

Canadian Government unveils stimulus plan to revive economy hit by the Pandemic

By Siva Sivapragasam

The Liberal government has presented its long-awaited fiscal stimulus plan in the House of Commons recently with a \$100 billion investment to build a "greener, more innovative, more inclusive and more competitive "We know the winter ahead will be hard, but we also know that spring will follow winter." Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau fist bumps Finance Minister Cynthia Freeland when she presented the stimulus plan to revive Canada's Economy in Parliament

economy". The Government is expected to reveal more details of the plan in the 2021 budget.

The measures in the economic program presented by Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland are expected es suggest the update will include assistance for airlines, hotels, and restaurants, and for the companies that supply them.

that supply them. Money to help long-term care homes stop the spread of infections.

Support to help women return

recovery.

Canada is facing its deepest budget deficit since the Second World War after the Government unveiled massive emergency spending on income supports because of the pandemic. In July, Freeland's predecessor projected a \$343 billion (US\$262.2 billion) shortfall this fiscal year, or 16 per cent of total output. The Finance Minister however defended the record spending by saying the country is in a stronger fiscal position than other advanced economies.

When presenting the stimulus plan Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland who is also the Deputy Prime Minister told Parliament "We know the winter ahead will be hard, but we also know that spring will follow winter."

Rohini Kosoglu of Sri Lankan Tamil origin appointed domestic policy advisor for US Vice- President Elect Kamala Harris

By Siva Sivapragasam

Rohini Kosoglu of Sri Lankan Tamil origin and a long-time Harris aide who currently serves as senior advisor to Harris on the



team and held chief of staff titles in both the incoming vice president's Senate office and past presidential campaign, will be the domestic policy advisor for Kamala Harris, US Vice-President Elect. She became the first South Asian American to be appointed a chief of staff in the Washington, D.C. office of a U.S. Senator, Kamala Harris. Rohini is of Sri Lankan Tam"She is not only an expert on some of the most important issues facing the American people, but is also one of my closest and most trusted aides from the Senate and presidential campaign,"

- Vice President-elect Kamala Harris about Rohini Kosoglu

il origin and the daughter of Dr. Wijeyadevendram Ravindran and Shobhana Ravindran whose origin is Jaffna, Sri Lanka. Kosoglu received a B.A. in English with Honors from the University of Michigan and a Masters in Legislative Affairs from George Washington University. She currently resides in the Washington D.C. area with her husband and three sons.

Vice President-elect Kamala Harris announced an all-female slate of

to include:

Support for airlines and the tourism and hospitality sector which have been hit hard by heavy losses due to border closures and lockdowns. The sourc-

to work.

Stimulus spending for infrastructure projects tied to the government's promise to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as part of the economic key senior staff including Tina Flournoy as chief of staff, in addition to naming her domestic policy advisor and national security advisor.



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Ontario Calls on Ottawa for Certainty as COVID- 19 Vaccine Preparation Continues

Province Wants Assurances that Canada Will Not Be Last in Line to Receive Vaccines

November 27, 2020

Office of the Premier

TORONTO — The Ontario government is calling on the federal government to immediately lay out its plan to allocate COVID-19 vaccines across the country as the province continues to prepare for the distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccine doses, which will be the largest vaccine rollout in a generation. This federal plan will inform the work of the new Ministers' COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force being led by General (retired) Rick Hillier.

With recent reports that COVID-19 vaccines will come later to Canada than other countries, the federal government must put forward a comprehensive plan for a national immunization program, including the ongoing review, procurement, warehousing, and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to Ontario and the other provinces and territories. While Ontario is doing everything it can to prepare, the government will continue to work closely with the federal government and local partners to ensure the province is ready when the vaccine is made available.

"With other jurisdictions ready to roll out vaccines as early as next month, Ontario and Canada should not be last in line to receive this vaccine," said Premier Ford. "I'm calling on the Prime Minister today to provide certainty that the contracts we've signed are rock solid and that Ottawa will provide detailed information to support provincial planning, including when, how much, and what type of each vaccine we're getting. The sooner we get a vaccine, the sooner we can offer that added protection for our frontline staff and most vulnerable,



take pressure off of our hospitals, and begin to return life back to normal."

The task force, chaired by retired General Rick Hillier, will support the government in the planning and execution of this historic logistical undertaking. This task includes ensuring the province is ready to receive, store, and administer the vaccines in an ethical, timely and effective manner as soon as they are available.

"It was my duty to agree to the Premier's request to lead the task force in this war to defeat COVID-19," said General Hillier. "We will be ready as of December 31, 2020 to receive the vaccine, no matter when it arrives, and to ensure the people of Ontario are vaccinated. Our task force team is integrated, professional, and committed."

The COVID-19 vaccines require special handling and storage, including in some cases the need for ultra-cold or freezer units to keep millions of doses at the right temperature. The logistics will have to be well planned for people to get the vaccines in a prompt, equitable fashion. For those reasons, Ontario needs the federal government to share the volume and timing for when the province will receive its allocations.

"Our government is building the capacity to undertake this monumental task, and I know that with

Ontario Supports Management

Agreements at Two Long-Term

Care Homes

Temporary Measures are Required to Help Contain COVID-19 Outbreaks

November 28, 2020

TORONTO - The Ministry of Long-Term Care has approved new voluntary management agreements for two long-term care homes in Scarborough and Richmond Hill to help address the current spread of COVID-19 in the homes and stabilize operations.

These arrangements allow Scarborough Health Network to provide enhanced support to Rockcliffe Care Community in Scarborough and allow Mackenzie Health to provide enhanced support to Langstaff Square Care Community in Richmond Hill, to help return both homes to normal operations.

"Our government is committed to protecting the health and well-being of Ontarians, especially our long-term care residents who are most vulnerable," said Dr. Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Long-Term Care. "I thank the dedicated staff at these facilities for their collaboration and for working together to stop the COVID-19 outbreaks and to provide quality care to our loved ones in these long-term care homes."

General Hillier at the helm we are in good hands as we move forward with Ontario's COVID-19 immunization program," said Minister Elliott. "This is a critical stage in our fight against COVID-19 that will require us to work together, as a province and as a country, to face the challenges ahead of us to protect the health and well-being of each and every Ontarian."

"Our government continues to take all measures necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19 while planning for the availability of a safe and effective vaccine once it is ready," said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones. "We



During these unprecedented times, the province is using every tool available to keep Ontarians safe. Management contracts are one example of the measures Ontario has utilized on behalf of long-term care residents and staff. Ongoing measures include emergency funding, regulatory flexibility, staffing support, expanded testing, along with direction and guidance on outbreak management, and infection prevention and control.

The Ministry of Long-Term Care will continue to make decisions based on case-by-case assessments, and in partnership with the local hospitals, as to which long-term care homes may require additional interim hospital support.

Via news.ontario.ca

are confident that the work of our task force, led by General Hillier, will ensure Ontario is ready for the next step of our recovery, and we are calling on the federal government to provide the information and assurances we need to move forward for Ontarians."

As part of its initial work, the task force will be guiding the development of an ethical framework, develop a logistical roadmap, and identify the key risks and mitigation strategies for the rollout of the program. Additional members will be announced in the coming days.

Via news.ontario.ca

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International Volunteer Day for Social and Economic Development 2020: Volunteer your time towards ways that you can make sure everyone is safe and healthy from covid-19 this holiday season and beyond

By Harrish Thirukumaran

After difficult and unusual times during these past couple of months this year, we are now approaching December, the final month of 2020. I say this as since March 2020, our collective lives here in Ontario and Canadahave been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing us to follow a host of public health guidelines and physically distance from each other. In turn, our normal daily lives have been temporarily halted to combat this disease.

While there is discussion and speculation that things will be different in 2021 with attention being directed at the possibility of vaccines, one will have to wait and see how this turns out and continue doing what we can to control the situation. This, in one instance, is accomplished through volunteering, especially since the pandemic has undermined the economy resulting in job losses for many individuals including yourself possibly. It can reignite that sense of purpose in life that jobs are fundamentally meant to do while making an impact on society's wellbeing overall.

The contributions of volunteers have also been recognized by the United Nations (UN) with International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development. This occasion is commemorated on December 5. International Volunteer Day is a chance for individual volunteers, communities, and organizations to promote their contributions to development at the local, national, and international levels. By combining UN support with a grassroots mandate, International Volunteer Day is a unique opportunity for people and volunteer-involving organizations to work with governSince then, governments, the UN system and civil society organizations have successfully joined volunteers around the world to celebrate the Day on 5 December.

Through the years, International Volunteer Day has been used strategically: many countries have focused on volunteers' contributions to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, a set of time-bound targets to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women.

The organization of International Volunteer Day is generally the result of a partnership between the UN system, governments, volunteer-involving organizations and committed individuals. Representatives from the media or academia, foundations, the private sector, faith groups, and sports and recreational organizations are often involved too.

In terms of the day's theme for 2020, it focuses on spreading the message of Together We Can Through Volunteering. Over the last months, as the COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged across the world, volunteers have been at the forefront of medical, community and societal responses. Headlines in the world's media have paid credit to volunteers for all kinds of work, from helping to provide medical care, to doing shopping for vulnerable neighbours, or checking up on elderly people living alone.

The COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan by the World Health Organization (WHO) identifies community volunteers as key stakeholders for risk communication and community engagement. This signifies the value that WHO sees in volunteers in relation to the pandemic.

In that sense, I encourage everyone

a happy festive season: December 10 - 18: Hanukkah December 21 - 30: Dedicated to Lord Shiva, Thiruvempavai December 25: Christmas Day January 1: New Year, 2021 January 14: Thai Pongal, Makara Sankranti, Maghi festival ment agencies, non-profit institutions, community groups, academia, and the private sector.

It was adopted by the UN General Assembly through Resolution A/ RES/40/212 on December 17, 1985. tovolunteer your time towards these and other practical ways that you can make sure everyone is safe and healthyfrom COVID-19 this holiday season and beyond.



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

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_CANADA NEWS 🦃

Celebrate the Holiday Season Safely

Ontario Provides Public Health Advice on How to Protect You and Your Loved Ones

November 25, 2020

Office of the Premier

TORONTO - The holidays are going to look a little different this year due to COVID-19. To support Ontarians as they begin to safely plan for the season, the Ontario government, based on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and input from the Public Health Measures Table, is providing preliminary guidance on how to safely celebrate this year and protect your loved ones.

Details were provided today by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, and Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health.

"I know there are many people looking forward to their traditional family celebrations at this time of year, but to keep your loved ones safe, traditions will have to be adjusted," said Premier Ford. "We're asking everyone to please stick to your own household when celebrating. Avoid big holiday parties or large family dinners to help us stop the spread of this deadly virus.

Safer Holiday Activities

Virtual holiday gatherings or events with family, friends or coworkers.

Outdoor holiday activities such as building a snowman or going on a sleigh ride with members of your household.

Visiting Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus or their elves outdoors and taking photos while keeping two metres apart.

Attending a drive-in or drivethrough event.

Watching holiday or other movies with your household.

Decorating your doors and putting up lights around your home.

Lighting your menorah.

Baking holiday treats with your immediate household.

Donating to your favourite holiday charity or toy drive.

Riskier Holiday Activities

In-person holiday gatherings or events, particularly gatherings where masks or face coverings must be removed to eat or drink.

Indoor holiday activities such as having overnight guests or sleepovers with friends or people outside your household.

Visiting Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus or their elves indoors and taking photos without being two metres apart. Children are not permitted to sit on Santa's lap this year.

Visiting family and friends for non-essential reasons.

Individuals and families in higher transmission areas should avoid going to lower transmission areas, except for essential reasons.

Hosting or attending social gatherings or organized public events that do not adhere to provincial or local requirements. See below for information about the gathering limits that apply in the various zones.

Fig. 1



By following this public health advice, we can all have a safe and fun holiday season."

No matter where you live in the province, the safest way to spend the holidays this year is by only celebrating in person with the people you live with and celebrating virtually with everyone else. If you live alone, consider exclusively celebrating with one additional household as a safe way to spend the holidays. While public health measures to keep Ontarians safe may be different in communities across the province, the following is some general advice to consider when planning your holiday season: direct and up-to-date guidance on how individuals and families can plan for a safe holiday season.

"The holidays are a special time of the year for many people, and while we all want to spend time with family and friends, we must celebrate safely to stop the spread of COVID-19," said Minister Elliott. "With the recent news about several vaccines there's light at the end of the tunnel. I realize that it distancing from everyone else;

• Adhere to the restrictions in your region on public and private gatherings;

• Wear a face covering indoors and wear one outdoors if physical distancing cannot be maintained or if wearing one is required;

• Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly;

• Cover your cough;

but as we are continuing to live in unprecedented times, we need to look at new ways of celebrating and marking special occasions," said Dr. Williams. "Everyone has a role to play in stopping the spread of COVID-19 and by strictly following these measures we can all plan for a healthy holiday season while keeping our loved ones safe."

Ontarians are advised to visit Ontario.ca/covidresponse to learn what public health measures are in place in their community, and check with their public health unit for any additional information or restrictions. Advice may also vary by the level a public health unit is in, which can change depending on public health trends in the region as the holiday season approaches.

Social Gathering Limits by Level under the Regulations

• In all levels, people are required to comply with public health guidance on physical distancing;

• Indoor and outdoor limits can not be combined to increase the applicable limit;

• The specified limits apply to gatherings even if in a private dwelling, including houses, apartment buildings, condominium buildings and post-secondary student residences;

• The limits do not apply to a gathering of members of a single household.

Green-Prevent, Yellow-Protect and Orange-Restrict:

• The limit for indoor social gatherings is 10 people;

• The limit for outdoor social gatherings is 25 people.

Red-Control:

• The limit for indoor social gatherings is five people;

• The limit for outdoor social gatherings is 25 people.

Lockdown (Stage 1):

• Indoor social gatherings are not permitted, except for a gathering of members of a single household, or a gathering that includes members of a household and one other person from outside that household who lives alone;

[Please see Fig.1]

While the above is recommended advice from public health officials, please remember you must adhere to public health and workplace safety measures and rules in your region.

A new holiday web page will be launched shortly to provide more won't be easy, but we must continue to follow public health advice and look for new and creative ways to celebrate this year."

It is important for everyone to adhere to the public health measures in their communities, especially when connecting with others. All Ontarians are strongly recommended to continue doing the following:

• Stay home if you have COVID-19 symptoms, even if they are mild;

• Avoid social gatherings and limit close contacts to your household or the people you live with;

• Maintain two metres of physical

• Get tested if you have symptoms compatible with COVID-19, or if you've been advised of exposure by your local public health unit or through the COVID Alert mobile app;

• Individuals and families from higher transmission regions should avoid travel to lower transmission regions (e.g., from Red level to Orange level), except for essential reasons; and

• Download the COVID Alert mobile app.

"We understand the traditional importance of visiting family and gathering during the holiday season, • The limit for outdoor social gatherings is 10 people.

Note that capacity limits for religious services, rites or ceremonies, including wedding services and funeral services are different from the above. Refer to O. Reg. 82/20, O. Reg. 263/20, and O. Reg. 364/20.

If a person or business is not found compliant with orders under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020 ("Reopening Ontario Act"), they could be ticketed with a fine of \$750 under the Act. **Via news.ontario.ca**

K CANADA NEWS

Statement by the Prime Minister on the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji

November 30, 2020 Ottawa, Ontario

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement to mark the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji:

"Today, Sikhs in Canada and around the world will celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism and the first Sikh Guru.

"The anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's birth is an important day for Sikh Canadians. It celebrates his life and his teachings of unity, equality, selflessness, and service.

"This year, as we continue to fight the global COVID-19 pandemic, those teachings have never been more important. Whether it is supporting a local charity, being there for neighbours, or helping those who are more vulnerable, Sikh Canadians continue to show selfless service.

"This year will look different as we follow public health guidelines to keep each other and our communities safe, but the Sikh values of compassion and inclusion will remain strong. These



values, which form the core principles of Sikhism, are also important for all Canadians.

"Today is an opportunity to recognize the significant contributions that Canada's Sikh community – one of the largest and most dynamic Sikh populations in the world – makes to build a better, fairer, and more inclusive Canada.

"On behalf of our family, Sophie and I offer our warmest wishes to everyone celebrating the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, here in Canada and around the world."

Via pm.gc.ca

CTCC elects New Board of Directors for 2020/2021 with Santha Panchalingam re- elected as President

By Siva Sivapragasam

The Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce which represents the Tamil business community in Canada elected a new Board of Directors for the coming year (2021) with Santha Panchalingam re-elected as President, at the virtual Annual General meeting held recently at the CTCC new office.

The following are the new members of the Board:

President

Santha Panchalingam Executive Vice President Thipan Raj Vice President – Internal Affairs Murali Sivaguru President Santha Panchalingam thanked everyone who supported him in the past two years and the donors who supported the building project.

He encouraged the members for their continuous support for the building renovation project.

Ontario Expands Existing Community Paramedicine Programs to Long- Term Care

November 27, 2020 Long-Term Care

Communities that have existing community paramedicine programs funded by the Ministry of Health through their Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), are invited to express their interest in expanding their program to the Ministry of Long-Term Care.

There are 29 communities that may be eligible for this phase of expansion, based on the following eligibility criteria:

• Existing community paramedicine programs can be expanded quickly to meet the needs of the target LTC-related population.

• The LHIN is supportive and committed to maximizing local resources rather than replacing or duplicating existing or new resources from other community paramedicine programs.

• There is existing local community paramedicine provider capacity, specifically advanced care paramedics, without risk to emergency medical services.

