while she said that even while having sex, she is worried about cooking food for the next day, light has remained on in the living room and how can I improve kids grades in school and many such things.

I understood her whole problem. I asked her to come see me at my office. She came and told me her story. She told me that she was married for five years, have two kids. She told me that she was a fun loving girl before marriage. Travelling was her passion but since her marriage, she has not gone even for a short picnic. Her husband is not interested in such things as he says it is all waste of time and money. Her life has become totally monotonous and she feels like she is under house arrest.

During conversation I found that she is a good singer and a trained dancer. I advised her if her husband does not like her doing any job, she should engage herself in cultural activities. Be busy. I advised her to attend just three meditation sessions. She did. These sessions helped her a lot. After a month she called me to thank me and said now I have understood how beautiful the life is. After a little silence she added, now I have understood the power of good sex and said that she wants to inform me that next week they are going to Vancouver on vacation.

Meditation is a tool that helps you build strength within you. It makes your concentration better than ever before. It makes you focused. You become a goal ori-

ented person. One month of meditation, not for hours, just 15 minutes a day can change your life. Do it and experience the change.

I would end this article with a proven fact. It mostly happens when two persons are engaged in sexual intercourse. All of a sudden the male partner loses all his control and helplessly ejaculates. The female partner feels it too bad. Pleasure of the entire session disrupts and they finish most unsatisfied. Here I would like to point out that meditating minds have better concentration. They have better control on their mind, on their heart, on their emotions and of course on all the organs of

their body. They can also control their sex organs and can have the pleasure of sex for a longer time, if not much, more than the usual time they do.

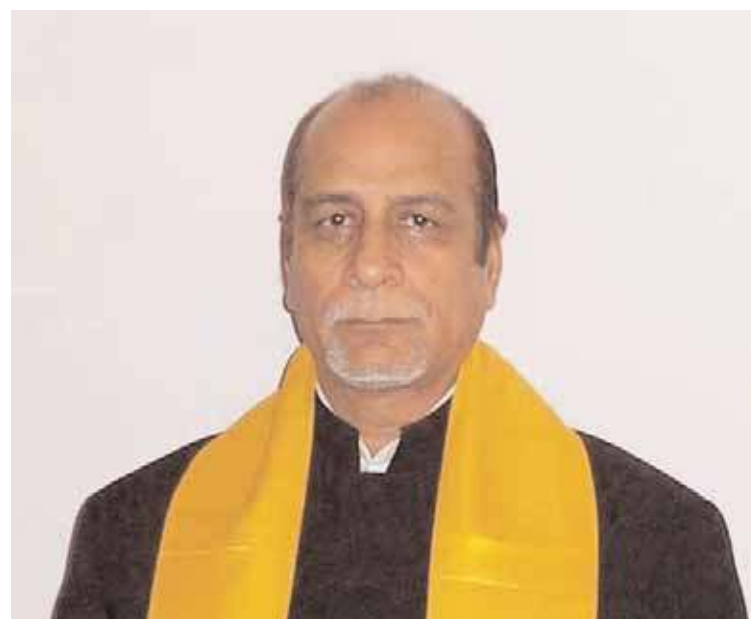
Believe me, everyone can do it.

- Continued...

(Prof. Saran Ghai is an author, editor and publisher of a number of books, magazines and newspapers. He is also a palm reader and a numerologist. Readers of Monsoon Journal can contact Prof. Ghai at (416) 816-5559,

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the other partner and you will see love will sprout up again. Love never disappears but of course it diminishes with time and circumstances. Love also diminishes if not properly taken care of. When you start losing love, have sex. Sex is like a spark plug in a car. Spark your emotions and you will see your love car starts running on the road of love again. Those who understand the significance of sex suggest to have sex quite often to keep on transmitting the message to your partner that you still love him/her.

Sex makes your relationship not just limited to one birth but for many births to come. George Burns said, "Sex is one of the nine reasons for reincarnation. The other eight are unimportant." Love is not so short lived that it starts at dusk and ends at dawn. It is a never ending process. Sex is the system of life. Those who hate sex, hate life. But as said above, sex is wonderful if God is in it, if devil gets in it, it becomes terrible. Changing partners for love and sex every night is dangerous. Love and sex are for pleasure, not for ruining health

seemed to be confused and sick and the second person clear minded and straight forward.

A lady called me one afternoon. She made a reference of my articles being published about meditation in various magazines and newspapers. After talking about a few things here and there, she came to the point and asked me if I can arrange a few meditation sessions, not with other people but for her alone. I asked why she needs meditation sessions. She replied she is losing concentration in every walk of life. She can not stick to one thing and her mind keeps on roaming around in all directions. She has lost all her charm of life. She is not interested in anything. I kept her busy in conversation to understand her state of mind better. Just as a question, I asked her, which of my articles she read more then once. After a little hesitation she said, "Sex and Meditation." I did never do it before but all of a sudden I asked her when she involves herself in sexual intercourse with her husband, does she really enjoy sex or

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Monsoon Appreciation

Navamani Editor M.P.M. Azhar A gem among journalists

By D.B.S. Jeyaraj

It was in April 1977 that I entered mainstream journalism by joining the Colombo Tamil newspaper Virakesari as a trainee journalist.