The communities that may be eligible for phase two include:

- 1. Algoma District
- 2. Chatham-Kent
- 3. Cornwall and Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry
- 4. Dufferin County
- 5. Essex County and Windsor
- 6. Frontenac County and Kingston



- 7. Grey County
- 8. Guelph and Wellington County
- 9. Haliburton County
- 10. Halton Region
- Hamilton
 Hastings County, Belleville
- and Quinte West
- 13. Lambton County
- 14. Lanark County
- 15. Leeds-Grenville
- 16. Manitoulin and District of Sudbury
- 17. Middlesex County and London
- 18. Muskoka
- 19. Niagara Region
- 20. Nipissing District
- 21. Norfolk County
- 22. Parry Sound
- 23. Peel Region
- 24. Rainy River District
- 25. Simcoe County
- 26. Sudbury
- 27. Thunder Bay and district
- 28. Toronto
- 29. Waterloo Region
- Via news.ontario.ca



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President Santha Panchalingam addressing the virtual Annual General Meeting

December 22, 1952

Canada's Parliament announces that a national library will be created on January 1, 1953, following the passage of the National Library Act.

The mandate of the National Library of Canada will be to maintain a wide range of written records related to Canadian heritage.

The first National Librarian of Canada will be Dominion Archivist William Kaye Lamb. He will play a decisive role in the development of this cultural institution.

In 2004, the National Library of Canada and the National Archives of Canada will merge and become Library and Archives Canada. (via: bac-lac.gc.c)



CANADA NEWS 🚽

Ontario Identifies Key Groups for Distribution of Initial COVID-19 Vaccines

December 7, 2020 Office of the Premier

TORONTO — The Ontario government is ready to distribute COVID-19 vaccines as soon as they are received, beginning with vaccinating vulnerable populations and those who care for them. As recommended by the **COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task** Force and in alignment with the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, the province has identified key populations to receive the vaccine first, including long-term care and retirement home residents and the staff who provide care to these groups. The government's approach is informed by science and prioritizes population groups that are at greatest risks of COVID-19.

Details were provided today by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Solicitor General Sylvia Jones and General Rick Hillier (retired), Chair of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force.

"We must deploy these first shipments of a safe and effective vaccine where they will make the most impact and save lives. That means vaccinating our vulnerable seniors and those who care for them as soon as possible,' said Premier Ford. "We are working diligently with General Hillier and the task force to ensure anyone in Ontario who needs a vaccine will get one when we receive them from the federal government. Until then, we are asking people to look out for their elderly loved ones and protect themselves by continuing to follow the public health measures."

Groups receiving the early vaccine doses in the first few months of the Ontario immunization program will include:

 $Residents, \, staff, \, essential \, caregivers, \, and \, other \, employees \, of \, congregate$

Province Ready to Deliver Life-Saving Vaccines to Vulnerable Seniors, Health Workers



living settings (e.g., long-term care homes and retirement homes) that provide care for seniors as they are at higher risk of infection and serious illness from COVID-19;

Health care workers, including hospital employees, other staff who work or study in hospitals, and other health care personnel;

Adults in Indigenous communities, including remote communities where risk of transmission is high; and

Adult recipients of chronic home health care.

"Ontario is ready to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to Ontarians as soon as they are available, and that starts with vaccinating our most vulnerable and those at greatest risk," said Minister Elliott. "Our priority continues to be the health and safety of all Ontarians, so we will make sure that no matter where they are receiving a vaccine, they will have a fast and safe immunization experience."

Ontario will also be prioritizing the rollout of the vaccine in regions with the highest rates of COVID-19 infection, including those in the Red-Control and Lockdown zones. The immunization program will focus on healthcare workers and the most vulnerable populations in those regions. At first, COVID-19 vaccines are expected to only be available for non-pregnant adults over the age of 18 years old based on early clinical trials. As further information becomes available from clinical trials and from Health Canada approvals, the groups for which the vaccines are authorized for use could change.

Ontario's approach is based on evidence available, the guidance of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, as well as recommendations from the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force. Members, including ex-officio members, of the task force include experts in public health and immunization, health and clinical domains, ethics, behavioural science, operations and logistics, federal-provincial and Indigenous relations, and information technology and data.

As further information is made available about the various type of vaccines and availability of doses, additional details related to the implementation of the COVID-19 immunization program will be provided based on the latest medical advice and scientific evidence.

"Due to the limited supplies we expect to receive from the federal government, our initial distribution of vaccines will focus on Ontarians who are most vulnerable and at greatest risk," said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones. "Our government continues to take all measures necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19 while prioritizing the health and well-being of communities."

"That is why, based on the guidance of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization and the recommendations of our COVID-19 task force, the government will prioritize those living in long term care homes, retirement residences as well as our frontline health care workers who are so critical to our COVID-19 response," noted General Rick Hillier.

Vaccination is expected to be an effective way to prevent the spread and reduce the impact of COVID-19. Only vaccines that Health Canada determines to be safe and effective will be approved for use in the country. Before any vaccines are available in Ontario or Canada, they will undergo rigorous clinical trials to determine if they are safe and effective, and be evaluated and authorized for use by Health Canada using rigorous standards. Once a vaccine is approved and in use, Health Canada will continue to monitor it to ensure it continues to be safe and effective.

As the province prepares for the arrival of vaccines, it remains critically important that all Ontarians continue following public health advice to protect our communities and most vulnerable populations, and to stop the spread of COVID-19. This includes staying home if you have any symptoms, even mild; maintaining two metres of physical distancing from everyone else other than household members; avoiding social gatherings; adhering to the restrictions in your region on public and private gatherings; wearing a face covering indoors and wear one outdoors if physical distancing may not be maintained or if wearing one is required; washing your hands thoroughly and regularly. Via news.ontario.ca

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WORLD NEWS

South & Central Asia

Sri Lanka Prison Protest Over COVID-19 Becomes Deadly

By VOA News November 30, 2020 04:58 AM

Officials say an inmate protest Sunday about the growing number of COVID-19 infections at a prison in Sri Lanka turned into a riot.

Authorities say guards opened fire on the inmates. At least eight people were killed in the clash and 50 people were wounded at the Mahara prison, about 15 kilometers north of Colombo.

Police spokesman Ajith Rohana told the Associated Press the prisoners "reportedly destroyed most of the property including offices inside the prison."



Inmates at prisons in Sri Lanka have been demanding early release in recent weeks because of the escalating infections.

Via voanews.com

Kashmir Rebels Kill 2 Indian Soldiers in Region's Main City



Indian security officers keep guard near the site of an attack on the outskirts of Srinagar, Indian- controlled Kashmir, Nov. 26, 2020

By Associated Press

November 26, 2020 06:51 PM SRINAGAR, INDIA - Rebels in Indian-controlled Kashmir killed two soldiers in an attack Thursday in the disputed region's main city, the Indian army said.

Colonel Rajesh Kalia, an Indian army spokesman, said militants sprayed bullets at an army patrol on the outskirts of Srinagar city. Two soldiers were critically injured and later died at a hospital, he said. or as an independent country.

Tens of thousands of civilians, rebels and government forces have been killed in the conflict.

The attack came during near-daily fighting between Pakistani and Indian soldiers along the highly militarized frontier that divides Kashmir between the two nuclear-armed rivals. The Indian army said Pakistani soldiers targeted Indian positions with mortars along the de facto border in southern Poonch district Thursday. Indian soldiers retaliated, the army said in a statement. It did not report any casualties.

Indian Farmers Clash with Police as

They Protest New Laws



Farmers protest against the newly passed farm bills at Singhu border near Delhi, India, Nov. 27, 2020

By AnjanaPasricha November 27, 2020 07:49 AM

NEW DELHI - Police fired tear gas and used water cannons Friday as thousands of farmers from northern India marched to protest new laws that the government says will revolutionize the farm sector but which farmers fear will expose them to exploitation by big corporations.

Scuffles erupted on the outskirts of New Delhi as angry farmers pressed against heavily guarded concrete barricades set up along the city's border to stop the marchers. Waving flags and shouting slogans, some tried to remove the barriers.

Many farmers have traveled on their tractors and motorcycles from the northern farming state of Punjab, vowing to camp in the Indian capital until the government amends the recent laws.

It was the second day that farmers clashed with police. On Thursday security personnel used water cannons on farmers as they traveled through neighboring Haryana state to reach Delhi.

Hours after the farmers demanded to know why they were not being allowed to protest, police announced that they would be allowed to enter the city. set by the government and paves the way for them to sell their produce to private companies.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has described the new laws as "historic" and said they will increase farmers' incomes, boost productivity and liberate farmers from dependence on middlemen. Supporters of the legislation say it could draw in private investment and help modernize Indian agriculture.

However, Indian farmers, who have long been protected from the free market, fear that the removal of government controls will leave them with little bargaining power with large corporations and force them to sell their produce at cheaper prices. While they have been demanding better prices for their crops, they worry that the new laws will further depress rural incomes.

Nearly half of India's population depends on agriculture, but it accounts for just 17% of India's gross domestic product. Most of the farmers own small plots of land, have tiny incomes and are often in debt.

Food and farm policy analyst, Devinder Sharma said the scale of the protests shows that farmers are "not in tune" with the government's plans. "At no stage were the farmers of India consulted about it," Sharma said. "The result," he said, "is that it is industry and markets who are excited about it, while the farmers are convinced it will be detrimental to them." The farmers say they will continue their protest until the government rolls back the reforms. Many have come prepared for a long haul with their vehicles stacked with provisions and even cooking gas cylinders. Via voanews.com

Counterinsurgency police and soldiers launched a search for the attackers.

Rebel groups have been fighting against Indian rule since 1989. None of the groups immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

Both India and Pakistan claim the divided territory of Kashmir in its entirety. Many Muslim Kashmiris support the rebel goal of uniting the territory, either under Pakistani rule On November 13, nine civilians and six soldiers were killed on both sides as Indian and Pakistani soldiers exchanged artillery fire at multiple locations along the de facto border. The fatalities were some of the highest reported on a single day in recent years.

Via voanews.com

Criticizing the use of what he called "brute force," Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh said the government should initiate "immediate talks to address farmers' concerns on the farm laws and resolve the simmering issue." The contentious legislation, passed in September, aims to reform decades-old laws under which farmers mostly sell their produce through state-run wholesale markets at prices



Indian Company Says it Made Millions of Doses of Astra Zeneca COVID-19 Vaccine Candidate

By AnjanaPasricha November 26, 2020 10:23 AM

NEW DELHI - There is rising optimism in India about getting access to a prospective Covid 19 vaccine after Britain-based pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca announced this week that clinical trials of its vaccine candidate have shown that it is highly effective in preventing infections.

An Indian vaccine manufacturing company, the Serum Institute of India, that has a licensing agreement with AstraZeneca to make the vaccine, has said it already has 40 million doses ready.

The Indian company, which is the world's largest vaccine producer by volume, has been in the news for months after its chief executive, Adar Poonawalla, said that the company is manufacturing the vaccine even before final approvals on the chance that it will pass trials.

Following AstraZeneca's announcement that clinical trials show its candidate can be up to 90% effective, Poonawalla said that it will first focus on supplying the potential vaccine to Indians if it gets approval.

To the world's second worst affected country by the pandemic, this holds out hope of swift access to the vaccine, according to health experts.

"They would be making roughly 850 million doses annually of this vaccine. About 50% of that would be available to India," says virologist ShahidJameel. There are no COVID-19 vaccines approved yet, but three companies Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca, have recently reported success in preventing infections with shots they



FILE - A research scientist works inside a laboratory of India's Serum Institute, the world's largest maker of vaccines, which is working on vaccines against COVID- 19 in Pune, India, May 18, 2020.

have tested.

AstraZeneca has said its vaccine has been found to be 70% effective on average, with potential to rise to 90% depending on how the doses are given.

Health experts say AstraZeneca's vaccine, which has been developed with Oxford University, is more suitable for developing countries like India - it is more affordable, easy to transport and can be stored in a refrigerator. The ones developed by Pfizer and Moderna on the other hand need deep freezers.

"They also need to be easy to administer in terms of the logistics. Particularly when it comes to a large population like India, the cold chain and the ease of administration matter and the cost matters," according to K. Srinath Reddy, President of the Public Health Foundation of India.

Poonawalla has told reporters that the vaccine in India would be priced at about \$13.50 per dose, but that governments signing large supply deals would likely buy it at a much lower price.

As the focus turns on vaccines to fight the pandemic, Indian companies like the Serum Institute are increasing production capacities - India makes more than half the world's vaccines and is expected to play a key role in supplying Covid 19 vaccines specially to low- and middle-income countries.

For India, the priority also is to get access to a locally developed vaccine - trials by two domestic companies, Zydus Cadila and Bharat Biotech are in the final stages. "If the Indian vaccines also come through and demonstrate efficacy and safety in completed trials that would make it easier to have a much larger volume at lower price," according to Reddy.

India's health minister has said that the country plans to vaccinate 250 million people by next July - the priority will be health workers.

But vaccinating a country of 1.3 billion people will pose unprecedented challenges because of the scale it will involve. Although India runs a massive and successful immunization program for children and pregnant women, health experts point out that a Covid 19 vaccine will for the first time also have to target adults.

"Here we are talking about millions of doses. So that capacity has to be built up," points out virologist Jameel. "And it is not just the vaccine, it is going to be vials in which vaccine has to be packaged, it is syringes and needles, it is people who can administer the injections, it is the cold chain requirement."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi this week asked state governments to make plans for administering the vaccine even as he stressed that safety and not speed will be the parameters on deciding any rollout.

"After the vaccines come, our effort will be to ensure that they reach every citizen. This is like a national commitment to us," Modi told chief ministers on Tuesday as he discussed steps to mitigate the pandemic. "The process must be smooth and systematic, but it will take long."

But experts caution that there are many unanswered questions about the prospective vaccines - how long they will afford protection and the possible side effects they may have. "The fact that there are multiple vaccines vying to be the candidates is good news though the caution is we do require review of interim results and completion of trials," points out Reddy.

But as infections pass the nine million mark in India, the news that they could be available has brought a ray of hope.

Via voanews.com

Is China Reinforcing its Position in Himalayas Along Disputed Borders?

By Anjana Pasricha

December 06, 2020 04:29 AM NEW DELHI - Rapid construction of infrastructure along the China-Bhutan border near a strategic Himalayan plateau where Indian and Chinese forces age bunkers being built in China near the Doklam area," according to a Maxar Technologies statement.

The construction includes a new village that some analysts who have studied the satellite imagery say lies inside Bhutanese-claimed territory. However both Bhutan and China have denied that that is the case.



were engaged in a standoff three years ago and new claims raised by China to a wildlife park in Bhutan have raised fresh concerns about Beijing pushing its boundaries in the Himalayan mountains.

Satellite images, produced by the U.S.-based satellite operator Maxar Technologies, show construction close to the Doklam Plateau, which is claimed by both China and Bhutan but is also of strategic significance to India.

"There has clearly been significant construction activity this year all along the Torsa River valley area with extensive road-building/construction activity underway as well as new military stor"The new Chinese village shown in satellite images is inside Chinese territory and not inside Bhutan," said Vetsop Namgyel, the Bhutanese ambassador to India.

Still, analysts say the infrastructure being built helps China reinforce its position in disputed areas.

"If you look at these activities, China is consolidating themselves in Doklam, the area they claim," according to Manoj Joshi at the Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi who has studied the satellite imagery. "They

FILE - Indian army soldiers walk along the line of control at the India- China border in Bumla in the northeastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. Oct. 21, 2012

are building a road, a village in a forest area where there is nothing to sustain it. By doing this, they are creating facts on the ground. This is what they have done everywhere such as South China Sea."

India's objections to a road being

constructed by China on the Bhutanese side had led to a tense 2 1/2-month standoff with Chinese troops in 2017 – both sides withdrew when Beijing agreed to maintain the status quo in the area.

Contd. on page 10 ...

WORLD NEWS

India Enters Recession, Worst Among Major Economies

By AFP

November 27, 2020 09:40 AM

NEW DELHI - India's economy contracted 7.5 percent between July and September, performing the poorest among major advanced and emerging economies and entering a technical recession for the first time since independence, official data showed Friday.

Although the figures were an improvement on the record 23.9-percent contraction recorded last quarter, they indicate that Asia's third-largest economy is in for a tough fight as it attempts to revive demand and create jobs even as coronavirus infections climb.

The two successive quarters of contraction mean that the country has now entered a "technical recession" for the first time since 1947.

After virus-led lockdowns ravaged the globe, the growth recorded by major economies including the United States, Japan and Germany during the quarter ending on September 30 raised expectations that India would also enjoy a revival.

But, while consumer businesses saw a boost due to increased spending in the run-up to the October-November festive season, hopes of a broader recovery were dashed, with the construction and hospitality sectors taking a hit.

Farming continued to be a relatively bright spot, while manufacturing activity also increased during the July-September period after plunging nearly 40 percent during the previous quarter due to the lockdown.

New Delhi has struggled to kickstart an economy that is expected to shrink 9.5 percent this year, according to estimates released by India's central bank governor Shaktikanta Das last month.

The International Monetary Fund has meanwhile predicted that India's economy would contract by 10.3 percent this year, the biggest slump for any major emerging economy and the worst since independence.

A report by Oxford Economics released earlier this month said that India would be the worst-affected economy even after the pandemic eases, stating that annual output would be 12 percent below pre-virus levels through 2025.

India's economy had struggled to gain traction even before the pandemic, and the hit to global activity from the virus and one of the world's strictest lockdowns combined to deal the country a severe blow.



A young boy selling vegetables sits on a hand cart without wearing a mask on the outskirts of New Delhi, India, Nov. 20, 2020

The shutdown in the vast country of 1.3 billion people left huge numbers of people jobless almost overnight, including tens of millions of migrant workers in the shadow economy.

The government has since been easing restrictions to revive activity, announcing two stimulus packages to offer farmers easier access to credit and dole out benefits to small-scale businesses.

The relaxation measures have been deployed even as the coronavirus continues to ravage the country, which has registered more than 9.3 million infections -- second only to the United States -- and over 135,000 deaths.

In a speech Thursday, central bank governor Das warned that the recent surge in virus cases and the imminent threat of new lockdowns posed further risks to the economy.

"We need to be watchful about the sustainability of demand after the festivals and a possible reassessment of market expectations surrounding the vaccine," Das said.

Via voanews.com

Hundreds III, One Dead Due to Unidentified Disease in India



Patients and their bystanders are seen at the district government hospital in Eluru, Andhra Pradesh state, India, Dec.6, 2020, where over 200 people have been hospitalized due to an unidentified illness in this ancient city famous for hand woven products

By Associated Press December 07, 2020 08:00 AM NEW DELHI - At least one person has died and 200 others have been hospitalized due to an unidentified illness in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, reports said Monday. the cause of the illness. So far, water samples from impacted areas haven't shown any signs of contamination and patients have tested negative for COVID-19.

Is China Reinforcing

New Delhi had intervened on behalf of Bhutan to prevent China from gaining control of the plateau because it overlooks a narrow piece of land that connects India to its northeastern states.

"Doklam was not a victory as was claimed by many in India at that time," said Joshi, who sees China's push in the Himalayan mountains as part of a wider strategy to gain a dominant position in South Asia.

Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary

Besides Doklam, a new area of concern for both India and Bhutan is China's surprise claims to a huge swath of land encompassing a wildlife sanctuary in Bhutan.

Bhutan was caught off guard this summer when Chinese representatives raised objections when it sought funding from U.S.-based Global Environmental Facility for the Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary, calling it disputed territory. Bhutan rejected the assertion but was shocked by the move because it had never been part of disputed areas discussed between the two countries previously. "According to all our records, Sakteng has always been our territory," Bhutanese historian Karma Phunstho said. The new territory flagged by China is bigger than other disputed areas on which the two countries have held two dozen rounds of negotiations since 1986.

Contd. from page 9

Analysts see the move as part of the wider bid by Beijing to gain an advantage in its territorial disputes with India. The sanctuary adjoins the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, which Beijing claims is part of south Tibet.

The question raised over Sakteng could be a pressure tactic on Bhutan, which so far has not made concessions on Doklam to Beijing in deference to Indian sensibilities, according to a Bhutanese analyst who did not want to be identified.

"All official Chinese maps also show Sakteng as a part of Bhutan," he said. Bhutan has traditionally been a close ally of India.

However, for the tiny nation of 750,000 that has remained largely insulated from the world, the emerging worry is being caught in the rivalry between India and China.

The illness was detected Saturday evening in Eluru, an ancient city famous for its hand-woven products. Since then, patients have experienced symptoms ranging from nausea and anxiety to loss of consciousness, doctors said. A 45-year-old man who was hospitalized with symptoms similar to epilepsy and nausea died Sunday evening, the Press Trust of India news agency reported.

Officials are trying to determine

State chief minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy visited a government hospital and met patients who were ill. Opposition leader N. Chandrababu Naidu demanded on Twitter an "impartial, full-fledged inquiry into the incident."

Andhra Pradesh state is among those worst hit by COVID-19, with over 800,000 detected cases. The health system in the state, like the rest of India, has been frayed by the virus.

Via voanews.com

"Bhutan has to be on its toes and be cautious as these geopolitical games are played out. We worry about being dragged into the tensions in our region and are wary of their agenda," said Phunstho.

Tensions between India and China are at their worst in decades with both sides involved in a tense military standoff on the other side of the Himalayas in eastern India. Tens of thousands of soldiers from both sides are deployed on icy peaks as the two countries spar over their disputed border.

Via voanews.com

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Funny Boy Review: An Emotionally Intense and Inspirational Film Despite its Flaws

By Harrish Thirukumaran

The recently released film adaptation of the 1994 novel by author Shyam Selvadurai, Funny Boy, was an engaging film overall despite the public controversy and flaws surrounding it.

It was an emotionally intense and inspirational film in artistically depicting the Queer Tamil experience in Sri Lanka, a country where homosexuality has been illegal and stigmatized throughout its history. It placed evolving generational differences at the forefront, as characters like 'Radha Aunty' can be seen defying cultural norms and embracing uniqueness, particularly in Arjie Chelvaratnam, the film's protagonist.

Kumar Ratnam remarked that Funny Boy is a great movie if you can forgive some bad modulation of Tamil and lack of native Tamil actors. Importantly, however, it brings issues for the Tamil community both in Sri Lanka as well as part of the global diaspora to mainstream. It is done in an artistic and emotional way, all the way to the Oscars.

Queen's University Assistant Professor, Amarnath Amarasingam, highlighted that the acting was excellent, especially Nimmi Harasgama, who played Nalini Chelvaratnam, Arjie's mother. He also mentioned that the cinematography was excellent as the setting of the island of Sri Lanka was beautifully shot.

However, he noted that the Tamil and Sinhalese became very distracting and clunky with their transitions. It would have been preferable if the film were kept entirely in English in consideration of this from his view. Regardless, he was overall thankful that the Tamil issue and Black July 1983 are now being talked about in the mainstream, despite being far from perfect.

Bob Rae, the current United Nations Ambassador and Permanent Representative for Canada,



commented that Shyam Selvadurai wrote a beautiful book and Deepa Mehta, the director of the film, has just made an extraordinarily beautiful, emotionally rich, and courageous film.

Along with tackling the circumstances of growing up gay in a deeply conservative society, it was also brave in depicting the issues surrounding the Tamil community regarding the Sri Lankan Civil War. Black July 1983 was dedicated its own extended scene, illustrating the horrors many Tamils faced. The tense Tamil-Sinhalese relations were on display through a wide range of situations throughout the film, demonstrating the deeply embedded nature of the conflict and its effect on daily life. It helped to put these issues in the mainstream for other audiences to hopefully take notice.

Funny Boy is a great moment for not only the film world and Queer community, but the Tamil community as well.





HEALTH & WELLNESS

MARKHAM STOUFFVILLE HOSPITAL NAMES MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TO RECOGNIZE LOCAL FAMILY'S TRANSFORMATIONAL GIFT

ARKHAM, ON (December 3, 2020) – Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation is celebrating a substantial multi-million dollar gift made by Gulshan and Pyarali Nanji. In recognition of this transformational donation, Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) will proudly name the Gulshan & Pyarali G. Nanji Mental Health Services.

The Nanji family is among MSH's most generous donors. Supporting our hospital since 1993, they have contributed to countless MSH fundraising initiatives to enable excellent patient care, with this gift being their most monumental to date. And still the Nanji family vows to continue to support the highest priority needs of the hospital for generations to come.

"Gulshan and Pyarali Nanji continue to transform lives in Canada. Their multi-million dollar gift to MSH continues to build on their passion for health care and their extraordinary legacy of giving back. We are so grateful to the Nanji family for this investment in patient care in our community," says Suzette Strong, CEO, MSH Foundation.

Pyarali Nanji is the president and CEO of Markham-based Belle-Pak Packaging Inc. – one of Canada's Top 50 Best Managed companies. Respected and admired for his talent in business and his leadership in the Markham community and beyond, Mr. Nanji has received many accolades, including the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award from Transformation Institute for Leadership & Innovation, as well as the highly prestigious Anthony Roman Award in 2017.

"On behalf of the City of Markham, I would like to thank the Nanji family for their generosity and commitment to bettering the lives of residents in their support of MSH," says Mayor Frank Scarpitti, City of Markham. "I have had the privilege of knowing the Nanji family and I am continually thankful for their commitment to service, exceptional character and inspiring generosity."

Gulshan and Pyarali Nanji are motivated by a desire to give back to their adopted country and have donated millions of dollars to hospitals and causes that are close to their hearts. MSH is proud to be among the Nanji family's charities of choice.

"Our community celebrates the generosity of the Nanji family with this donation that empowers and de-stigmatizes all things related to mental health and mental illness," says Dr. Rustom Sethna, Chief of Psychiatry, MSH. "On behalf of the many who will benefit from this monumental gift for years to come, I



Gulshan and Pyarali G. Nanji

express our deepest gratitude to Mrs. Gulshan Nanji and Mr. Pyarali Nanji. You make an immeasurable impact on the lives of this community."

While the money supports the hospital as a whole-including the purchase of life-saving medical equipment and innovative technology-it will also serve to inspire and innovate change in the mental health services provided at MSH. MSH has established a regional reputation for its mental health programs and services and is a well-known leader in patient care. In naming this patient care space of almost 40,000 sq. ft. in recognition of the Nanji family for this transformational gift, MSH will continue to elevate its brand and reputation as a leader in clinical care, as well as help contribute to the de-stigmatization of mental illness. The Gulshan and Pyarali Nanji family often gives anonymously and has asked MSH to hold the amount of their gift in confidence. Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation exists to enable the growth of Markham Stouffville Hospital by raising funds and awareness for its ongoing priorities and needs. Donations from the community fund life-saving medical equipment that helps to ensure the delivery of first-class health care at MSH. For more information visit mshf. on.ca. For more information, please contact: Madeline Cuadra, Director, Marketing & Donor Engagement, mcuadra@msh.on.ca | 905-472-7373 ext. 6970, Mobile: 416-877-8425

Blessed Christmas

Look through the silent night Carol singing swells; The carol songs affirm that, God Is born in a manger to dwell.

Brightly gleaming star that Leads shepherds through the night, To the manger dim, but now bright Where the Holy infant lies inside.

The holy baby you there; shall find, To their view displayed Meanly dressed in ragged bands And on the straw He lies.

God's only Son, taken human form: The sacrificial lamb in humble home To guard us guide us and protect us From storms and dangers of life.

Let us bow down before the baby, holy Born in the manger to mother Virgin Mary The babe will have the highest honor And for His name, Father God has given power.

– Kingsley

🐶 HEALTH & WELLNESS

SCARBOROUGH BEER STORES DONATE \$71,300 TO SUPPORT SHN FRONTLINE WORKERS

Mario Di Paolo, the district manager of 11 Beer Store locations in Scarborough, knew that when COVID-19 hit, he wanted to do something to help.

"It is so important for us to help the frontline workers because they've been doing such an amazing job," Mario tells us. "We wanted to do a small part ourselves to help out and give back to the community."

And give back they did. Customers came in droves to drop off their empty bottles and cans, with all proceeds going to support the fight against COVID-19 at Scarborough Health Network.

"We have to come together as a community in times like these," says Beverly Scoon, store manager at the Ellesmere and Victoria Park Beer Store location. "Our clients are very generous and we did a hard push. Everything was outside, and people just donated – they're just so willing to help."

On Friday, October 16, Beverly, Mario, and the staff members at the Ellesmere and Victoria Park Beer Store presented SHN Foundation with a cheque for \$55,000 to support urgent and ongoing health care needs in Scarborough during COVID-19. They went on to raise another \$16,300 through their bottle return program.

"Scarborough is so special and unique. You can always rely on the people of Scarborough to step up and help," Mario shared with us.



When asked what makes Scarborough so special and why she gives back, Beverly gave us a simple yet powerful answer – the people. "They're generous, they're kind, and they're just willing to help. You ask and they deliver."

We are incredibly grateful to the Scarborough community and the local Beer Stores for their generosity as we continue to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, for supporting our frontline heroes.

Thank you to the Scarborough Beer Stores for your support:

- 2727 Eglinton Ave. E.
- 1437 Victoria Park Ave.
- 3431 St. Clair Ave. E.
- 1089 Kingston Rd.
- 40 Ellesmere Rd.
- 2300 Lawrence Ave. E.
 - 3561 Lawrence Ave. E.

Scarborough's Ontario Health Team Receives Approval

On November 18, the Ministry of Health announced that Scarborough Health Network and its partner organizations received approval for their application to form an Ontario Health Team.

The new Scarborough Ontario Health Team will be focused on offering a seamless approach to delivering health and community services. This is enhanced through the structure of a Health Team, which brings Scarborough's providers across the continuum of care into closer collaboration.

It is comprised of over 30 Scarborough health service provider organizations, who together, will be caring for the largest population of any Ontario Health Team to date. This is an important designation that they intend to honour by maximizing the depth and breadth of their team's expertise. They will use their collective strengths to change the landscape of care, setting a new precedent for addressing the wellbeing of the people of Scarborough.

The partners already have a great deal of experience working together successfully. During COVID-19, they have developed coordinated programs including safety assessments and education to long-term care homes, centralized intake for Community Support Services and coordinated community testing, and their second annual community-based flu vaccine clinics. They are building on these efforts in the coming months with a focus on providing integrated services for frail seniors living with mental health and/or addictions issues and multiple chronic conditions, as well as caregivers for this population as they work to reduce health and social inequity to achieve population health.

Provincial funding announced for additional beds at SHN

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) was extremely pleased to learn on November 20 that the Government of Ontario is investing in the purchase of additional beds for hospitals across the province.

As part of that funding package, SHN will be receiving \$11,835,800 for up to 45 hospital beds and 8 additional critical care beds to help alleviate hospital capacity pressures and reduce wait times. This includes 20 beds at their Birchmount Hospital and 25 beds at their Centenary Hospital.

The ability to add bed capacity at SHN is important and welcome news for the community of Scarborough. It is particularly helpful in allowing the health network to update contingency planning for the additional space that may be necessary to treat patients during the second-wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. The announcement came as part of the Ontario government's plan for providing \$116.5 million to create up to 766 more beds at 32 hospitals and alternate health facilities across the province. This investment will help reduce surgical backlogs and improve access to care during the COVID-19 pandemic.



HEALTH & WELLNESS FIRST-EVER VIRTUAL SIP, SHOP & CELEBRATE WOMEN EVENT RAISES \$60,000 FOR SHN





pandemic and express her gratitude to the attendees.

"We want to make sure everyone in our community stays safe as we continue to deliver care during these challenging times," said Dr. Lovinsky. "It's through the support of our community and the people in this meeting tonight that we're able to deliver the kind of exceptional health care that Scarborough needs and deserves. By attending tonight's event, you are doing your part to help our frontline staff and our patients."

A special thank you goes out to our sponsors for helping to make this event possible:

- International Group (\$15,000)
- Automatic Coating (\$5,000)
- Leland Industries (5,000)
- RBC (\$3,500)

Satellite Emergency Department at Centenary

As we continue to address the increased visits to our hospitals during the second wave of COVID-19, our emergency department is preparing for an increased surge this winter. In order to support that we are opening a new Satellite Emergency Department, located at our Centenary hospital.

To respond to the increased visits in our emergency department (ED) and ensure adherence to IPAC standards to accommodate appropriate social distancing, the ED is taking an innovative approach for continued quality patient care in the ED. The satellite ED, which is a freestanding structure located outside of the Centenary ambulance bay, will be used to provide care for patients as deemed appropriate (following triage and registration). For anyone coming to our Centenary ED, you will be taken through triage and registration inside our main emergency department. Following triage and registration, if you are going to be seen in the Satellite ED, our emergency staff will help to provide you with information on next steps. Patients will be given a card that will let staff know they are being treated in the Satellite ED. Staff throughout the hospital will assist with directions and wayfinding if patients are required to enter the hospital again for testing. The satellite will ensure the continued safety for all patients and staff while also continuing to see patients in a timely manner, and has been set up with consideration of all weather conditions and includes washrooms

Members of the Scarborough community came together on Tuesday, November 5, 2020 for the seventh-annual Sip, Shop and Celebrate Women event in support of Scarborough Health Network. Held virtually live on Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was dubbed the "Girls Night In" edition. Despite the unique challenges, over 200 guests joined in for this year's event, raising \$60,000 towards SHN's areas of greatest need.

"We are incredibly thankful to the community for continuing to come together in support of our hospitals, even with the event going virtual this year," said Alicia Vandermeer, President & CEO of SHN Foundation. "It's amazing to see the community's unwavering commitment to our cause, even in these difficult circumstances, and we are inspired by the generous group of volunteers who led this event to its eventual success. It was an amazing turnout, and the funds will make an immense difference on the health and wellbeing of our Scarborough community." Organized by SHN Foundation and the Scarborough Women of Philanthropy Council (SWOP), the annual fundraiser is the SWOP Council's signature event for Scarborough women. Hosted by television personality Liz West, guests had the opportunity to network from a distance and participate in exciting live demos from popular local vendors, all while bidding on a wide selection of silent auction items. This year, guests heard from surprise

guest speakers such as Mayor John Tory and Premier Doug Ford, who left messages to the attendees thanking them for their support of Scarborough's hospitals.

Dr. Reena Lovinsky, medical director of infection control and infectious disease specialist at SHN, also spoke during the virtual call to share updates on SHN's approach to the COVID-19

Moving our COVID-19 Assessment Centres for the Winter!

 \mathbf{S}^{HN} is pleased to announce that we will be partnering with the University of Toronto -

Scarborough Campus (UTSC) and Centre for Immigrant and Community Services (CICS) to

provide COVID-19 testing at new, indoor Assessment Centres locations for the upcoming winter

months. We will be moving our Centres from the trailers at our hospitals to warmer indoor

facilities at neighbouring UTSC and CICS venues.

We are proud to be working together to ensure access to testing for Scarborough residents, and

to help protect the health and safety of our community. COVID-19 testing at the new indoor

Assessment Centres will continue to be by appointment only, and for those who are eligible —

including anyone with COVID-19 symptoms, or who have been exposed to a known case,

instructed by Public Health or notified by the COVID Alert app, or require a test for travel

purposes.

For more information on COVID-19 testing visit www.shn.ca/ covid19-assess.

A Perspective on the US Presidential Election Process



by Arul S. Aruliah

Observing the recent United States presidential election will provide the impression that it is chaotic and a continuing saga. On the contrary the founding fathers devised two centuries ago one of the best mathematical models for the election of the president in a confederated nation. It is that modelling ingredient that serves the nation well and it is being so stable for so long.