On my second day at work I was assigned to cover an agriculture related conference held at the Agriculture Research and Training Institute (ARTI) Auditorium at Wijerama Mawatha. When I went to the venue I found the conference was a closed-door event, restricted to government officials alone. The press was not allowed in and no scribe was anywhere around.

Possessing romantic notions of intrepid journalism, I tried to creep in quietly, but was detected and unceremoniously ejected (this was 30 years ago; nowadays I would be locked up under the PTA on account of my ethnicity). I was asked to leave the premises.

I returned to office disappointed and dejected. It was around lunch time and the Editor, News Editor and Chief Sub Editor were not around. I must have cut a forlorn figure as I sat alone dejected about failing to complete my mission.

A valuable lesson

It was then that one of the Virakesari's senior reporters observed me for a while with a smile and then walked across to me. It was M.P.M. Azhar. He patted my shoulder and asked whether I had gone out on an assignment. I told him about what happened.

He laughed and said in Tamil, "No problem. You can easily find out what happened there." I was, of course, puzzled about how one could get the information without being physically present at the meeting.

Azhar then telephoned some of his contacts and asked them to help me. He also helped me identify some conference participants through the official directory and told me how to approach them on the phone.

Soon I was busily picking up information from multiple sources. Azhar then instructed me how to turn the information I gathered into a news story. I did so, and when the News Editor returned to his desk, I had filed my copy and got an appreciative nod from him.

I went up to Azhar's desk to thank him for his help. He brushed it aside and said in Tamil, "Remember, it's best if you can see things for yourself firsthand. But even if you can't be on the spot, there are ways and means to get to know what happened."

I learned a valuable lesson

then that one need not be physically present, on the spot, to know and write about what had happened.

The lesson that I learnt then is still applicable on a larger scale nowadays as I write about Sri Lanka from Canada.

Down memory lane

Upon hearing that veteran journalist Mohammed Pichai Muhammad Azhar had passed away, my mind went down memory lane. I recalled the incident narrated above and many others during my close association with him.

Azhar, whose soul departed on August 28, was 62 years old at the time of his death. He was a man who regarded journalism as a profession and vocation.

Azhar, who began dabbling in journalism at the age of 18, went on to found his own newspaper 12 years ago. He was the Founder Editor of the Tamil weekly Navamani, which means nine gems.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Azhar was indeed a 'gem' in both his personal and professional capacity. It was my good fortune that this man took a liking to me in my tenderfoot days and took me under his wing.

As far as journalism was concerned he was friend, philosopher and guide to me as I cut my teeth as a cub reporter. In those days there was no college or academy to teach journalism. It was basically a skill you acquired on the job.

It was a harsh, tough world out there and cynical veterans had little time or patience to teach raw recruits. I was indeed lucky that Azhar became my mentor. I was privileged to learn many tricks of the trade from him. He encouraged and advised me and was proud of my progress.

He would take me to Parliament with him and allow me to watch proceedings even though I was not accredited officially to cover Parliament. This was possible then as security had not become a problem those days.

Azhar also introduced me to many Muslim politicians. It was through Azhar that I first met people like Dr. Badiuddin Mahmood, Bakeer Markar, Abdul Majeed (Muthur) Naina Marikar and A.C.S. Hameed. My first meeting with M.H.M. Ashraff was also due to Azhar.

I remember enthusiastically bombarding a senior politician with questions, displaying my knowledge. He promptly clammed up. Later Azhar admonished me gently saying, "Never show politicians you know more about a

subject than them. Pretend to be an ignoramus".

Guru and friend

He always monitored my career. This continued even after I joined the English language media. Azhar would offer both praise and criticism whenever he felt it was necessary. Later when I ran my own Tamil weekly in Canada, he was one of my primary sources of information.

After the Tigers unleashed violence and stopped the paper, I became a columnist for English newspapers in Colombo. Once again it was Azhar and senior journalist N.M. Ameen that I turned to for gaining an insight into Muslim politics. I also bought the Navamani regularly to keep myself informed of Muslim affairs.

Though his name was spelled in English as 'Azhar' he was called 'Azwer' in Tamil. I always called him "Azwer Naanaa" (Elder Brother).

I know that some people use the term "Naanaa" derisively when referring to Muslims. For me, it was a term of respect and endearment.

The Virakesari years of my life were a pleasant period. The two Muslim journalists were Azhar and ALM Sanoon. There was the photographer Nazeer and drivers Farook and Salahuddeen. We got along famously.

During my years at Virakesari, I often visited his home then at Maligawatte. Many are the meals I have had at his place then and I have also interacted with his family members.

Azhar lost his wife a few years ago in a motor accident. He was very close to her and was shattered by her death. He also sustained injuries and had a phobia of three-wheelers thereafter.