Trump's presidency and re-election, however, brought out the two solitudes in the American society: the middle of the road and the extreme right-wing that harbors grudges from the old history of the United States, slavery, and extreme form of libertarianism during this pandemic, skillfully orchestrated by President Trump.

some proper clothing. One president was so eager to demonstrate his prowess and was taking oath with just the proper suit only. He died of pneumonia a month later!

Any amendment to the Constitution is easier said than done in a federal set up, same as is in Canada. An amendment to the US Constitution requires a two-third majority in the Congress and then three-fourth of the States must ratify to take effect.

A Truly Federal Structure

Now returning to the presidential election, a true federal structure requires that each component state must effect its due weight in the election of its chief executive. Electing a president by a simple majority of popular votes will provide undue weight to the more populous states that affect the less populated states.

own affairs. However, the election of its chief executive, the prime minister, is invariably effected by the populous provinces and hence the ongoing tussles. India also has a federal system, but component states are constructed weakly, and it is subjected to the whims of the linguistic majority as is in a unitary state. Hindi belt in the country invariably controls the state structures without any balancing mechanism for other states.

The US Model

It is important to remember that a US president is not elected by the popular vote in the November Election. It is merely to allocate Electors to the Electoral College (EC) by each State to elect the president. The election provides the process for allocation of Electors to the Electoral College who in fact elects the president and vice-president in December.US presidential election is a process hence the long duration. Process: The US has a fixed number of House of Representatives. The number of Electors shall be equal to the number representatives for each state in the Congress being House of Representatives, and the Senate. Each state's share is based on the state population, as enumerated in the census in the previous decade. The 2020 elections are based on the 2010 Census. Now the population served by each Representative approximates to

760,000.

There is no particular institution as EC, merely ascribed as such and each state controls its entire process, the general election, and Electors to EC. The goal is set for each state to have a proportionate direct say in the election of the president. In effect, his first obligation is to each state and by then extension to the people.

The Electors total is therefore dynamic for each state and it represents the proportional weighting of the populous states. The following Table shows the number of Electors for this year and hundred years back in 1920 and the state's standing.

New York had the number one status in 1920 that was overtaken by California from its 12th place then. Florida was in 33rd position then and now in 3rd position. The Electors from the first ten States are still occupying over 40% Electors share except that different states have gained status due to significant inter-state movements of people.

Of course, a few components in the Constitution require improvement for the 21st Century digital years when compared to that of the horse-drawn carriage years. The inauguration used to be in March, over four months after the election, and was later advanced to January with an improved nationwide delivery mechanism.

Abraham Lincoln waited so long to assume the power in March and by then some of southern states, strong on slavery, seceded thus paving the way for a Civil War. Celebrating inauguration outdoors in winter calls for

Election by a popular vote in a democracy may best work in a unilingual, monocultural unitary society like Italy, Korea, or Japan. There are very few countries in the world that match these criteria. A good federal system provides a satisfactory environment even in a unilingual country and the one in the US is one of the best available with each state being able to control its own affairs and have interdependency as well as a nation. Canada has a relatively good confederal set up. Each province enjoys a significant degree of control of its

Election Electors to the Electoral College

As stated, the US president is elected by the Electoral College and not by the popular vote. Each party provides a slate of electors and the winning party in each state by popular votes is allocated with its slate of Electors. A winner takes all systems to represent the state, except in Maine and Nebras-



ka where a split is made by districts. Those two states choose the Electors by Congressional districts and two electors from statewide voting. Accordingly, a presidential candidate may win the presidency even if he does not receive a majority of the popular vote. It happened with Trump's election in 2016.

Once the Electors are certified by the State, they form the part of the EC members. Each State certifies its Electors by December first, the latest being Wisconsin that certifies its Electors on the first of December.

November election is merely a projected winner based on presumed EC tally and referred to as a 'Presumptive' winner. The Electors meet in their respective state capitals in December to cast their votes for the election of the president and the vice president, this time on December 14. The Presumptive becomes President-elect and Table: First Ten States with most allocated Electors in 2020Compared with that in 1920 for a dynamic population

State	2020	standing	1920	standing
California	55	1	13	12
Texas	38	2	20	5
Florida	29	3	6	33
New York	29	4	45	1
Illinois	20	5	29	3
Pennsylvania	20	6	38	2
Ohio	18	7	24	4
Georgia	16	8	14	10
Michigan	16	9	15	9
North Carolina	15	10	12	18
Subtotal	256		216	
Share of total	48%		41%	
Total Electors	538		531	

US, the election of chief executive in Canada is a simpler process and there remains the on-going intra-provincial and federal-provincial tussle. Canada is a bilingual confederal state, and the leader is not elected by a popular vote across the nation or by the participation of the Provinces but from a single riding, just like any other member of parliament. The Confederal structure is not directly represented in the election of its chief executive officer, the prime minister.

A party leader is elected by the party membership nationwide, and under our parliamentary system, he or she runs from a single riding and when elected becomes the leader of his party in the House of Commons, and becomes the prime minister if that party holds more elected members than the opposition party. This is the same as in a unitary governmental system.

The party holds power from mem-



the provisional results are sent to the Congress for confirmation.

If none of the candidates receives the required majority, 270 of the Electors, the new House Representatives elect the president, and the Senate elects the vice-president.

President Trump and

irregularities claims, none have been proven to date in the courts.

Apparent voting irregularities, in fact, refers to Blacks being active in the voting. Again, it goes back to the earlier days when the Black were either unwilling or unable to cast their vote. The slave population was counted as 60 people for every 100 people, three-fifths rule; not that they had any voting rights then but for taxation purposes in the state. This was changing progressively and in recent years Black vote is a factor and this Trump did not comprehend it in his wishful thinking. Another aspect was increased postal voting by proven procedure during this Covid-19. The election result writing has been on the wall all along. However, Trump, having not conceded and going by the book, is entitled to his position until December 14, 2020, the day when the president and vice president of the US is actually elected, but still subject to confirmation by the Congress.

The newly elected Congress will meet on January 6, 2021 to certify the Electoral College results and the Vice-President shall confirm the election of the new president and the new vice president. The newly elected president and vice president shall be sworn-in this time on January 20, 2021. The office of the existing president expires at 12:00 noon on that day and ceases to be president unless re-elected. A president can serve only two terms. Joe Biden and Kamala Harris when confirmed shall be eligible to serve for two terms. Kamala Harris, daughter of a Tamil immigrant mother and a Jamaican father, has a potential chance to become the President of the United States of America in the future.

bers elected from populous provinces like Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia and other provinces have no weighted impact in governance. Alberta has no elected member from the current party in governance today and hence has no direct effect through the caucus. This is a significant difference, a shortcoming, in a federal structure of governance between the two models of government, the US and Canada. This notwithstanding, our parliamentary governance system is dynamic and unlikely to see a leader like Trump in the prime minister seat for more than a few days once certain issues are known. There will not be any drawn-out impeachment process but will resign for being unable to withstand the heat in the House of Commons or by simple no confidence motion.

2020 Election

The presidential election in the US is indeed a process. The losing candidate in the November election in the past has been conceding his loss in a gentlemanly and timely manner within days of the election and the president-elect is promptly known. The follow up process then becomes a mere formality. The key factor being conceding to the winner.

Regrettably, it did not happen that way this time around with President Trump. Hence the apparent quagmire and the country was thrown into endless court challenges and voting

The Canadian Model

When compared to that in the

Words of Peace

Lockdown, Day 1

with Prem Rawat

"Offer each other kindness and understanding. This is the time for empathy, clear thinking, and courage." - Prem Rawat "Lockdown," a personal message from Prem Rawat addressing these trying times.

Prem Rawat:

Hello, everyone; Prem Rawat here. I just thought I'd take this time and address everyone.

We're in the midst of coronavirus. And it's very hard and very trying times for a lot of people. And if, some way, I can alleviate the load, the burden, the concern - of course, we all need to be concerned, but if I can somehow alleviate the burden that people feel on their shoulders, then it would be wonderful.

So, what's going on? Well, it's a little, little virus that's taking over. And there are so many commentaries; there are so many ideas that people have; there is so much misinformation. There is good information; there is bad information. And somehow, there is very little clarity. There is very little understanding of what really it's all about.

Now, has anything changed? Well, in one way, everything has changed. But every human being wants to feel secure; everyone wants to feel good; everyone wants to feel free. So, in that sense, nothing has really changed because this is, when everything was fine, when coronavirus was not an issue, people wanted to feel that too.

But today, because this burden is upon us and it's like, the fear - the fear comes in. And of course, you can let the fear take over, and fear would love to take over. But let me just remind you of something.

There is something really wonderful inside of you, and it's called "courage." In these dark times, in these very concerning times, we need to be using courage, not fear, to live through this. We need the light that shines from within our hearts to illuminate this very dark jungle out there.

We need to live every day with a sense of purpose, a sense of clarity, a sense of understanding, a sense of just, not doubt, but clarity - and this is what I talk about all the time. But in these times, these elements that we have inside of us really need to shine - every day! It's not a question of, you know, "Today is not important." No, today is important. All of a sudden, the world being in pretty much, a lockdown, just locked down everywhere, just about - what do you do? What do you think about? And there's just so much misinformation - on television, on social media and so on and so forth. But there is a truth inside of you - and you need to let that truth come out. There is a

reality inside of you and you need to let that reality come out.

So, the contrast, I would say, is immense right now because there is so much that is, well, real concerning stuff that is going on, this coronavirus - that we need to isolate ourselves. And that we need to make sure that we are healthy. But we have to be healthy, not only physically, but we have to be healthy here too, in our minds.

So, all of these issues really come into play; it's like, "Okay, how do we do this? How do we take the good and make the good really come out? How do we enjoy ourselves in these dire circumstances?"

So, sometimes, you know, you really have to just step back and say to yourself, "Well, what is this all about? I am here; I am a little part in this puzzle." Of course, you don't want to hurt other people, so you don't want to go and become a person who contaminates more people. And the best way to do that is to isolate; the guidelines are being provided. And some of it makes complete sense.

What do you rely on? Well, for once, you also have to look at inside of you. You have to rely on yourself too, your heart, your understanding, your desire for clarity, your desire to be happy. You have to - you have to rely on that. You have to accept that, that this is a very basic thing.

Not just be drowned in fear, drowning in, like, "Oh my God, what's going to happen to me?" Now, you should be concerned, but by the same token, there is something very beautiful that is being said from your heart, from yourself.

And you need to include yourself in this one. Don't exclude yourself; you need to include yourself in this one. You need to include that beauty that you have inside of your heart on this one.

Because, what's going to happen?



and we have to come together in a very funny way - and we have to come together by being together ourselves. Even in isolation, we have to be complete; we have to be whole and not do silly and stupid things.

But at the same time, will human beings win this race, win this war? And, yes, you know, yes, we have to; we have to. We have to go on. And the way we can win it is to be sensible, to be clear, not be in doubt, not be anger, not be in frustration, not be finger-pointing at each other. It is time.

This little virus - which is not a living thing; it's just some RNA wrapped around in some fat - it has done, for this world, something really amazing.

It is calling upon us, in its very unfortunate and harmful way, to come together - all of us, helping each other around the world, spreading good news, not rumors, not wrong information, but spreading the news that "Use courage! Use clarity. Use that good stuff that you have in you."

And then and only then, I really feel that not only can we win this, but we can really win this war, really, really win - and not be shortchanged by it, not be smacked by it, not be hurt by it, but come together.

And it is time to rely on yourself to

ing together; medical staff is coming together to help people. And we need to be helpful towards them; we need to be helpful towards each other.

It is time for humanity to really kick in - and for us humans to really take on those super-nice attributes that we have as human beings and offer that to each other, offer each other kindness, offer each other understanding. This is the time for empathy. This is the time for clear thinking; this is the time for courage.

And if we can have that, then I think we can make a huge difference for ourselves, for every single day that we are alive, even without the coronavirus. Because our world needs to be - with or without coronavirus, we need to be in that clarity.

So, I hope, of all the things that I have said, something makes sense to you. And you take that to heart. And no reason for fear because fear doesn't do anything, you know, except just clamps you down.

What you need is courage. Understand the complexity of the problem; understand the severity of the problem, but instead of giving fear the rise, give clarity the rise; give courage the rise; give understanding the rise, not the doubt. And these are the things that can make a difference in every single day that we have.

Now, I'm going to try to communicate with you as much as I can - and this is the first attempt at it. I'm doing this, you know, in a very simple, very simple way. I set up my little tripod; I set up my little iPhone - and this is what it's recorded on. I don't have extra lights; I'm just in this room - and it's a pretty plain background.

So, to me, background doesn't matter. You know, the lighting doesn't matter - just so far I can reach and give you some comfort, give you some understanding, give you some clarity so that you can have a better time of this, you know, because these are trying times. There's no question about that.

Well, you know, we saw, we see the numbers from China - and this is where the epidemic started. But by the same token, they clamped down and were able to manage it to the point where, at this moment, anyways, the numbers of people dying and new cases have significantly dropped down!

"Can we do this; can we win this war?" Yes, we can win this war. The only thing is, it would be nice if we didn't have such high numbers or, you know, these enormous numbers were not there for people dying. But we human beings have to bind together; we have to come together, do not silly things. As the guidelines are, you know, "Isolate; stay home. Don't spread this to other people; maintain your distance" - to follow these simple guidelines.

But by the same token, also be visiting our heart, visiting ourselves, visiting our understanding - and just, from clarity, coming out from clarity, to be able to see that, "Yes! I'm still alive and my aspirations have not changed."

So, whatever it may be. And people, you know, have their ideas of "how this is going to happen and how that should happen." And doctors are comAnd not have to be living in fear, but come from courage, come from clarity, come from understanding. And yes, we will win; we will win. We will win.

Maybe I can make a difference. And I will certainly make as much time as I can available to you. And I hope that these broadcasts get to you, and you can enjoy them, like them, and have a good time with them. So, thank you. I'll see you later. www.timelesstoday.com



Nalavenba



By: Kumar Punithavel

alavenba is a collection of about 403 N quatrain poems as a sub story under the great epic Mahabharata. After losing to Gowravas, Pandevas had to leave their country and live in the jungle. In order to console Dharmar the eldest of the Pandavas, St. Prkadasuvar narrated the story of Nalan. The Nidatha country was ruled by King Nalan. Venba in Tamil literally means quatrain verses. As this collection of 403 quatrain verses the story is named Nalavenba, and was written by poet Puhalenthi.

Poet Puhalenthi was born in Thondai kingdom and served as poet in the Pandivan emperor's court. Later when Pandian princes got married to the Chola King, he too moved to Chola kingdom together with the bride. Puhalenthi had composed other literary works too. Here, let us take one quatrain which vividly gives the uniqueness of womanhood and the social norms of Tamils during his time, while describing the bride to be, Damayanthi to king Nalan. The poet describes the royalty of the bride with her noble qualities. This poem was written around 13th century, and it gives an insight of the high esteem of womanhood among the Tamils at that time. The women at that time had four fundamental qualities or traits, which when looked at the surface may sound as timid, but in reality, the poet calls them as four armies that protect the woman.

The four traits are fear, tact, shyness and aversion. The meaning of the four traits needs to be expanded to get the proper connotation. The trait of fear, which is fairly straight-forward. It is the fear of the unknown. By intuition a smart woman will not take unwanted risks, for it is always better to be safe than sorry.

The second trait is tact, that is to develop sensitivity towards others feelings, and we can call it a practice of diplomacy. While standing up for what is right, these woman don't proclaim themselves as all knowing. Knowingly pretend to be ignorant and correct. Speaking without hurting other's feelings, which will be an army protecting the lady from harm's way.

The third trait is to be shy in front of strangers. By shyness; is to be shy in front of strangers, which will protect from harm by an unknown stranger. It is almost a twin birth of fear and prevents the lady being in harm's way.

and counselling the womanhood's royalty.

The poet then mentions that the arrival of her majesty our princes will be announced to the groom by the chiming of her anklets as the drum beat!

Next the poet talks about her majesty's two main weapons which he says are the eyes of the bride the princess. She can cut off the enemy, or stab him with her beautiful eyes. Finally, he calls her moon like face as the royal canopy under which she rules her royal domain womanhood.

The poet highlights all the great virtues of the womanhood and calls it a royalty. Even to this day these virtues are great to adhere to.

Four traits as four armies, five senses as good ministers,

Chimes of anklets as drumbeat and

Last but not least is the aversion a woman has, when a stranger touches her. These four traits, the poet calls as four armies our bride has protecting

her.

He then points to her five senses and calls them as her ministers, who is protecting

Sword as eyes, moon like face as canopy Rules the royalty of womanhood.

நாற்குணமும் நாற்படையா வைம்புலனும் நல்லமைச்சா ஆர்க்குஞ் சிலம்பே யணிமுரசா - வேற்படையும் வாளுமே கண்ணா வதன மதிக்குடைக்கீழ் ஆளுமே பெண்மை யரசு.

> The great poet Puhalenthi in his own beautiful rhyming verse glorifies the womanhood in the epic Nalavenba.

The Ever - Enchanting Attractions of the Christian Faith

By: J.A. Rajah

A. THE HUMAN NEED FOR MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL REPLENISHMENT:-

hristian faith has a number of Uattractions that have made it the most vibrant faith that guides and inspires a large number of people in the modern world. The attractions of the Christian faith are woven round the personality of Jesus Christ and his revelation of God - as the very embodiment of love. The main attraction is that the Christian mission was intent on creating a new community. The message preached gifts, spiritual gifts to people who went beyond he everyday experience and also promised immortality, a future life which would be liberation from sickness and from disease and from disease and from poverty and isolation. There is a future for the individual. The Christian faith was initially championed by the Holy Roman Empire. In spite of the glories of the Roman Empire, people lived in inequality. There was great poverty on the one hand and immense wealth in the hands of very few people. There was sickness and disease but there was no health services and doctors were

expensive. In those days' emperors were all powerful. He is the conduit to the divine world. If you are at the bottom of the social pyramid were not getting many things coming down to them. Slavery diminished but continued to exist in many forms. In the letters of St. Paul, we find a sociological formula that defines a new community. It is a community where each other member is equal to you. It provides personal dignity and status for all members. They care for each other. People are taken out of isolation. If thy ae hungrv. they know where to go. If they are sick, there is an elder who will lay hands on them to heal them. Christian faith ensures security for them all. Even in those days of the Roman Empire, hospitals were established. There was some kind of health service. There was a clear establishment of social service available from soup kitchens to the poor if they need it. Widows were provided with all the basic help they needed. The widows were at the bottom of the social ladder and the



churches were prompt in helping them to lead normal lives. The Churches wanted their members to be knowledgeable capable of reading the Bible. They established institutions of education for reading and writing. The success of the Christian faith was due to the considered and well thought out establishment of institutions to serve the needs in the community. It was during the time of Emperor Constantine the Christianity spread throughout the world. Christianity always provided for basic human needs and that was the major factor for its wide acceptance in many counties of the world. It has an ideology of justice, which will be guaranteed by God. It offers a community which shapes the basic moral institutions-which provides a quality of life for all its members. The Christian movement served to create a sense of human worth in two ways. Both the story of Jesus and his simplicity in terms of social status had an appeal for all.

B. CHURCHES - AS EPICENTERS OF DEVELOPMENT:-

Most countries where a sizeable population embraced Christianity progressed in civilization and hence quality of life. Educational institutions, Churches, hospitals, maternity homes and social service institutions were established to provide facilities for better livelihood. Initially development progressed within the framework of the Church parish. Then it spread around through institutions which served as the fulcrum of development. People throughout the world including the under-privileged people in Africa and Latin America are benefitted by the altruistic activities and related services of missionaries and their organizations. One could only have to look at the terrain of Jaffna in Sri Lanka to see the number of schools, Churches and superstructures that adorn the city to witness the effect of the impact of the Christian faith.

C. THE BLESSED ASSURANCE -Guaranteed By Jesus:

Jesus inspired a blind woman, Fanny Crosby to write more than 8000 hymns for the Methodist Church. They all revel in expressing the mighty deeds of Jesus and his contributions for the spiritual and life-giving thoughts of Jesus. In this season of Christmas, we remember with gratitude to God for the joy of the coming of Jesus. Christmas is celebrated throughout the world by people of all colours and creeds. It is a universal celebration of the enchanting name of Jesus and in the words of Fanny Crosby: Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine, oh! what a foretaste of glory divine!, This is my story, this is my song, praising my saviour all day long. Perfect submission, perfect delight, I in my saviour, am happy and blessed, watching and waiting looking above, filled in His goodness, lost in His love". Christmas is not about fireworks, Santa Claus, balloons and cakes; it is about daring to follow Christ in every footstep of our lives. "Joy to the world, the Lord is come".

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Joe Biden's presidential victory and possible effects in Canada



Raymond Rajabalan

Once Joe Biden is officially sworn in as the next president of US in January we may expect various political and economic effects to take place in Canada.

Here are some of the areas that may be affected.

Environment

The day after the election, the United States became the first and only country in the world to withdraw from the Paris climate change pact. However, President-elect Biden has promised to put the U.S. back into the agreement as soon as possible, and that, plus his own domestic environmental policies, could be a boon for Canada, including by opening markets for Canadian clean energy technology. In the last four years, Canada has in some places slowed or amended its own environment policies to reflect concerns American companies facing fewer environmental regulations and taxes might hurt Canada's competitiveness. That includes Methane regulations, which Canada delayed by three years when outgoing U.S. President Donald Trump paused similar targets in the U.S., and limiting the carbon pricing on industries that face heavy competition from U.S. firms that don't pay the same kind of tax.

Among them, a surge in asylum seekers who crossed irregularly into this country due to a loophole in the Safe Third Country Agreement. Canada has been trying to renegotiate that deal and might find a more willing partner in Biden – or the flow might dry up. Trump's move to make it harder for people from certain countries to enter the U.S., and for people to obtain skilled worker visas, also saw a jump in immigration to Canada. Biden may reverse those changes, and there could be a subsequent "brain drain" from here. **Trade**

Trump's years in office were marked by turbulence in Canada-U. S. trade relations, including the rewriting of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). A Biden victory likely means an end to the persistent threat of the steel and aluminum tariffs that Trump imposed on Canada in 2018, using executive powers under U.S. trade law that gave the president the right to impose them on national-security grounds. Still, Biden is also advocating Buy American protectionist policies that could prevent Canadian companies from bidding on U.S. infrastructure projects at the state and municipal level. Existing workarounds with state Governors should be able to continue, but there remains political will in Biden's own camp to stick to a protectionist trade approach.

standing up for the values of multilateralism in a world of rising nationalist politics personified by Trump.

In Biden, other Western leaders are likely to find more of an ally for international institutions such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and North American Treaty Organization (NATO). Trump was widely believed to be on the cusp of pulling the U.S. out of that military alliance, raising serious questions about its future.

Biden's platform calls for a more active role for NATO, and a return to the U.S. working more in concert with its allies on global threats.

Politics

A few months before former U.S. President Barack Obama left office, he gave a speech to the Canadian House of Commons widely interpreted as being a handover of responsibility for progressive politics to Trudeau. Biden himself said as much in a speech in Ottawa later that year, where he told Trudeau the world was counting on him to uphold the international liberal order.

Immigration

Trump made wide-ranging changes to U.S. immigration policy that did have an effect on the flow of people to Canada.

Foreign affairs

Ahead of the vote, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau met with the most senior political leaders of the European Union, a trio that has been "Vive le Canada – because we need you very badly," said Biden, who was on his way out as vice-president at the time.

Trump's loss could dampen what's been a common political attack against Conservatives in recent years – which they are merely trying to impose a Trumpian approach to Canadian politics – and give them political space to promote a Canadian conservatism without Trump's shadow. *Adapted from an article by Stephanie Levitz, THE CANADIAN PRESS*



Poem

FAREWELL! 2020 FAREWELL!

C. Kamalaharan



The year ends with lockdown Causing business to shutdown Official machinery to breakdown And all activities to slowdown

All due to the corona virus That suddenly swarmed us Unexpectedly detained us And unfairly marooned us Many countries are also vying Day in and day out striving In the process of finding A vaccine to be promising

A breakthrough seems possible As finding so far favourable Researchers too are hopeful Finding a solution workable

At health authorities strict insistence We faithfully follow social distance And always maintain consistence Without any form of resistance

A suitable vaccine is urgently needed For the virus to be effectively treated Medical researchers are fully committed To find a break through as expected The viruses are vastly spreading While treatments are sadly lacking Thereby casualties are daily increasing And people are severely suffering

Farewell! 2020 Farewell! You have been a real hell Take away all that befell Let in 2021 for a better spell



Nords of Solution

Nanri oruvarkku cheythatkal annanri, Enru tharunkol enavenda- ninru, Tharlara varlar thengu thaarlunda neerai, Thalayale than tharuthalal. - *Moothurai 1.*

Once the help is rendered to the needy, Do not wait for any return of gratitude-albeit, The coconut palm that takes water in its roots, Delivers it as sweet juice from its top.

When we help others, we should not expect anything back for us in return. It is really an investment which will bring us reward without any further effort on our part. Awwayar is comparing it to the coconut palm which receives water at it roots but grows valiantly high skywards in order to bear fruit and reward the very people who toiled for its upbringing. The sweet juice it renders is very tasty and nutritious for all those who consume it. Besides the coconut palm has umpteen number of uses for humans.

Awwayar is an expert at metaphors which spells out the guidelines for better living. The world prospers with the services of philanthropists like Bill Gates. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation helps with poverty, hunger and global health issues -preventive vaccines, health solutions, affordable and reliable drugs. His Pledge Program is an outstanding philanthropic act the world has ever seen.



SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE ERA OF THE PANDEMIC



By: J.A. Rajah

A. The Spread of the Coronavirus:-

Noday maintaining social distance is con-**L** sidered mandatory to avoid the spread of the covid-19 virus. However so far humanity has prospered by getting closer together. It is by mutual cooperation and goodwill that men accomplished so many progressive matters that helped to improve the quality of life in all parts of the world. Jesus performed all his miracles and acts of healing in the midst of multitudes. He rarely socially distanced himself unless he wanted to fast and pray. Today people have to lead secluded lives in order to stay securely. Now the pandemic situation has forced man to do the opposite to stay safe and healthy. Not all countries are able to adjust to the new restrictions. There have been violent protests in countries like US and France which do not like the repercussions of such lockdowns to the economy of the country and welfare of its people. Recently there has been an upsurge in the number of people affected by the pandemic- both globally and locally. Currently there are 57,974,667 people are affected by Covid-19 with 1,378,411 lives lost. USA with its best health facilities leads other countries with 12,044,934 infections and 255,541 deaths. The Canadian Prime minister is taking strenuous steps to contain the virus. In Ontario, 1,500 new cases are reported daily to have got the virus. Non-essential businesses are shut down. Worship places are allowed only o have any kind of sessions with a maximum of ten people. Covid-19 is on the rise in most Canadian provinces in Manitoba, Quebec and New Brunswick. In Sri Lanka the government has laid strict directives to contain the virus. Rapid spread of the pandemic is reported in densely populated areas like the Pettah, Watala and Ratmalana. They have enforced the curfew to restrict people's movements. People are not allowed to enter shopping malls in large numbers. Long queues are reported to be seen at lepartmental stores like the Food city. Travel rom one province to another is also limited and rain services are curtailed. Seven people have been reported to have coronavirus infection in Vavuniya. The UNP leader alleged that the

government is using coronavirus as a pretext for blocking the media. Fishing industry is also blocked by government for controlling the spread of the virus. The Chilaw fish market is unable to function as usual and it was reported that people of the Western Province are finding it difficult to buy fish. The Jaffna fishermen are also having numerous hassles as they continue with their work due to governmental restrictions.

B. The Major Precautionary Measures:

Though Ontario is reported to have moved into phase 3 of its reopening play, there is a tendency to go back to lockdown due to the recent upsurge. However, people are expected to help ensure a safe and healthy life mentally and physically. The CDC recommends cloth masks for the general public. The Pandemic has taken a toll of our mental health in addition to our physical health. People get frustrated staying in closed doors all the time. Systematic exercises, calming meditation, healthy pass-time activities are recommended for people who are affected by staying indoors. People are also advised to get outside, get to a park or even bringing in some plants to the living space can help. People could practice healthy sleeping habits and ensure they get enough rest. They should keep connected with friends and family. Social distancing should be adhered to at any cost and one must wear mask especially in a crowded setting. One should preferably stay outside while socializing as there is much higher risk of transmission in indoor spaces. Eating at a restaurant is riskier than sitting in your backyard. Proper distancing rules and washing hands are mandatory everywhere.

The American Medical scientists have arrived at a vaccine called the' morderna' which is expected to be available in large quantities in December for distribution amongst the public. Astrazenecca is considered as a vaccine that would help as a preventive disease vaccine. The Coronavirus has become such an important issue such that it determined the US elections held recently in the US. The current president was blamed for the widespread damages caused by the virus as he did not take adequate steps to control it. He himself did not take the necessary precautions like wearing a mask and went about downplaying the seriousness of the pandemic. Whereas his opponent said that he would make every effort to control the virus as soon as he takes over. Loss among racial and ethnic minorities remain disproportionately high than among the whites. Washington Post records that 5.8 million people have been tested positive for the virus from early March through mid-October. In the US, hospitals are finding it difficult to accommodate all those infected by Covid-1. In countries like India and Pakistan affected patients are even put in corridors for want of space in wards. Hospital front-line workers are getting sick and that adds to the gravity of the situation. Canada is preparing to face the second wave of the Coronavirus attack. People are not allowed to gather for functions in numbers of more than 10. People ignoring public health rules will be fined as a deterrent. Toronto and Peel regions will be subjected to lockdown. Restaurants are limited to take out and deliveries only. The measures are expected to be aggressive, targeted and expanded to other regions. These measures entail travel ban, very limited contact between persons, staying home for those who can (except for essential purposes), accompanied by comprehensive testing-including rapid testing-of key segments of the population and isolation of those tested positive. Pharmacies, doctor and dental offices, grocery stores, essential services remain open. Schools will also remain open. Social distancing is the need of the hour. Every effort is made to help seniors and those in need. Food banks provided free grocery packages to seniors. Volunteers and philanthropists are coming forward to grant all help needed for the affected. We should all cooperate wholeheartedly for a better tomorrow

C. The People's Response and Retaliatory Measures:

However, people are learning to adjust to circumstances. They are able to conduct prayer meetings, bible studies, church services, business meetings, family chit-chats through zoom meetings. It is true that these are not equal to person-to-person meetings, but they serve the purpose. Necessity is the mother of invention.



🔋 EDUCATION & CAREER

Why Don't Lionesses have Manes?

By: Priti Jesman,

Grade 4 student at RG Education, wrote her own myth that re-imagines the reason why lionesses do not have manes.

nce upon a time, the first Ulioness in the world was born. Everyone thought she was beautiful because of her golden mane. All the animals admired her beauty and loved her so much that they made her queen of the animal kingdom. As time passed, she got married to another lion. They eventually decided to have children. They gave birth to two twin cubs, one girl and one boy. The girl was named Lilah, and the boy was named Isaac. As Lilah and Isaac began to grow, so did their manes. However, Lilah did not like her mane, it was grey and she thought it made her look old. Isaac's mane was reddish brown, like their father's. Lilah wished she had a beautiful golden mane like her mother. Isaac saw that Lilah was unhappy with her mane, so he tried to cheer her up by telling her that her mane was beautiful, unique, and even better than their parents' names. More importantly, she was born with claws more powerful than him, but Lilah did not see it that way. She wanted to be the lioness with the most beautiful mane.

One day, Lilah came up with a treacherous plan. She would threaten to kill her brother Isaac with her powerful claws if her mother did not cut her mane off. However, what Lilah did not know was that if her mother cut off her mane. both her and Isaac's mane would disappear. Still, Lilah waited for the perfect day to carry out her plan. Finally, Lilah decided to execute her plan on the anniversary day of her mother becoming queen. At the celebration, the queen called upon her two children. As Isaac walked towards his mother, Lilah pounced on him. With her powerful claws, Lilah grasped onto him tightly and Isaac could not break free.

As all the animals watched Lilah shouted, "Cut off your mane, mother, or I will kill your only son! Let's see if you can still be a beautiful queen without your mane!"

The queen was speechless as she tried to think of a way to protect her son without hurting her daughter. As Lilah's father saw the events unfold, he roared until the ground beneath them shook but Lilah would

not budge. She was not scared. Lilah even jumped on her father and bit him.

At that moment, the queen rose up in anger and charged at Lilah and the two lionesses fought. Even though Lilah was born with a power claw, it was not nearly as powerful as her mother's. The queen pinned Lilah down on the ground and exclaimed to her, "Child, this mane is a symbol of power, not beauty. It is meant to make you strong! It is foolish to focus on its beauty when it gives you something so much more important!"

The queen relinquished her claws and held it against her mane. "If this is what you want, then I will remove my mane." Everyone watched as the queen cut off all the hair in her mane. As her mane became smaller and smaller, Lilah and Isaac's mane began to disappear. Lilah could not believe her eyes. She finally realized how foolish she had been. She wept and wept, wishing she could have her grey mane back. Lilah was so humiliated that she ran away and never returned. She had learned a valuable lesson – Jealousy is never the answer. No lioness born after the incident had a mane. Their lack of mane is a reminder that beauty is not important, and that the true strength of a lion is what matters.





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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

THE 2020 NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE

The Blood Tests and New Medicines have Saved Millions of Lives

By OUE Research Institute

The 2020 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine L is jointly awarded to Harvey J. Alter, Michael Houghton, and Charles M. Rice for the discovery of the Hepatitis C virus. The trios have made a decisive contribution to the fight against blood-

There are two primary forms of hepatitis. One form is an acute disease caused by the Hepatitis A virus transmitted by contaminated water or food. The other condition is caused by the Hepatitis B virus or Hepatitis C virus. This form of bloodborne hepatitis is often a chronic disease that may progress to cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma.



borne hepatitis. This major global health problem causes cirrhosis and liver cancer in people around the world.

Their seminal discoveries led to identifying a novel virus, the Hepatitis C virus. Before their work, discovering the Hepatitis A and B viruses had been critical steps forward, but most bloodborne hepatitis cases remained unexplained. The discovery of the Hepatitis C virus revealed the cause of the remaining cases of chronic hepatitis. It made possible blood tests and new medicines that have saved millions of lives.

IMORTANCE OF THE AWARD

The Nobel Laureates' discovery of the Hepatitis C virus is a landmark achievement in the ongoing battle against viral diseases. Thanks to their discovery, susceptible blood tests for the virus are now available. These have virtually eliminated post-transfusion hepatitis in many parts of the world, significantly improving global health. Their discovery also allowed the rapid development of antiviral drugs directed at hepatitis C. For the first time in history, the disease can now be cured, raising hopes of eradicating the Hepatitis C virus from the world population. International efforts are required to facilitate blood testing and making antiviral drugs.

HEPATITIS AND HUMAN HEALTH

Liver inflammation, or hepatitis, a combination

AGENT The key to successful intervention against infectious diseases is to identify the causative agent. agent. In the 1960s,

Baruch Blumberg determined that one form of blood-borne hepatitis was caused by a virus that became non as Hepatitis B virus. The discovery led to the development of diagnostic tests and an effective

INFECTIOUS

vaccine. Blumberg was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1976 for this discovery.