He leaves behind his mother, brother, son and four daughters. My deepest sympathies to them and other family members, as I share their sorrow over this irreparable loss.

Mohammed Pichai Muhammad Azhar was the nearest to a 'guru' during my formative years as a journalist. I was privileged to have him as a fraternal friend. This article therefore is a humble tribute to honour his memory.

Islamic renaissance

Azhar was one of two sons who lost his father at a very young age. His mother struggled to bring up the children in Maligawatte. While his brother Nizam became an entrepreneur, it was printer's ink that ran in Azhar's veins.

The Muslim youths of Maligawatte underwent an electri-



fying change when the pedagogue Al Haj Mukthar A. Muhammed of Weligama took up residence there.

This was a period of Islamic renaissance. Due to Mukthar's efforts, an organisation, Majlis Islam, was set up. This in turn paved the way for the formation of the Muslim United Front.

Azhar was an executive committee member of this organisation. Some of the other prominent members were Sri Lankan Ambassador to Iran M.M. Zuhair, Attorney-at-Law Farook Thaheer, School Principal N.M.M. Razeen and Azhar's brother Nizam.

This organisation began publishing a journal titled Puthumai Kural (New Voice) and later another, Eluchi Kural (Resurgent Voice), in Tamil.

Azhar was an editorial board member and contributed extensively to these journals. This was his journalistic baptism. His entry into professional journalism came in the late sixties of the last century when he joined the Thinapathy, run by the Dawasa group of newspapers.

Azhar always acknowledged the late Thinapathy Editor S.T. Sivanaygam as his 'guru.' He made his mark as a reliable reporter and soon graduated to being Parliamentary correspondent.

When the MD Gunasena group was sealed under the emergency in 1974 during Sirimavo Bandaranaike's time, Azhar was out of a job. It was then that he joined the Virakesari.

Azhar was at the Virakesari when he married in 1976. His wife was from Malwana, the land of Rambuttan.

The Thinapathy resumed publication in 1977 but Azhar opted to remain at Virakesari.

The journalist

He was a reporter known for his accuracy and speed in filing copy. He could cover all the essentials with a great economy of words.

He was a Parliamentary correspondent for more than 25 years. He saw many politicians come and go. The quiet, soft-spoken Azhar was highly respected by Tamil and Muslim MPs. He seldom made mistakes and covered proceedings without giving cause for complaint.

At the Virakesari he was well-known for his lobby column 'Paralumandra Palahani' and political column 'Arasiyal Athirvettugal.'

Azhar was also involved with the publication Uthayam run by the UNP Muslim Youth League. He was a founder member of the Muslim Media Forum and served as Treasurer from its inception.

Azhar was a devout Muslim with great social and political consciousness. He also felt deeply for the plight of the Muslim community in Sri Lanka.

The community has many grievances that needed to be articulated and redressed. It has been long felt that the community required a national newspaper to voice and address particular concerns.

Several people including T.B. Jayah and Naleem Hadjar recognised this need and attempted to rectify it. Despite their best efforts, the birth of a newspaper for the Muslims remained a mirage.

Finally, the mantle fell on Azhar's shoulders. With the help of two committed Muslim businessmen, M.C.M. Rizwie and Thaha Muzammil, Azhar commenced publishing the Navamani in 1996.

There were many pessimists. Yet, the Tamil broadsheet Navamani has survived mainly due to the dedication and hard work of Azhar and other idealist employees.

Navamani

Despite its popularity and valuable contribution to society, the newspaper ran into financial difficulties a year ago. Azhar and colleagues struggled to keep it going, sometimes working without remuneration.

The Muslim Media Forum stepped in and enlisted support from the community to keep it afloat. A new company was formed and funds were raised. People rallied to help Navamani. The crisis was overcome.

The mainstay of Navamani was the column 'Arangathukul Antharangam' and its balanced editorials. They were written by Azhar.

There are different shades of political opinion among Muslims and the newspaper gave coverage fairly to all. No Muslim politician was able to accuse the paper of being partisan to a particular party or politician.

Many Muslim leaders consulted Azhar on important issues. His advice was valued highly.

The late M.H.M. Ashraff was associated with Azhar from the days of Eluchikural. The need for a Muslim party was often discussed at Azhar's home.

The birth of a renewed Sri Lanka Muslim Congress under Ashraff's leadership was welcomed by Azhar. He made it a point to take me along with him for the inaugural session. The fragmentation of the SLMC after Ashraff's tragic demise was a very troublesome matter for Azhar.

Continued Next Page ...

Monsoon Appreciation

Shoemaker to the World: Thomas John Bata

Statement By Bata Shoe Organization:

It is with great sadness that the Bata Family and the Bata Shoe Organization announce the sudden passing of Thomas John Bata, at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto at the age of 93.

As "Shoemaker To The World", Thomas J. Bata was a man of outstanding qualities and achievements who had a positive influence on the lives of many millions of people throughout the world.