At that time, Harvey J. Alter at the US National Institutes of Health studied the occurrence of hepatitis in patients who had received blood transfusions. Although blood tests for the newly-dis-



covered Hepatitis B virus reduced the number of cases of transfusion-related hepatitis, Alter and colleagues worryingly demonstrated that a large number of issues remained. Tests for Hepatitis A virus infection were also developed around this time, and it became clear that Hepatitis A was not the cause of these unexplained cases.

It was a great source of concern that a significant number of those receiving blood transfusions developed chronic hepatitis due to an unknown infectious agent. Alter and his colleagues showed that blood from these hepatitis patients could transmit the disease to chimpanzees, the only susceptible host besides humans. Subsequent studies also demonstrated that the unknown infectious agent had the characteristics of a virus. Alter's methodical investigations had in this way defined a new. distinct form of chronic viral hepatitis. The mysterious illness became known as "non-A, non-B" hepatitis.

co-workers created a collection of DNA fragments from nucleic acids found in an infected chimpanzee's blood. The majority of these fragments came from the chimpanzee's genome, but the researchers predicted that some would be derived from the unknown virus. On the assumption that antibodies against the virus would be present in blood taken from hepatitis patients, the investigators used patient sera to identify cloned viral DNA fragments encoding viral proteins. Following a comprehensive search, one positive clone was found. Further work showed that this clone was derived from a novel RNA virus belonging to the Flavivirus family, and it was named Hepatitis C virus. The presence of antibodies in chronic hepatitis patients strongly implicated this virus as the missing

SUMMARY

The systematic studies of transfusion-associated hepatitis by Harvey J. Alter demonstrated that an unknown virus was a common cause of chronic hepatitis. Michael Houghton used an untested strategy to isolate the new virus's genome that was named the Hepatitis C virus. Charles M. Rice provided the conclusive evidence showing that the Hepatitis C virus alone could cause hepatitis.

The Hepatitis C virus's discovery was decisive, but one essential piece of the puzzle was missing: could the virus alone cause hepatitis? To answer this question, scientists had to investigate if the cloned virus could replicate and cause disease. Charles M. Rice, a researcher at Washington University in St. Louis, along with other groups working with RNA viruses, noted a previously uncharacterized region at the end of the Hepatitis

C virus genome that they suspected could be important for virus replication. Rice also observed genetic variations in isolated virus samples and hypothesized that some of them might hinder virus replication. Through genetic engineering, Rice generated an RNA variant of the

Hepatitis C virus that included the newly defined region of the viral genome and was devoid of the inactivating genetic variations. When this RNA was injected into the liver of chimpanzees, the virus was detected in the blood. The scientist observed that pathological changes resembled those seen in humans with chronic disease. It was the



of the Greek words for liver and inflammation, is mainly caused by viral infections. However, alcohol abuse, environmental toxins, and autoimmune disease are also important causes. In the 1940s. it became clear that there are two main types of infectious hepatitis. The first, named hepatitis A, is transmitted by polluted water or food and generally has a little long-term impact on the patient. The second type is transmitted through blood and bodily fluids and represents a much more serious threat since it can lead to a chronic condition. cirrhosis, and liver cancer. This form of hepatitis is nsidious, as otherwise healthy individuals can be silently infected for many years before severe complications arise. Blood-borne hepatitis is associated with significant morbidity and mortality. It causes more than a million deaths per year worldwide, <u>thus making it a global health concern on a scale</u> comparable to HIV-infection and tuberculosis.

HEPATITIS C VIRUS

Identification of the novel virus was now a high priority. All the traditional techniques for virus hunting were put to use but, despite this, the virus eluded isolation for over a decade. Michael Houghton, working for the pharmaceutical firm Chiron, undertook the arduous work needed to isolate the virus's genetic sequence. Houghton and his

final proof that the Hepatitis C virus alone could cause unexplained cases of transfusion-mediated hepatitis.

The three Nobel laureates' discoveries allowed the design of sensitive blood tests that have eliminated the risk of transfusion-transmitted hepatitis in large part of the world. This breakthrough also enabled the development of antiviral drugs that can cure the disease. Hepatitis C remains a primary global health concern, but the opportunity now exists to eliminate the disease

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BUSINESS / FINANCE

Managing your Money

Managing Finance naging Your Money

David Joseph, M.A.(Economics), CFP[®], CLU

GICs and Savings Accounts - the park and 'no-pay' options.

When financial markets become a little uncertain – some investors get nervous. Uncertainty and nervousness can cause some investors to flee equities and jump into fixed income investments that they feel will provide more certainty and protection from investment losses. But ... there may be a price for playing it too safe financially, like the loss of buying power from ignoring opportunities to keep your investments growing. The reality is that investments in these products are not positioned to take full advantage of equity market performance, resulting in a significant impact to an investor's long-term plan.

The GIC refugees

Canadians have \$500 billion in **Guaranteed Investment Certificates** (GICs). Safe, yes - but so-called 'safe' is essential. Including a portion of equities in your portfolio can protect your purchasing power and help grow your wealth over time.

The savings account sideliners In fluctuating markets, some investors choose to sit on the savings account sidelines - which at least partially contribute to the fact that there is currently \$670 billion sitting dormant in Canadian savings accounts, roughly \$200 billion more than average. By sitting it out on the financial sidelines, these investors missed out when the market began its steady climb while those who stayed invested capitalized on the upside of the market and reduced the impact of shortterm volatility. The market moves fast and often with no warning. Strong gains can easily be missed by sitting on the sidelines. Even conservative investors should allocate at least 30%



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always remember, it's a range of asset classed (yes, even fixed income investments) working together that is the vital key to increasing future income, offsetting rising costs, and reaching all your financial goals.

Proper care must be taken to avoid excessive market volatility and insulate you as much as possible from such occurrences. The easiest way to reduce risk is by investing in assets that offer a guaranteed rate of return. The problem is that the investment return of a guaranteed investment is relatively low. The stability of this asset class also lowers the long-term growth potential. This means that over time the effects of inflation will likely ravage the value of the investment. Quite often investing in risky assets such as stocks and bonds tends to be the most appropriate means for achieving an investment goal. To that end, the best way to invest in stocks and bonds without incurring an excessive amount of risk is by diversifying your assets. Proper diversification and asset allocation is essential, as it will

reduce risk without sacrificing a whole lot of return. Investing always involves an element of risk, and no matter how careful an investor is, losses will occasionally occur. That is why an appropriate investment strategy must be in place to help minimize risk.

Depending on your objectives and preferences, a portfolio may contain anywhere from six to ten distinct asset classes ranging from fixed income securities to domestic to international equities and further diversified by growth and value management styles. The end result is an investment strategy that is tailored to your comfort level with risk.

investments earn low income - and GICs are actually a 'no-interest' option, especially when you factor in taxes and inflation. So, by parking too much of your non-registered portfolio in locked, fixed income investments, you could lock yourself out of the opportunity for growth. Look at it this way: The real return on an average one-year GIC was actually negative every single year over the last decade while, during the same timeframe., the 10-year return for Canadian equities on the S&P/TSX Index is 6.51. This is why having a diversified portfolio with a range of asset classes

of their portfolio to equities.

The expected outcome is enhanced investment returns with similar levels of investment risk over the long term. **Buying power erosion**

Often, the price of play-safe investment options can be the erosion of your money over time due to inflation. On the other hand, by choosing the right investments and sticking with your investment plan, you will be positioned to capitalize on growth opportunities as they arise. Including equities in your portfolio can be the best way to protect your purchasing power and grow your wealth over time. But

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BUSINESS / FINANCE 🏶



In order to stay on top of how much debt you can afford to carry, you should monitor your debt to income ratio. You can do this by adding up all of your debt (minus your mortgage) and divide it by the total amount of money you bring in each month after taxes. The result, your debt ratio, should be 10% or less. As a rule, if it is more than 10%, you have too much debt.

So how can someone tell if how much debt they can really afford to carry? In this article, we will try to explain just how much debt you can afford to carry. Although you would think it would be easy to tell if you have too much debt, but unfortunately many people do not know until they are close to financial ruin because of their debt problems.

If you are not missing any bill payments, this means that you have your debt under control. You may be only paying the minimum payments to your creditors, but in this way, you could be paying too much money in interest. A great way of seeing just how much interest you are accumulating over the next couple of years on say your credit cards if you just make the minimum payment is to use a debt calculator. Furthermore, another way of knowing how much debt you can afford to carry is if you find that you are able to pay the bills each month. But what you should never do is choose to pay one bill instead of another and it is vital that all the bills coming in do not exceed what you are actually earning (after-tax). If you find yourself in this situation then the first thing that you need to do is cut costs wherever you can immediately. This may mean that you no longer go out every night with your buddies or that you cut back on the number of times you go out to dinner each month.

Another way of realizing how much debt you can afford is if you are denied credit. Often a person will be turned down for credit if they are considered to be high risk. A great way of seeing what the problem is if you are denied credit is to get hold of your credit report immediately and see what is wrong.

Equally important, in order to know how much debt you can afford it is vital to determine what type of debt you have - productive or nonproductive. "Productive debt" has the potential for a financial payoff, such as a child's education, your own education, buying a car to get to work, or borrowing money to remodel your home. Conversely, "non-productive debt" is debt that will not provide a payoff in the long term such as buying clothes, vacations, and dinners at restaurants. In this view, it is recommended that you don't carry any "non-productive debt" at all. If you buy these (non-productive) thing with a credit card, be sure to pay them off completely at the end of every month (or billing cycle). In case of you have credit or debt issues visit www.gtacredit.com or call 416-489-2000.

BUSINESS / FINANCE

Trading and Investment in Cryptocurrency

by Arun Senathirajah ACIB, MBA (Banking Mgmt)

A cryptocurrency is a digital or virtual currency that is secured by cryptography, which makes it nearly impossible to counterfeit or double-spend. Many cryptocurrencies are decentralized networks based on blockchain technology - a distributed ledger enforced by a disparate network of computers, rather than by a centralized authority. "decentralized cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin now provide an outlet for personal wealth that is beyond restriction and confiscation." Cryptocurrencies use decentralised technology to let users make secure payments and store money without the need to use their name or go through a bank. They run on a distributed public ledger called Blockchain, which is a record of all transactions updated and held by currency holders.

Unregulated

Cryptocurrencies are digital currencies that are, for the most part, decentralized, unregulated and not subject to any government control. In a way, they work like any fiat currency, as you can exchange dollars for bitcoin or bitcoin for pounds sterling or yen. The biggest difference between cryptocurrency and traditional currencies is that there is no physical representation of the former. A single bitcoin, the most common and successful cryptocurrency, doesn't exist in the same way that a single dollar bill or a single euro does. You can't pull it from an ATM or withdraw it from a bank and have a physical coin in your pocket. Instead, it only exists in a digital space. Users control the sending and receiving of money, which allows for anonymous transactions to take place throughout the world.

Types of cryptocurrencies

These are seven of the best cryptocurrencies in the market. Bitcoin (BTC), Bitcoin Cash (BCH), Litecoin (LTC), Ethereum (ETH), Ripple (XRP), Binance Coin (BNB), Tron (TRX) and Chainlink (LINK). It has been over a decade since the mysterious Satoshi Nakamoto created Bitcoin, the first



rithm within the blockchain. While everyone can see the transaction, only the owner of that Bitcoin can decrypt it with a "private key" that is given to each owner.

Bitcoin Cash (BCH)

Bitcoin Cash is a type of digital currency that was created to improve certain features of Bitcoin. Bitcoin Cash increased the size of blocks, allowing more transactions to be processed faster.

Litecoin (LTC)

Litecoin was launched in 2011 as an alternative to Bitcoin. Like other cryptocurrencies, Litecoin is an open source, global payment network that is completely decentralized, meaning there are no central authorities. Litecoin is believed to feature faster transaction times. The coin limit for Bitcoin is 21 million and Litecoin is 84 million.

Ethereum (ETH)

Created in 2015, Ethereum is a type of cryptocurrency that is an open source platform based on blockchain technology. While tracking ownership of digital currency transactions, Ethereum blockchain also focuses on running the programming code of any decentralized application, allowing it to be used by application developers to pay for transaction fees and services on the Ethereum network.

Ripple (XRP)

Cryptocurrency Trading and Investment

While cryptocoins are digital currencies. Many investors have seen opportunities in using it as a speculative investment for the future. As the relative value of a digital coin fluctuates naturally over time, much in the same way a fiat currency does, there is the potential for a return both in the short and long term.

The Risk of Investing in Cryptocurrency

Crypto investing and trading is a very new market. This is a hugely speculative investment. There are a host of cryptocoin vulnerabilities that you need to be aware of. Hackers have gained unauthorized access to digital wallets and cryptocurrency exchanges. It requires specialized knowledge that may be inscrutable to the uninitiated. Rampant growth has led to volatility. And while it may seem attractive to invest in digital currencies, this brand new field does have some instability to consider before investing. As with any new investment, be sure the weigh the risk versus reward so you can make the right choice for your situation. Cryptocurrency market prices are often highly volatile.

Cryptocurrency Exchange

A cryptocurrency exchange, or a digital currency exchange, is a business that allows customers to trade cryptocurrencies or digital currencies for other assets, such as conventional fiat money or other digital currencies. Kraken, Coinbase, Binance, Bittrex, Bitfinex, TradeStation, and Bitstamp are some of the famous trading exchanges. Prospective traders have to visit these websites and understand well the pros and cons of the each platform before start using it for trading.

The Bottom Line

Trading and investing in cryptocurrency may have the potential for big return as well as abysmal loss. Walter B. Wriston Former Chairman and CEO of Citicorp said about derivatives product as "Where there is Risk, Money travels with it." Same expression can be well applied to cryptocurrencies.

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and by far most popular form of cryptocurrency in the world. Brief details of some of the cryptos are given below. **Bitcoin (BTC)**

One of the most commonly known currencies, Bitcoin is considered an original cryptocurrency. It was created in 2009 as open-source software. The author of the whitepaper that established this digital currency was under the pseudonym Satoshi Nakamoto. Using blockchain technology, Bitcoin allows users to make transparent peer-to-peer transactions. All users can view these transactions; however, they are secured through the algo-

Ripple was released in 2012 that acts as both a cryptocurrency and a digital payment network for financial transactions. It's a global settlement network that is designed to create a fast, secure and low-cost method of transferring money. Ripple allows for any type of currency to be exchanged, from USD and Bitcoin to gold and EUR and connects to banks, unlike other currencies. Ripple also differs from other types of digital currencies because its primary focus is not for person-to-person transactions, rather for moving sums of money on a larger scale.



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MONSOON KITCHEN

GENIE SISTERS SAMAYAL SANTHAI



Welcome to our recipe corner! We sisters will entice you with recipes that we have fallen in love with and teach you a little Tamil along the way, as all the ingredients will have their Tamil names. Both of us love to cook and we have developed very different styles. Niranjini has a very refined palate and cooks more contemporary world cuisine with an Asian touch. Rajini is a seasoned homemaker who loves making traditional dishes for her friends and family. Follow us on Instagram: @ninjaeatsfood and @tamil food Eat more, learn more!

Sisters Niranjini Mandalia and Rajini Nathan are both food enthusiasts from England. Niranjini, who lives in London, has a degree in Human Biology and is a trained chef. She makes it her business to know everything about what she eats, from nutritional value to source producers. Follow her food obsession on Instagram @ninjaeatsfood. Rajini, lives in Toronto and has a background in psychology. Her speciality is in Tamil food from around the world, catch up on her meal ideas on Instagram @tamil_food.

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Purple Yam Pudding Raasavalli Kizhangu

Purple Yam or raasavalli kilangu is available at most groceries stores in Canada. Walmart, No Frills and other smaller shops all sell these super food. If you've never tried purple yam ice cream, put that on your list too- but till then, try this super delicious dessert that will help you keep the calories down this holiday season.

Ingredients:

- 1 large purple yam
- ¹/₂ tin of coconut milk
- Sugar/jaggery/ palm sugar/ maple syrup/ sweetener of choice to taste
- Water for boiling

Method:

Lightly rub your hands with coconut oil. Peel the yam and roughly cut it into 2-inch cubes. The yam can be guite slippery, so please be careful and use a sharp knife. Wash the cubes of yam really well. Boil water in a pan and add the cubed yam. Once the yam has cooked through and is soft enough to mash, drain the water and mash the yam to your desired texture using a potato masher or fork. Add the coconut milk a little at a time and mix it into the yam, until you reach a desired consistency. Bring the heat to a medium, add your sugar/sweetener of choice and once it has warmed through, that is it! It's ready to eat. To jazz it up, you could add açai powder, desiccated coconut and a sprinkling of cardamom powder to the top before serving.



2021 COOKING CLASSES

Interactive group cooking classes

2 Jan	Sambhar
10 Jan *	Sweet and savory pongal
16 Jan	Rasam
30 Jan	Salmon and chicken samba

I

Try making this recipe this month and

Hashtag #monsoonjournal on Instagram and send us your pics, comments and feedback. Spread the love (and recipe!)

13 Feb Nasi Goreng 27 Feb Chicken curry 13 Mar Chicken Biryani 27 Mar Kurma 10 Apr Puliyodharai 24 Apr Mango curry Email: Tamilfoodclasses@gmail.com to book a spot Classes are CAD \$30-\$40/ GBP £20-£30 per session |Limited spaces only Classes will be morning sessions conducted online *This will be an afternoon session (3-5pm EST)
DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION



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DTA Celebrates 20 Years

DTA SERVING DURHAM TAMILS DURING THESE UNPRECEDENTED AND CHALLENGING TIMES



Durham Tamils Association is always looking for ways to help our members, youth, and our seniors. During this pandemic period and this winter, we are continuing to provide free virtual activities almost every day. Thank you to our fabulous volunteers who don't expect anything, just serving the community. We truly appreciate your continued support. Also, DTA's Tamil school continues to provide virtual Tamil classes for our students.