He was born in Prague and educated in Czechoslovakia, England and Switzerland. His father Tomas had founded the

develop the Bata Shoe Company of Canada centred in a town that still bears his name, Batawa, Ontario.

The Second World War saw many Bata businesses in Europe and the Far East destroyed. After the Second World War, the core business enterprise in Czechoslovakia and other major enterprises in Central and Eastern Europe were nationalized by Communist governments. Tom devoted himself to the rebuilding and growth of the Bata Shoe Organization together with his wife and partner, Sonja. He successfully spearheaded ethical and innovative expansion into new



Thomas John Bata:
September 17, 1914 to
September 1, 2008



Shoemaker to the World: Thomas John Bata

Bata Shoe Organization in 1894. After his father's premature death in an aircraft accident in 1932, Thomas J. Bata was guided by his late-father's moral testament: that the Bata Shoe company was to be treated not as a source of private wealth, but as a public trust, a means of improving living standards within the community and providing customers with good value for their money. He promised to pursue the entrepreneurial and humanitarian ideals of his father. This became his life's work.

Anticipating the Second World War, Mr. Bata, together with over 100 families from Czechoslovakia, moved to Canada in 1939 to

markets throughout Asia, Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. Under his leadership the Bata Shoe Organization experienced unprecedented growth and became the world's largest manufacturer and marketer of footwear selling over 300 million pairs of shoes each year and employing over 80,000 people. "Our customer - Our Master" was one of his guiding principles.

Thomas J. Bata was particularly proud of his association with the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment. He joined the Regiment during the Second World War and served as a Captain in the Canadian Reserve Army and as Honorary Colonel

Thomas Bata once sent a salesman to India to sell his shoes. The salesman returned after two weeks and told him - "Can't sell shoes in India because very few wear shoes." Bata sent another salesman and he returned after two weeks and told him "Best place to sell our shoes because very few are wearing shoes"

from 1999 to 2007.

Mr. Bata's consideration for others led to his work with numerous charitable organizations. He was Chairman of the Bata Shoe Foundation. His dedication to Junior Achievement International, Trent University and York University in Canada and the Tomas Bata University in the Czech Republic reflected his special interest in the education of young people.

His business qualities included vision, dedication, energy and drive for excellence. He was also an exceptional mentor to those who worked with him.

He saw business as a contributor to human well being internationally. He always made it a priority to ensure that his businesses not only contributed to the economies of the new markets he entered, but also made a positive

A gem among journalists

Continued from previous page

The Navamani newspaper also gave wide coverage to the problems faced by Muslim localities, particularly those tiny enclaves amidst overwhelming Sinhala and Tamil majorities.

The difficulties and dangers faced by Muslims of the north east were given full exposure. Recently, the paper campaigned hard for a Muslim to be appointed as Eastern Province chief minister.

Muslim viewpoint

Educationists, writers, poets and artistes among the community were also afforded a forum by Navamani.

The Navamani was unique in expressing the Muslim viewpoint on crucial issues. It was both an index as well as maker of Muslim opinion. As a result, the newspaper enjoyed wide readership among Muslims.

Most Muslim majority neighbourhoods had organisations called Navamani Vasagar Vattam (readers' circle). It was a popular, people-based newspaper.

Azhar's dream was to develop the weekly into a daily. He would often tell me that I should write regularly for the paper once it became a daily. Alas! That was not to be during his lifetime.

He was a God-fearing Muslim who observed the tenets of his religion. I have rarely heard him speak ill of anyone. Even his political criticism was sweetly, and not bitterly, expressed.

He seldom got angry but when he did it was like a volcano erupting. But it was righteous anger and everyone kept quiet on those occasions. I have never known him to be a schemer or plotter getting into cliquish office politics. He always steered clear of such petty activity.

A true gentleman

He was a gentle man and a gentleman among journalists. A real gem of a person. I shall miss him. His death is a great loss to the Muslim community as well as to Tamil journalism.

Azhar was engaged in morning Subuhu prayer and reciting the Kaleema when he had a heart attack and a stroke.

Al Haj M.H.M. Azhar's mortal remains were taken from his residence in Wellampitiya and buried at the Maligawatte Muslim burial grounds on the same day.

May the Almighty be merciful and grant him Jennathul Firdous.

(D.B.S. Jeyaraj can be contacted on djeyaraj2005@yahoo.com)

difference in the lives of his employees and their communities. Many Bata operations were established with medical, educational and social facilities for Bata employees.

Mr. Bata participated in several leading business organizations. In Canada, he was a former Director of Canadian Pacific Airlines and IBM Canada. He was a founding member of the Young Presidents Organization, Chairman of the Commission on Multinational Enterprises of the International Chamber of Commerce and Chairman of the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to OECD. He was particularly fond of India and was a founding member of the Canada India Business Council.

In addition to his many university doctorates, he was a Companion of the Order of Canada and received the Order of T.G. Masaryk in Czechoslovakia. In 2007 he proudly received the First Lifetime Award for Responsible Capitalism in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Bata continually stimulated those around him to be passionate about their work and to continually aim higher. He was a true inspiration to everyone he met. His vision was to "shoe the world". His vitality, wisdom, generosity and sense of humour endeared him to people of all ages.