Digital Youth Festival 2020

Get ready for DTA's 19th Annual youth festival. DTA's kids have prepared some very crafty and unique programs so make sure to mark your calendars on December 12th, 2020. It will be live-streamed on Zoom, Facebook, and Youtube from 7 pm- 9:30 pm. The login info will be on www. are grateful to our judges Dr. Mohen Pancharatnam (Ottawa) and Melwyn Jude, Funeral Director at Ajax Crematorium and Visitation Centre as well as a well-known entertainer and broadcaster in the Tamil community, for their time.

Maaveerar Naal

(Great Heroes Day) Celebration.

DTA had a great virtual celebration on Friday, November 27th. All the participants used candle lights during the virtual celebration. Lest we forget those who sacrificed their lives. DTA is a non-political organization.

Are you in High School?

Are you looking to earn more volunteer hours from home? Here's a great way to earn them from home. You can earn your volunteer hours by helping your parents and grandparents. Help set up a zoom account and help them with logging into our free DTA zoom programs. Please mark down the program they attend and the date when it took place so we can provide you with the hours. For further details, please contact us at durhamtamils.org **DTA's Seniors** We are keeping our seniors fully occupied with multiple free virtual classes and programs. DTA runs Seniors Chair Yoga Class, Mind Exercises, Mat Yoga Class, Cooking Classes, Health Seminars, Chess Club, Virtual Game Nights, Travel Around The World From Arm Chair, Crafting Classes (including free craft items),

and much more for our seniors. DTA is here to support you in any way. We are going to give the senior care package soon.

Please register for virtual

Seniors programs at www.durhamtamils.org If you want to participate in

our programs, please check our monthly calendars.



durhamtamils.org

Namma Veetu Deepavali

Yesterday's Durham Tamils Got Talents Special program Namma Veetu Deepavali was a wonderful celebration. Many thanks to all our performers and our audience who dressed up for the occasion. https:// youtu.be/osrbJ9XL3As Check out the YouTube video of our Namma Veetu Deepavali performances. Don't forget to hit the subscribe button to stay up to date with all DTA videos. As always our production crew Mano Pancharatnam & Sveta Mano were excellent in keeping everything moving along. We

FREE VIRTUAL CHESS CLUB (MEMBERS ONLY) REGISTER ONLINE AT DURHAMTAMILS.ORG RUN BY DTA YOUTH SATURDAYS 3-5PM ALL AGES

DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION

DTA SERVING DURHAM TAMILS DURING THESE UNPRECEDENTED AND CHALLENGING TIMES





DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2020

Presents FREE CRAFTING CLASSES For Seniors - Members Only Virtual Classes

Wednesdays 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Instructor Sinthu Senthillmohan from Major Artery Collective



Learn how to make: Keychains Earrings Pottery Coasters And more!



Register online at DURHAMTAMILS.org



DURHAM TAMIL SENIORS WEEKLY PROGRAMS SCHEDULE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
)	10:00 am-11am Mind exercises to experience complete peace & happiness)	10am-11:30am Virtual chair yoga class (1.5 hour)	10:00am-11:00am) Mind exercises to experience complete peace & happiness	10:00PM-11:30PM Virtual Mat yoga class
	11:00am-12:30pm Drop in Zoom Sessions for Tamil Seniors					
			5:00PM-6:30PM இலக்கியமும் வாழ்வியலும் கேள்வி பதில் நிகழ்ச்சி			5:30PM-6:30PM Durham Tamils Got Talents
6:00PM-7:30PM Tamil Discussion	5:00PM-6:30PM Travel around the	5:00pm-6:30pm Beading and clay	Medical Seminar (Every third week-	-	7:30PM-9:00PM Virtual Game	
Group	world from arm chair	workshop	6:30-8:00pm)		Night	





Devoted husband, loving father, kind mentor, and a caring friend, Kiritharan (affectionately called Giri) passed away suddenly on November 8, 2020 in Boston, USA at the age of 55. The news sent shockwaves amidst all those who knew him.

Hailing from Nallur, Jaffna, the late Giri was the youngest son of the late Saverimuthu James (Retired Teacher - St. Antony's College, Kayts) and Gertrude James, both of Naranthanai, Kayts.

Born to an illustrious and religious family of highly educated siblings, many of whom have completed university degrees in various fields, it was no surprise that Giri too developed the natural interest to pursue higher education.

Having completed his primary education at Jaffna Central College, North Sri Lanka, Giri left for Canada during the height of the Civil war. After completing his secondary studies at Woburn Collegiate in Scarborough, he gained admission to the University of Ottawa where he completed his Bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering. It was during his undergraduate days that Giri met his future life partner, Janani, who too was following the same degree program. Aiming for a bright future, Giri continued to pursue his Master's degree having been advised and guided by his elder siblings, many of whom had already successfully established themselves in their various fields ranging from Engineering to Medicine. industry expert in the field of Cyber security. He led several multinational teams and was a highly sought after leader and mentor.

Concern for the war affected victims

Even though Giri moved to Canada nearly three decades ago, painful memories of his first-hand experiences during the civil war in Sri Lanka were firmly etched in his memory. As a result, he was lifelong advocate and activist for social justice and equality. Giri was involved in various charitable acts to improve the life of the war-affected widows and orphans. He was a founding member of the charitable organization named NOW-WOW (New opportunities for Wounded and Widows of War) and worked tirelessly to improve the lives of many in North Sri Lanka. He also helped many students from needy families to complete their education.

Excerpts from the eulogies at his funeral His long-time colleague at DELL, Mr. W. Noe paid a glowing tribute to Giri stating that he helped him handle difficult and sensitive projects. He also elaborated on the friendly nature of Giri replacement.

Giri's nephew Rajan James from Cincinnati, USA read out the tribute forwarded by his cousins Rathulan and Jerry from South Africa recollecting their fond memories when they were living together as toddlers in Canada. Rajan also elaborated on their deep gratitude regarding how Giri made their evenings happy playing games with them. He also mentioned the fond memories their mother, Ruba, had about her brother Giri as a little child.

Gri's niece Sinthu Anthonyrajah from Boston, USA read the tribute to Giri written by his wife Janani and daughters, Vaibhavi and Utsavi. Sinthu shared the story of Giri's life with his wife and daughters-a life of happiness, deep purpose and adventure.

His former university colleague Dushy Gnanapiragasam in his eulogy described the late Giri as a problem solver with strong leadership quality and caring attitude for all around him. He summed it up by saying that Giri was a big brother who was always considerate, had a magnanimous attitude, and was helpful to all around him. The final eulogy was delivered by his beloved wife Janani. Janani spoke especially of the importance Giri placed on people and human relationships and of the principles that made him an exemplary man of honour. She expressed gratitude for the outpouring of support and love from across the world from so many whose lives Giri touched in a profound way.

A Brilliant career

Giri started his career at Augius Technologies in Ottawa and then worked for Lockheed Martin. In 1999 Giri joined the multinational company, EMC Corporation (now Dell-EMC) I n Boston, USA. During his 21 year tenure at Dell-EMC, Giri assumed roles of increasing responsibility and was recognized as a leading company and who often joined his colleagues after work to relax and have fun.

Mr. M. Connel who interviewed him at the original company EMC (that was later bought over by DELL) elaborated on Giri's great qualities pinpointing how he was devoted to his work. In closing, Mr. Connel said that "though we all have lost a great human being, we have gained great memories of him."

Yet another colleague Ms. Mageswary who worked for DELL from a remote location made a very effective remark at the end of her eulogy stating that although Giri's position can be replaced, he was a unique personality with no May his soul rest in eternal peace.

Tribute by

Bernard (Chutty) Emmanuel

15TH YEAR IN CIRCULATION

9

www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka



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Transgender Rights: DON'T UPLIFT ONE CAUSE BY BELITTLING ANOTHER

Search for people, places and things

Transgender Rights: Don't uplift one cause by Currently people pointing out the Emperor is naked- and flashing penis in women's safe spaces, are getting cancelled as "transphobes."

For the record (so ridiculous this even needs to be said) I'm absolutely pro trans rights and the right of genuine transwomen to access women's spaces including bathrooms within reason. Just that in

the west currently men are conveniently 'identifying as women' and on that basis demanding access to women's spaces - with beards and burly

builds intact. And women rejecting this is evidence of 'transphobia' apparently.

Women - and even men and other trans people calling this out are getting rape threats, death threats as well as losing their jobs because the woke brigade keep piling on their employers. And getting

mass cancelled by society for being 'TERFs' and 'transphobes'.

Because Colin down the street who has always identified as a man feels women are being hostile to him when he hauls his 6 foot still completely male presenting frame into a women's bathroom because he suddenly feels like a woman - and his wittle feelings got hurt.

Not just gender but also biological sex are just social constructs apparently, and if he identifies as a woman, he ought to be taken at his word. Oh wait that's a hate crime now. SHE ought to be taken at her word.

In this climate of prevailing idiocy, when JK Rowling got cancelled for pleadingly calling for common sense- one person sent this letter to a Cambridge Unversity Student paper. It has been pulled down now as transphobic too - even though the writer very clearly didnt wade into the trans issue at all, calling it too dangerous to do so. She just called out the misogyny of sending JKR rape and murder threats- but doing that is transphobia too apparently. If suddenly self identified trans women want to send women rape threats, calling them out on it is transphobia now. Let that sink in a bit. So this letter got taken down with an apology for 'hurting anyone's feelings' by the editors.

I am reproducing the letter here because

The objects of mockery are those poor souls who never quite escaped the depths of their Tumblr fandom, those who unhealthily construct their entire personalities around this crusty childhood obsession.

The objects of mockery are those poor souls who never quite escaped the depths of their Tumblr fandom, those who unhealthily construct their entire personalities around this crusty childhood obsession. You know the type; you've seen them before. Adults who 'ship' Hermione Granger and Draco Malfoy; write erotic fan-fiction involving Severus Snape, Peeves the poltergeist, and Molly Weasley; arrange the seating plans at their wedding on the basis of which house they think their friends would belong to; annually 'mourn' the deaths of Remus Lupin and Nymphadora Tonks ('poor orphan Teddy!'); and devote their whole lives to the fictional world of J.K. Rowling's imagination (I am very sorry to report that all of these examples are real). It is for these individuals that the group's advice to 'read another book', to find another hobby, rings loudest.

To sight such a specimen has become a modestly popular online sport, which is why the group is about the same size as Caerphilly or Chichester. To be one of the group's few moderators is a widely coveted privilege. As moderator I have power over who may and who may not enter the group; I have power over what gets posted; and every time someone uses an offensive word, Mark Zuckerberg's algorithms ensure that I am notified immediately, so that I may deliberate on whether to show clemency to the offender, or exile them forever.

How did I ascend to such lofty heights? Like many dark and decrepit corners of social media, the group once had a severe antisemitism problem. I am not entirely sure how that problem began: somehow, no matter what was originally posted, the comment section would descend into a 'discussion' of Israel and Palestine, and somehow this discussion' would inevitably become overtly and unambiguously antisemitic.

The group's founders unsurprisingly did not expect this problem to arise. The point, after all, was not to discuss Israel and Palestine, or to perpetuate antisemitic tropes and canards, but instead to expose the dangers of excessive Harry Potter fanaticism. So they sent out a call for a Jewish moderator to help address the issue. Curious about the inner workings of Facebook tag groups, eager to peek behind the curtain, I applied about two years ago and was accepted. I now spend a tragic portion of my life policing the online behaviour of strangers. I like to think that I've done a fairly good job. In my jurisdiction of tackling antisemitism, the group has thankfully quietened down somewhat. But the fact that antisemitism was allowed to flourish in the group in the first place provided a fascinating insight into the pervasive nastiness of online communities. Jews are fortunately no longer the

object of this nastiness, but the nastiness itself has not gone away, as the nasty members of the group have discovered a new target of hate, abuse, and bullying: women.

This misogyny, as befits a group dedicated to Harry Potter bashing, is largely directed towards one woman: J.K. Rowling. Even before her name

denoted 'trans-exclusionary radical feminism', she was deemed by the mob to be 'problematic'. To place Cho Chang in Ravenclaw is apparently to stereotype all Asians as clever: Kingsley Shacklebolt is a racist caricature; Hermione, her campaign to end the indentured servitude of house elves notwithstanding, typifies 'white feminism'. Their own

problems with antisemitism did not prevent them from accusing Rowling of being antisemitic herself (the goblins are Jews, apparently): she and her writing reflect every prejudice under the sun.

But the anger climaxed last month, when it was reported that her latest novel, Troubled Blood, was, in the words of a Pink News headline, 'about a murderous cis-man who dresses as a woman to kill his victims'. It did not matter that the novel was about nothing of the sort (the feature described takes up only one of the book's 927 pages), or that Pink News had come to this judgement on the basis of a trolling, woke-baiting review of the book in The Telegraph. The damage was done, and she became the object of intense abuse.

In 'I'm begging you, please read another book' I have seen numerous rape threats and death threats. Some are tedious and thoroughly unimaginative ('kill the bitch'); some are at least a bit more creative ('make her grave a gender-neutral bathroom'). Nor is this discourse confined to the online sphere. The former Everton goalkeeper, Neville Southall, described her 'the wicked witch', and earlier this year Lloyd Russell-Moyle, the Labour MP, was compelled to apologise after he accused Rowling of 'using her own sexual assault as justification' for her stance.

My purpose here is not to discuss J.K. Rowling's views on biological sex and trans rights. Only a masochist would voluntarily wade into something so dangerous. But whatever you think about her position on this matter – even if you think it deserves to be utterly excoriated – there can be no doubt that much of the discourse surrounding it is rooted in deep-seated misogyny. Yet her attackers pride themselves on their commitment to social justice. Far from seeing themselves as misogynists, they think of themselves as noble crusaders, fighting the good fight on the left. Just as the antisemites masked their prejudices behind the respectable veneer of a sincere concern for Palestinian liberty, so too do the woke misogynists claim that their attacks on Rowling are justified in the name of social justice. They might deceive themselves, but they shouldn't deceive us."

its fully worth reading:

"My claim to fame, inasmuch as I have one, is that I am a moderator of a Facebook group with over 30,000 members. 'I'm begging you, please

read another book' has quite a simple premise: just tag the group whenever you see an adult Harry Potter fan in the wild doing something that makes you cringe.

Not the young and innocent type of Harry Potter fan, of course – and if you post a screenshot of something completely innocuous, you should prepare yourself for a resounding chorus of 'Let people enjoy things'. No, we spare our scorn and derision only for the most egregious sinners.

APPOINTMENTS

COMMUNITY WATCH

Compiled by Siva Sivapragasam

Ron Klain to serve as US President Elect Joe Biden's chief of staff



President-elect Joe Biden has announced that Ron Klain will serve as his chief of staff. Klain, who served as chief of staff to Mr. Biden when he was vice president, as well as to former Vice President Al Gore, is a natural pick for the role. Klain, 59, served as Ebola health crisis "czar" for the Obama administration, and has been a frequent critic of President Trump's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr. Vivek Murthy appointed Co-Chair American Coronavirus Task Force



Dr Vivek Murthy of Indian origin who was Surgeon-General during President Obama administration will co-chair the coronavirus task force that US President-elect Joe Biden set up as his first core policy step towards fighting the pandemic. During the campaign period, Murthy had also emerged as Biden's health advisor.

Murthy, whose family hails from Karnataka, received his bachelor's Degree from Harvard University, and pursued MD and MBA from Yale University. Talking about his own family, Murthy said: "Six years ago, when Joe Biden met my family, many of them immigrants awed to be in the nation's capital, I saw how he kneeled beside my grandmother's wheelchair, took her hands in his and said thank you for choosing us, the United States of America, as the place to trust for your family."

Delmege Forsyth Group of Companies appoint Terrance Niranjan Abraham as CEO of its Consumer Cluster



The Delmege Forsyth Group of Companies in Sri Lanka has appointed Terrance Niranjan Abraham, Chief Executive Officer of its Consumer Cluster.

Abraham who joined the Delmege team in 2018 as Chief Operating Office has been promoted to lead the consumer team in addition to his appointment as Director, Delmege Forsyth & Co Ltd.

Abraham counts more than 25 years of experience in consumer goods companies (FMCG), consumer lighting, protection, and power. He has functioned in various positions of increasing responsibility including Director Sales, International Cosmetics (Pvt) Ltd, The Capital Maharaja Organisation Ltd where he was instrumental in prioritizing channels, customer excellence, automation and building capacity for growth.

His role as General Manager of Hemas Consumer Brands with extensive experience in sales and marketing saw him leading many functional teams to peak performance levels.

Jeevan Thiagarajah to be appointed member of Sri Lanka Elections Commission



Jeevan Thiagarajah is to be appointed a Member of the Elections Commission in Sri Lanka. Jeevan Thiagarajah is chairman of the Institute for Human Rights, a Sri Lankan NGO. He has worked in the NGO sector in Sri Lanka since 1984, holding executive positions in several humanitarian and human rights organizations.

PART I

COMMUNITY WATCH

HISTORIC INFLUENCE OF HINDUISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IN ARCHITECTURAL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AREAS



Garuda Thailand National Emblem & Royal Seal of Approval

Hinduism has a profound impact on the region's cultural development and its history. Hindu civilization also transformed and shaped the social structure and statehood of Southeast Asian region. Through the formation of Indianized kingdoms, small indigenous polities led by petty chieftain were transformed into major kingdoms and empires led by a maharaja with rituals derived from Brahmanism are preserved in rituals, such as the use of holy strings and pouring of water from conch shells. Furthermore, Hindu deities are worshipped by many Thais alongside Buddhism, such s Brahma at the famous Erawan Shrine, and statues of Ganesa, Indra and Siva, as well as numerous symbols relating to Hindu Deities, are found. *Garuda*, a symbol of the monarchy. However, most of the contemporary Indians came to Thailand after 1920, and during the first half of the 19th century

The Devasathan is a Hindu temple established in 1784 by King Rama I. The temple is the centre of Brahminism in Thailand. The royal court Brahmins operate the temple, they perform several royal ceremonies in a year.