He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, whether at home or exploring unfamiliar destinations, skiing, swimming or playing tennis. In fact, he continued to enjoy sporting activities until shortly before his death.

He was an example of how ideals and qualities can and will continue to inspire all of us.

In his own way, Thomas J. Bata has left his "footprint" on humanity.

Mr. Bata is survived by his much loved wife and partner, Sonja (born Wettstein), son - Thomas George who is the present CEO and Chairman of the Bata Shoe Organization; and three daughters, Christine, Monica, Rosemarie, and their families.

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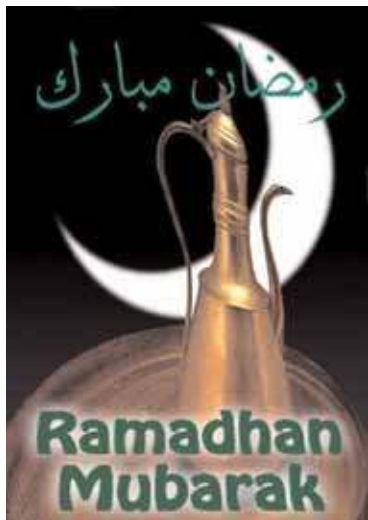
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Monsoon Features

Ramadhan - the month of fasting and prayer

By Shezna Shums

Most of the Muslims in Sri Lanka as well as around the world have begun fasting during the holy month of Ramadhan. Fasting is expected to start early September when the new moon was sighted. Fasting being one of the five pillars of Islam is an important part of any Muslim person's life. Of course he/she must be physically and mentally fit to fast.



Islam is built upon five pillars, which are: testifying there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, performing the five daily prayers, giving Zakat, performing Hajj and fasting during the month of Ramadan.

For a person's fast to be valid first there should be the intention to fast, and then refraining from the things that break ones fast. It is also recommended that a pre-dawn meal is taken, even if it consists of just water.

At sunset

When a person is fasting he is advised to hasten the breaking of the fast once he is sure the sun has set. Breaking fast is usually done by consuming an odd number of dates followed by water. Muslims consider this to be the best way to break fasting. The Qur'an says "Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become righteous.

"The prescribed fasting is for a fixed number of days, but whoso among you is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of other days; and of those who are able to fast only with great difficulty as an expiation, the feeding of a poor man. "And whoso performs a good work with willing obedience, it is better for him. And fasting is good for you, if you only knew."

As guidance

"The month of Ramadhan is that in which the Qur'an was sent down as a guidance for mankind with clear proof of guidance.

"And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So they should remember Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way."

A Hadith is a record of the actions and teachings of the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH), Hazrat Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) has narrated that: "I heard the Holy Prophet (PBUH) saying that you should start fasting when you see the moon for the month of Ramadhan and stop fasting when you see the new moon." (Sahih Bukhari). At the time of Ifthar (opening the fast): There are some times during the day that are more helpful and assist in prayers being answered. Allah accepts more prayers when the fast is opened.

No prayer is rejected

In one Hadith the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is reported to have said: "No prayer is rejected at the time of the opening of the fast that is offered by someone who has been fasting."

Welcoming the month of Ramadhan, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said; "The month of Ramadhan comes to you. This is a blessed month." "To render our dues we should recite the Holy Qur'an as much as possible." During this month, at night, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is said to have recited the Holy Qur'an in its entirety with the Angel Gabriel.

Opening the doors to heaven: Hazrat Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) has narrated that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said: "When the month of Ramadhan starts, the doors of heaven are opened, the doors of hell are closed, and Satan is put into chains." (Sahih Muslim)

A place in heaven

In this saying the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has promised a high place in heaven for one who observes the fast because a believer is enjoined to perform such deeds that please Allah and stay away from bad things.

Charity during Ramadhan is also very important: Holy Prophet (PBUH), was the most generous of men and he was at his most bountiful during Ramadhan when Gabriel visited him every night and recited the Qur'an to him. Allah forgives all previous sins of a person who sincerely worships Allah during the month of Ramadhan. It is the same when it comes to prayers during the month of Ramadhan.

During this month Allah's mercy and blessings are at their peak. The Prophet (PBUH) has



Mosque in Central Road, Trincomalee, Sri Lanka - Photo: Drs. Sarajevo

said that during Ramadhan: "Allah says: 'Is there anyone who calls on me so that I can accept his prayers? Is there anyone who asks for anything so that I can fulfill his desires? Is there anyone who asks for forgiveness so that I can forgive.'"

Last 10 days

Last 10 days of Ramadhan: Hazrat Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates that, "during the month of Ramadhan, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) used to develop a new vigour, staying awake all night and also waking members of his family for worship."

During the month of Ramadhan worship reaches its peak in the form of I'tikaaf (retirement for Allah's worship). Ramadhan and Lailatul Qadr (Night of Decree): Hazrat Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "O Allah's Prophet, if I know which night is the Lailatul Qadr then what should I pray? He replied: you should pray: 'O Allah, you are very forgiving and love those who forgive others. So bestow your blessings on me and forgive me.'"

"Lailatul Qadr is such a night that the Holy Qur'an has declared it to be better than a thousand months.

"May Allah enable us to be the recipients of Lailatul Qadr that we truly benefit from the coming month of Ramadhan. May Allah accept our prayers during this month, and whenever we pray as well." During this time of Ramadhan it is obligatory that every Muslim pays Zakath before the end of Ramadan.

This money is collected and given to the less fortunate so that they too may enjoy the festivities on Eid-ul-Fitr.

[thesundayleader.lk]

Memorial Service in Toronto

By: J.J. Atputharajah

The Past Pupils' Association of St. John's College, Jaffna and Chundikuli Girls' College organized a memorial service at St. Paul's Anglican L' Ameroux Church at Scarborough for the life, work and witness of the late Dr. E.S. Thevasagayam, Principal Emeritus and also commemorated the 185 years anniversary of the revered institution. The late Thevasagayam served as principal from 1988 until 1993. The service was presided over by Rev. Bobby Mather. The choir was trained by Joel Joseph, director of the Eagle Chorus who also organized the service in a very meaningful manner. The choir gave a very good account of themselves. The Tamil song sung by the Thevaseer-vatham family was very well rendered. Tributes for the life and work of the late principal were paid by Messrs. E. Thevaseer-vatham (a brother) and T. Elaya-thamby (a past pupil and family friend). Mr. Thevaseer-vatham referred to the inimitable Christian life led by his brother, his love for the family, devotion and dedication to his school and his faithful services to the Anglican church of Ceylon for which he served in many capacities. He gave a full history of his brother as a loving brother, a dedicated teacher, a professional scientist who was in the anti-malaria campaign and later joined the UN to work as an etymological research specialist in Asia and several other countries. He used his skills and education for the welfare of his community, country and the world at large. Thevasagayam also initiated a foreign aid scheme by which deserving students could be helped through donations from abroad. Mr.

Elayathamby referred to his excellent services in St. John's as a Zoology master, house master and prefect of games. He remembered how Thevasagayam was also responsible for the renovation and restoration of the school buildings at St. John's after the civil war. He took over as principal of St. John's at a very crucial time when there was chaos all around and set in motion forces for the re-building and renewal which was successfully completed by his successor, the late Mr. S. Thanapalan. Mr. Jimmy Rajaratnam paid tributes to the past principals of St. John's and talked highly of the achievements of outstanding principals. They were Rev. Joseph Knight (the dreamer), Rev. Johnstone (the founder), Rev. Pargiter (the consolidator), Rev. Thompson (the developer), Rev. Henry Peto (the modernizer), the Rev. J. T. Arulanathan (the first national principal), Mr. K. Pooranampillai (The redeemer) and Mr. S. Thanapalan (the builder of modern St. John's). It is the initial sacrifice and services of missionaries that made it possible for St. John's to be the enduring centre of education and enlightenment in the Jaffna peninsula torn by civil war and turmoil.

Special prayers were offered for the nation and the people who are suffering due to the continuous conflict in the island nation. The organizing committee headed by Mr. Joel Joesph and the members of the executive committee of the Past Pupils' Association should be commended for the fitting memorial service and commemoration of the 185th anniversary of St. John's. "Johnians always play the game."



Monsoon Kids Corner

Color Me Competition - 7

Dead Line for entries:
September 25, 2008

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

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

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- Anjana & Rishi Chandrakumar
Scarborough
- Eesha Kirubaharan
Markham
- Bairavie Piravakaran
Toronto
- Abu George
Scarborough
- Abzhara Sasikumar
Markham

Entry Form:

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Address:

.....

Tel No:..... E-Mail:

Veteran Nathaswaram exponent Kaanamoorthy passes away

V.K.Kaanamoorthy, an exponent in Nathaswaram music passed away on September 9th night in Jaffna Teaching Hospital after a brief illness at 60 years of age. Kaanamoorthy with his younger brother Panchamoorthy, excelled in playing Nathaswaram not only in Sri Lanka but also in Tamil Nadu in South India, Singapore and Malaysia for more than three decades.



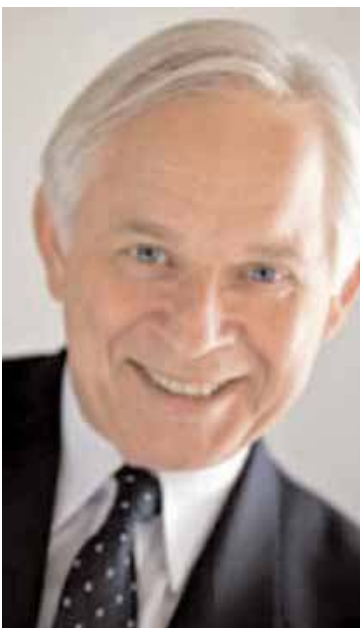
V.K.KaanamoorthyKaanamoorthy was born in the year 1948 in Koandaavil in Jaffna district.