An annual Giant Swing ceremony known as *Tiruvempavai-Tiruppavai* were held in major cities of Thailand until 1935, when it was abolished for safety reasons. It is known that Tamil verses from Thiruppavai



Suvarnabhumi Airport tug of war art

statecraft concept akin to those in India. Examples of the Hindu cultural influence found today throughout the Southeast Asia owe much to the legacy of the Chola Dynasty. The Chola school of art also spread to Southeast Asia and influenced the architecture and art of Southeast Asia.

Today, vibrant Hindu communities remain in Malaysia, Singapore, *Thailand*, Indonesia and the Philippines mainly due to the presence of Indians, such as Tamil people, who migrated from the Indian subcontinent to Southeast Asia in past centuries.



Compiled by Kidambi Raj



Representation of The churning of the Ocean of Milk

Buddhism that incorporated distinctive local features and in other respects reflected local cultures, but the framework of their religious life, at least in the upper classes, was largely Indian. Stories from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* became widely known in Southeast Asia and are still popular there in local versions.

Thailand is the hub for a lot of tourists from all over the world especially from India. Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand has many temples which embodies peace and serenity. Bangkok is where you can enjoy beautiful sights, beaches and the temples. For all the Hindu tourists, Bangkok has great places to offer their prayers. Thai People worship Hindu Gods as their own Gods. They widely believe in the stories and also, they have given different names to the Gods. For instance, Lord Ganesa is called the God of Arts. Whoever is an artist there, pray to the Lord Ganesa regularly. They also follow certain traditions. Buddhism is the major religion in Thailand but it is a multi religious country. It also has Christianity, Hinduism, Islam etc. But Hindu traditions and the Buddhist traditions are considered somewhat similar, by the Thailand people.

Despite being Hindu and Brahmin deities, the three features prominently as statues at Thai temples. Ganesa instantly is recognisable as an elephant's head on a human's body and can also be found in temples throughout Thailand. Known in Thai as Phra Pikanet, he is a well-respected figure amongst Buddhists. Known as a deity who can remove obstacles, he's often prayed to by those about to undertake a new venture to ensure everything goes well, and is also associated with the arts and good luck. Vishnu is depicted as having four arms, and often alongside His mount Garuda.

Why is Thailand's National Emblem, GARUDA?

Why does Thailand use a Hindu God as it's national emblem? First off let's discover who this Hindu God is. The Hindu God used by Thailand as a national emblem is Garuda, known as Krut in Thailand. In Hindu mythology Garuda (Krut) was the vehicle of Lord Vishnu. Garuda is half man, half bird. He has the body of a man but his head, his wings and talons are that of an eagle and said to be the mount of God Vishnu. Away from temples, the Garuda represents the authority of the King of Thailand, and can be found on government documents as well as on banknotes. The reason Thailand as a Buddhist nation adopted Garuda, a Hindu God as a national emblem is not illogical, there is a long history of Hinduism in Thailand, and there are very close ties between Buddhism and Hinduism. Thailand's cultural roots are actually based on areligious and spiritual fusion of Buddhism, Hinduism and Animism, which is why so many Hindu deities such as Brahma and Ganesh are commonplace, and Animist Spirit Houses are found outside just about every household. Hinduism has played an influential role in the Thai Royal Household for centuries, according to legend the Kings of Thailand are an avatar or reincarnation of Lord Vishnu. It is this historic role which led to the adoption of Garuda as the national emblem of Thailand's royalty many centuries ago. Garuda was not officially accepted as the national emblem until Rama VI officiated it in 1911, since then it has been used to officiate both royal and governmental documents. Garuda may take on slightly different forms, as you can see in the picture and you will most commonly see picture of Garuda on royal and government documents, and used by many official organizations such as banks as a motif or seal of approval. The statue form of Garuda is commonly seen on and

around temples and official buildings. **Yaksha (God of**

Thailand

A number of Hindus remain in Thailand. Despite the fact that today Thailand is a Buddhist majority nation, many elements of Thai culture and symbolism demonstrates Hindu influences and heritage. For example, the popular epic, **Ramakein**, is based on the Hindu Epic **Ramaya***na*. The Royal Emblem of Thailand depicted Garuda, the vahana (vehicle) of Vishnu.

The Thai city, *Ayutthaya* near Bangkok, is named after *Ayodhya*, the birthplace of Rama. Numerous The Plack explaining the Churning of the Milky Ocean

and Thiruvempavai were recited at this ceremony, as well as the coronation ceremony of the Thai king. The swinging ceremony depicted a legend about how the God created the world.

The elite, and the royal household, often employ Brahmins to mark funerals and state ceremonies such as the Royal Ploughing Ceremony to ensure a good harvest. The importance of Hinduism cannot be denied, even though much of the rituals has been combined with Buddhism.

The civilizations of Southeast Asia developed forms of Hinduism and



Sri MariammanTemple

Death – Yamaraaja)

You may have noticed yakshas, or yak, in temples as well as in the departure hall of Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi airport. Whilst they may look intimidating with their large teeth and piercing eyes, they're said to be benevolent creatures who strive to ensure goodness prevails over evil. Yak have served as guardians to temples in Thailand since the 14th century, where they keep away malevolent spirits and strike fear into anyone who seeks to do harm.

International Airport in Bangkok, Thailand

The International Airport in Bangkok, the Capital of Thailand is called,

COMMUNITY WATCH



Erawan (Brahma) temples

Suvarnabhumi International Airport. The interesting aspect here is the name Suvarnabhumi. Suvarnabhumī means Golden Land or Land of **God** and the ancient sources have associated it with one of a variety of places throughout the Southeast Asian region. The location of Suvarnabhumi has been the subject of much debate, both in scholarly and nationalistic agendas. It remains one of the most debated and contentious issue in the history of Asia. Scholars have identified two regions as possible locations for the ancient Suvarnabhumi: Insular Southeast Asia or Southern India.



Wat-Vishnu Temple

Inside this Airport in the main area there is a Long and beautiful sculpture depicting the Samudra Manthan or the churning of the Milky Ocean. Churning of the ocean is one of the best-known episodes in the Hindu philosophy narrated in the Bhagavata Purana, in the Mahabharata and in the Vishnu Purana. The Samudra Manthan explains the origin of Amrita, the nectar of immortality and the omnipotent God of destruction, Siva drinking the visha (poison). Mount Mandara was used as the churning rod, and Vasuki, a Naagaraajaa, who is described as having a gem called Nagamani on his head. Vaasuki is Shiva's snake.

The Samudra Manthan process released a number of things from the Ocean of Milk. One of them was the lethal poison known



out telling them the reason. First, the Devas held the head end of the snake, while the Asuras held the tail end. The Asuras were enraged by this, as the lower part of an animal is impure, or less pure, than the part that contains the head. They insisted on holding the head side of the snake. Lord Vishnu had an inkling that his reverse psychology would work. The Asuras demanded to hold the head of the snake, while the Devas, taking advice from Lord Vishnu, agreed to hold its tail. When the mountain was placed in the ocean, it began to sink. Vishnu, in the form of Kurma (turtle), came to their rescue and supported the mountain on His shell. The Asuras were poisoned by fumes emitted by Vasuki. Despite this, the Devas and the Asuras pulled back and forth on the snake's body alternately, causing the mountain to rotate, which in turn churned the ocean.

The Devas then approached Lord Shiva for protection. Shiva consumed the poison to protect the three worlds and which in the process gave a blue hue to His throat. In some versions as Lord Shiva drank the poison, he was suffering intense pain, but could not die, as seen by Parvati, His consort. She immediately placed a hand on his throat, stopping the poison to flow down his throat any further, and by Her Maya stopped it forever. As a result, his throat turned blue and he was henceforth called *Neelakanta* (*neela* means blue and *kanta* means *throat* in Sanskrit).

Eight Magnificent Hindu Temples in Bangkok

There are many ancient temples in Bangkok, Thailand and it is fun to visit all these places. If one is from India, and he or she visit the Hindu temples outside their home country, the feeling will be different. Here below are some ancient Hindu temples in Bangkok, Thailand that one has to visit.

1. Sri Mariamman Temple at Silom Road

At the center of Bangkok, one which is over-100-year old Hindu Temple is situated on the Silom road which is one of the hectic business areas in Thailand. This temple is also known as Wat Khaek or Uma Devi temple following the principle Buddha image of the temple. The name of the temple reflects the founder>s belief of Shakti which mainly dedicates to Goddess Mariamman.

The Hindu Goddess Mariamman or



The Narayana Temple in Intercontinental Hotel

lingam is located. This temple used to welcome only Hindus for some period. However, now a days the temple is open more to the public of all faith. Sri Mariamman Temple is open for a visit and a prayer every day with an appropriate dress regulation. No food is allowed. There are flower stalls close to the temple, selling flowers, flower garlands, fruits and foods for ceremonies. This temple is based on the South Indian architecture and dates back to 1879. After India turned into a colony of the British Raj, some people from Tamil Nadu have left the country. They came to Thailand as gemstones traders and then, a leader of their group, Vaithy Padayachi, built this temple. This temple is in the street in Silom, which is also known as Vaithy Lane. This temple has three shrines in total which are dedicated to Lords Ganesa and Karthikeya. The main shrine is for Sri Mariamman. The temple is built according to the gopuram style which is quite prominent in the South Indian Temples.

2. Erawan (Brahma) Shrine, Bangkok

The Erawan Shrine, was built in 1956 by the Grand Hyatt Erawan Hotel in the Pathum Wan district. There are many shopping centers nearby, so a lot of tourists do come over here for worshipping and shopping. There are other shrines for worshipping the gods too like Phra Trimurti, Phra Khanet etc. This shrine represents the idol of Lord Brahma. This shrine was constructed when an astrologer suggested the Erawan Hotel people to build a small shrine to ward off all the negative energies and the owner did just that. Also, it is visited by many tourists from all over the world.

3. Wat Vishnu Temple or Wat Witsanu Temple

This temple is also known as Wat Witsanu temple. It is one of the off-beat temples but it is a very peaceful one. This temple is quite hard to find as it acts as it is hidden. Also, you need to tell the driver the exact location as it is hard to get the perfect location. The reason why is a very few people know dedicated to each god near the Sri Narayana shrine. This is located in the Intercontinental hotel. A lot of locals believe that Lord Narayana is the protector of the locals and their livelihood. The Lord also protects them from any illness. Thus, they worship this Lord regularly. You can easily see the Sri Narayana Statue under the Ratchaprasong Sky Bridge. A lot of people believe that this Lord brings peace and spirituality.



Goddess Lakshmi Shrine

6. Goddess Lakshmi Shrine

As told before, there are 5 shrines near the Sri Narayana Shrine in Bangkok. Goddess Lakshmi is the consort of Lord Narayana and she symbolizes wealth and fortune. She stands beautifully in pink robes. This shrine is located on the 4th floor of a shopping mall in Bangkok. You can got the Gaysorn shopping mall. You can offer pink flowers, coins and other symbols of wealth.



Trimurti Shrine

7. Trimurti Shrine

This shrine is located in front of the Central World Bangkok. This is near to the Ganesh Temple which is also located near the Central World Bangkok. You have a certain way of offering your prayers to God. You need to offer exactly nine red incense sticks, red candles, red roses and fruits. The best time to visit this shrine is in the evening time. This God basically grants all the wishes of love and prosperity which explains the red roses and fruits.

8. Ganesa Shrine

The Lord Ganesa shrine is again next to the Trimurti Shrine near Central World Bangkok. This Lord is reverent-



Indra Shrine At Amarin Plaza

as *Halahala*. However, in some other variations of the story, the poison escaped from the mouth of the serpent king as the demons and gods churned. This terrified the gods and demons because the poison was so powerful that it could destroy all of creation. In the variation, Lord Vishnu knew that Vasuki would vomit poisonous flames when twisted and pulled, and therefore advised the Devas to hold the tail end of the snake, withMother Mari is God Siva's queen. She is the goddess of mercy and elegance when she is Mother Mari's form. Many devotees worship her and pray for good wishes. At this Hindu temple, besides the statue of Sri Mariamman, there are also the statues of other Hindu Gods and Goddesses including Ganesa. Brahma, Vishnu, Lord Dhandayuthapani, Sri Mahalakshmi and Sri Saraswathi. The architecture features the structural temple of South India combining between Chola and Palava periods of Tamil Nadu of south of India. At the center of this sacred temple, there s a small Hindu temple where Siva

about this temple.

4. Indra Shrine at Amarin Plaza

This shrine is just opposite the Sri Narayana Statue which is in front of the Intercontinental Hotel. This temple is just in the same street of the Erawan shrine. This shrine is dedicated to Lord Indra who is the supreme ruler of Indra Loka. There are also small elephant figurines over here. These Hindu shrines and temples are very close to each other. Thus, all the Hindus and the locals go to these temples. You can also buy marigold flowers from the local shops and offer them to the God as offering. **5. Sri Narayana Shrine in Intercontinental Hotel**

Ganesha in Tiger Cave Temple in Krabi, Thailand

especially the students and teachers. They offer prayers to this God for wisdom and good luck. You can offer

There are a total of 5 Hindu shrines

flowers and incense sticks.

ጳ COMMUNITY WATCH

FC Kohli, Pioneer Of India's IT Sector & Founder Of TCS, Passes Away At 96



Faqir Chand Kohli, who was rightfully referred to as the 'father of the IT industry', breathed his last at his house after suffering a heart attack.

Written By: Vishal Tiwari

The Indian IT industry on Thursday, November 26 lost one of its stalwarts—a doyen of the industry, Faqir Chand Kohli, who passed away at the age of 96. Kohli, who was rightfully referred to as the 'father of the IT industry', died after suffering a heart attack. Kohli founded Tata Consultancy Services, which went on to become India's largest software services company and second largest in terms of market capitalisation.

From Peshawar to MIT

Kohli, who was born on March 19, 1924, in Peshawar, Pakistan, completed his Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BSc Honors) from the University of Punjab. He moved to Canada to study at Queen's University after he won a scholarship. He then worked at the Canadian General Electric Company before rolling in the renowned Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to do his MS in Electrical Engineering.

Kohli moved to India in the early 1950s and joined the Tata Group, where he served on various positions subsequently becoming one of the board of directors in the company. While at Tata, Kohli helped set-up TCS in 1969 Vivek Goel named new president, vice-chancellor at University of Waterloo



Vivek Goel will become U Waterloo's seventh president and vice-chancellor on July 1, 2021. University of Waterloo

By Kevin Nielsen, Global News

A changing of the guard will occur at the University of Waterloo at the end of June as the school announced it is getting a new leader.

Vivek Goel has been chosen to replace Feridun Hamdullahpur as U Waterloo's president and vicechancellor.

Hamdullahpur is stepping down after having served in the role since 2010.

Goel, who will become the U Waterloo's seventh president and vice-chancellor, comes to the school from the University of Toronto, where he was the vice-president of research and innovation.

"Dr. Goel has decades of experience and expertise as a university leader and as a champion of student experience, research and innovation," Cindy Forbes, chair of the University of Waterloo's board of governors, said in a release. "He is uniquely qualified to guide the institution and to bolster our strengths at the intersection of health, society and technology." A public health physician, Goel is also a member of the federal government's COVID-19 Immunity Task Force and scientific advisor for the CanCOVID **Research Network.** "A research-intensive institution like Waterloo is ideally poised to create the change and solutions for a better future – whether it is tackling public-health challenges, addressing systemic racism, dealing with the climate crisis, or spurring economic recovery and growth," Goel stated.

and lead the company as its first CEO before stepping down in 1996. He also served as the president and chairman of India's IT trade body association NASSCOM, where he helped shape India as the next global IT hub which turned out to be a masterstroke as the industry now values at \$191 billion.

"Mr. Kohli was the visionary leader who foresaw the opportunity of India in technology services and built TCS many decades back when almost nothing existed in the tech sector in India. His leadership and passion over the decades played a key role in helping establish India as a trusted and quality partner for global corporations, evangelise the importance of technology adoption for India, push for greater research in academic institutions, bring awareness on the importance of local language and hardware industry in India. We salute his contribution to the industry and will continue to build on his vision for the industry," NASSCOM said in a statement on Thursday.

Kohli has been bestowed with numerous awards for his pioneering work in the Indian IT industry, including the Padma Bhushan in 2002, which is India's third-highest civilian honour. He has also received honorary degrees

A 19-member committee spent almost a year searching for what it felt was the best candidate to replace Hamdullahpur.

•• T hey said it

Quotable Quotes - 2020

By: Siva Sivapragasam



"We have seen courage in this pandemic. We have seen it in long- term care homes, in parents dealing with kids at home for months. We have seen it in public health, sometimes in politics, and in people who have done essential work at risk to themselves and others. Courage comes in different forms." - Columnist Bruce Arthur in the Toronto Star

"He won because the Election was Rigged, I concede NOTHING! We have a long way to go. I will leave the White House if the Electoral College confirms Biden's election victory" - President Donald Trump on US Election result





"This has been a year like no other and the holiday season will need to be a little different to protect our loved ones and our community. Let us all find a safe way to spend the holidays. The safest way is to celebrate with our own household" - Premier Doug Ford

66

"I resolved the lingering questions of my racial identity. For it turned out there was no single way to be Black; just trying to be a good man was enough." - Barack Obama in his new book "A Promised Land







"We should remain students for lifetime. You should be ready and yearn to learn

from every moment of life." - Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India



"Poverty is bad, it's difficult, I knew it well. You want lots of things and all you can do is dream about them. It would be nice - if those who have a lot had a little less, and

those who have a little had a little more."

- - World Famous Soccer Player Diego Maradona, the Legend of Argentina who died recently



🏹 COMMUNITY WATCH

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