Once mastered in Nathaswaram, he and Panchamoorthy, had been playing the instrument in temples and other musical functions.

At the age of 14 he learnt Nathaswaram music from veteran Vidwan Narayanasamy and later learnt most techniques in the music from Mr. Rasa of Maaviddapuram.

Both the artists have been described by the music world as the twins of Nathaswaram.

Scarborough-Guildwood Conservative Candidate Chuck Konkel begins his campaign on Saturday Sep. 13th



The Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham entertained Durham residents with a cultural show recently. Pictures here show dance programs at the show.



Terror attacks can't break India's unity

In a couple of days we'll probably have a better idea of the damage caused by the Saturday evening blasts in three important markets in the national capital. We should by then also be able to make some sense of who the perpetrators might be, looking at the nature of the materials used and by the modus operandi of the terrorists. Early reports suggest more than

10 people lost their lives and more than 80 were injured. Whether this is a coincidence or not, the Saturday blasts bear a striking resemblance to blasts in Delhi three years ago. They occurred on the same day of the week and approximately the same hour of early evening. Perhaps this points to the fact that the terrorists expect ordinary people to be out shopping in large numbers on weekend evenings. But whoever they are, the executors of evil designs

against innocent people must be warned that they will be exposed in the not too distant future. Already, several leading dramatis personae of previous terror attacks on prominent cities are finding the going tough. It is

no use getting carried away by claims that terrorists make. This is usually done to demoralise the authorities and the public, especially when the same agency seeks to appropriate credit on more than one occasion. The intention is to plant

the subconscious fear among ordinary people that those who plan to hit them are everywhere, while the providers of security are groping in the dark. These are pretty much standard psy-war techniques. Ordinary folk should be encouraged to give them short shrift. Terrorist groups sometimes advertise themselves loudly with a view to registering their success with those that dispatched them. This is a mercenary motive, of course. It is only when the initial impact of a

terror attack simmers down and the early excitement abates that it is possible to dispassionately analyse an incident or a chain of events. The Delhi blasts are also being taken credit for, and the name of a group popping up is the same that tried to foreground its claims on earlier occasions also. It may be no more than a paper front shielding the

real culprits, or it may be the alias of another outfit. Whatever the case, we should await proper identification

before jumping to conclusions. Since the primary purpose of terrorism is to jolt the morale of a people, and create in them a gripping sense of insecurity, as citizens we will do well not to direct suspicion against whole religious communities. This is a communal reaction that demonises people only on the basis of their faith. The terrorists would have succeeded in their aims if they can elicit such a reaction from us, for the ultimate purpose of the enemy is to

disturb the unity of a people. The terror strike in Delhi should impel us to greater effort to establish a well-coordinated national agency to track and attack perpetrators of terror attacks. Such an agency will naturally need to have strong cooperative relations with police sleuths in the states. This is because all of India is on the radar screen of those who think nothing of killing innocent people in order to advance their political aims.



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MUSIC FESTIVAL 2008

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Sadhguru trained Isha Yoga teacher will offer Inner Engineering Program from September 17 - 23 at 175 Bloor St. East, Toronto, ON - M4W 3R8. There will be an introductory talk on September 17th from 6:45 pm to 7:45 pm. All are welcome. www.ishayoga.org email: toronto@ishafoundation.org

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The annual cultural event of JHCA Canada, the Kalaiarasy is to take place on **Saturday, September 27th, 2008.**

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Location: Chinese Cultural Center, **5183 Sheppard Avenue East, (Close to Markham & Sheppard), Scarborough.**

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www.jaffnahinduacanada.com

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Kollywood Film Review



by Anand. J
DHANAM

The makers of Dhanam have made a brave attempt at handling two contemporary burning social issues, prostitution and superstition. The attempt in itself is worth appreciating. The question is whether the movie has done justice to the scope of the issues being handled, because the subject, especially that of prostitution has been beaten to death by stereotypes in Tamil cinema, barring a few sensitive portrayals.

Sangeetha as Dhanam is a lady who has been forced into the life of a sex worker. However, she does not isolate herself from the society. In fact she helps out people around her with the money that she earns. Fortunes seem to smile upon her as a young man from a good family expresses his desire to marry her. Just as she settles into her new life, fate plays spoil sport and circumstances force her to return to her earlier



life. Much else cannot be revealed about the story.

Woven around an interesting premise, what strikes you most about the movie is the hurried nature of events that take place. A few of the turning points in the movie are extremely difficult decisions made by characters who are totally antagonistic to an orthodox community set up. Yet the characters do not seem to experience mental turmoil or careful consideration before arriving at these decisions, which makes it a bit difficult to swallow. For example, a young man from a respected family coming forward to marry a sex worker has been shown too

lightly. Also, the screenplay moves in such a way that there is an element of suspense at the beginning, but that fizzles out towards the end.

The movie tries hard to deliver quite a few messages and does succeed at many points. The acceptance of a sex worker by an orthodox family (headed by Girish Karnad) is one of them. Also, there is Raj Kapoor, as a police



officer, whose meaningful dialogues convey a few pertinent points which might get noticed if the movie stands strong at the box office. However, the best message has been delivered by Kota Srinivasa Rao who comes across as an unscrupulous astrologer. He effectively portrays the way in which fraudsters take advantage of the common man's superstitions.

What one expects most from a movie like Dhanam is strong performances. One wonders why Girish Karnad is not seen more often on the Tamil silver screen, he does his part with aplomb. TV actor Prem has done his bit well, but nothing spectacular. Sangeetha as Dhanam has done a fair job, given the nature of her role. But one feels that she could have been better at many places, especially at the end where her decision does not evoke any reaction (for or against) her character. There have been attempts at comedy lead by M.S. Bhaskar with Karunas providing the rearguard. Needless to say, it looks completely out of place, something the movie could have done without.

Technically, there is nothing much to write home. But one cannot fail to notice the difference in

the levels of cinematography in different parts of the movie. Portions shot by the late Jeeva are definitely a notch above his replacement Srinivas Devamsam. Music by Ilaiyaraaja seems average by the maestro's high standards. However, there is one song with a classical touch which is bound to be liked by everyone.

Overall, Dhanam is a movie which does not fulfill the scope of its theme. Also, the subject will be seen by some groups as controversial. This, coupled with a pretty narrow cross section of the audience who will accept such bold themes, stacks the odds against Dhanam.

SAROJA

It's the return of the victorious team of Chennai 600028. All those who watched and loved the refreshingly youthful fun story would certainly have high expectations of Saroja. The onus is on Venkat Prabhu to prove that Chennai 600028 was not a freak hit. Billed as a first of its kind in Tamil cinema, Saroja tells the story of four ordinary men who end up in an extraordinary situation on a day that is perfectly nor-



mal to start with.

Ganesh Kumar, Ram Babu, Jagapathi Babu and Ajay Raj are the four protagonists of the story. The movie begins with four of them setting off in a car towards Hyderabad to catch a cricket-one-day-international. But what happens is more exciting than just a 50 over cricket match, perhaps something more exciting than they would have bargained for. Things start to go wrong when an untoward incident on the road threatens to spoil their trip. But

the youngsters have spirits that will not be dampened and that is exactly what leads them to the centre of a conspiracy. Taking a deviation from the highway, they make their way through an isolated path hoping to rejoin the main road at a later point.

But events start taking unexpected turns by the moment. An accident, a few gunshots, a heart stopping incident, a few goons, a missed purse and a girl (Saroja) all alone in the middle of nowhere leave them bewildered. It is only



slowly revealed that what they have seen are the moving parts of an immaculately planned conspiracy. As the threads are unraveled, henchmen, policemen, a high flying businessman and many others are at different ends of the conspiracy.

Basically planned as a thriller, we feel it would not be appropriate to reveal anything else about the movie as it would take the zing out of the experience of watching it. The prerequisite for any thriller is the pace in the script and Venkat Prabhu seems to have faltered a bit in this regard. Some scenes in the first half could have been shorter and crisper. However, he has done really well in all other departments. His evolution as a film maker is evident in the way most of the scenes have been picturised, the scale is definitely bigger this time round. There are places in the movie where one can clearly feel and see a Hollywood influence. The dialogues are youthful and well conceived. The high point of the movie is when the threads of the conspiracy are fully revealed, the audience will surely be taken by

surprise, however intuitive they may be.

Talking about the cast, it is indeed pleasant to see much of the Chennai 28 cast back again on screen; the director shows his acumen here. All of them have done fairly well, but the one who scores highly is Premgi Amren once again. He returns to his best after his debut, seemingly enjoying the experience of working under his elder brother; but there is a lingering doubt as to whether his comic capers in the midst of racy thriller will be liked by the audience. SPB Charan is the new addition. Apart from the Chennai 28 cast, the movie also has experienced hands in Prakash Raj and Jeyaram who add a touch of class to the proceedings. Debutant Vega, Nikitha and Kajal Aggarwal have done their parts well without delivering anything special.

Technically, Saroja is a movie that gives a lot of scope for the cinematographer, most of the story being at night, and has been used well. The background score too is befitting of a thriller. The songs have been tailor made for the youth and are bound to be enjoyed. But the movie on the whole belongs to the director who has taken a one line plot and maintained the element of suspense till the very end, a very challenging thing to do for a director in only his second movie. He has managed to cleverly craft the characters such that we don't get the slightest inkling of what is afoot.

Saroja is certainly different from the run of the mill movies and the attempt should be appreciated. At the box office, the thriller tag and the deftly held suspense will prove to be its strength and the lack of pace (at places) and the elements of comedy (perhaps) may go against it. Venkat Prabhu proves that he is not a flash in the pan, the young director is here to stay.

Post your comments to
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