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Hanthana Pavura

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Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya - Ottawa Chapter - Canada

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President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

It is with great satisfaction and sincere gratitude that I write this message for Hanthana Pawura, our periodic newsletter. At the outset, I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the editorial team, led by Dayan Herath, for producing this latest edition. It features a wide array of insightful articles and creative contributions, offering a meaningful platform to celebrate our members' talents and share our collective story. As you turn the pages of this issue, I am confident you will appreciate the diverse and thoughtful works presented by AAUPOC members and friends.

As we commemorate twelve years of impactful presence within the Ottawa community, I take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to the current and past Executive Committees, our committed members, and the broader community for your steadfast support. Together, we began the 2025–2026 program year on a high note with Gee Padura, a musical tribute to the legendary Sri Lankan artist, Clarence Wijewardena. The evening was a remarkable success—not only a celebration of music and talent, but also a testament to our shared spirit of generosity and community. Through your unwavering support, we were able to raise significant funds to further our scholarship program, which supports financially disadvantaged students at the University of Peradeniya.

Looking ahead, we have a vibrant lineup of events planned, including our annual cricket match, beach outing, Walkathon Challenge, and our signature cultural celebration, Hanthana Night. These gatherings serve not only to strengthen our community bonds but also to advance a greater purpose—fundraising in support of student scholarships and development initiatives at our alma mater.

In 2024, we were proud to transfer LKR 1.9 million (approximately C\$8,350) to the University's scholarship fund. For 2025, we have set a goal of raising LKR 1.5 million (approximately C\$7,500) to provide 25 scholarships, each valued at LKR 60,000. Additionally, we have introduced a new initiative in partnership with the University's Career Guidance Unit and the Vice Chancellor's Office. This program aims to foster innovation and entrepreneurship among undergraduates. AAUPOC will contribute LKR 600,000.00 to organize a competition and provide seed funding for the top three proposals. Selected students will also benefit from mentorship and guidance from Sri Lankan-Canadian entrepreneurs through workshops and networking opportunities.

Our guiding motto, "Together we march forward," continues to inspire and shape our efforts. We look forward to working alongside each of you as we deepen our connection to the University of Peradeniya and to each other.

Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to our advertisers for their invaluable support. Every dollar contributed goes directly to the scholarship fund, making a meaningful difference in the lives of students in need.

With warm regards and best wishes to you and your families for continued health, happiness, and prosperity.

Niroshan Thantrige.

President, AAUPOC

**"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."
- Winston Churchill -**



The Canadian Farming Industry

Sudarma Samarajeewa

(An Alumna of the University of Peradeniya, Faculty of Agriculture)

History

In Canada, Indigenous peoples were the first farmers. Later, European settlers began farming in the Maritime provinces before expanding into the Prairie provinces—Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba—where agricultural production grew rapidly, creating a surplus for export. Early Canadian farmers cultivated staples such as wheat, peas, oats, dairy, and raised livestock for dairy products and meat. In recent decades, technological advances, shifting demographics, and economic pressures have transformed Canadian agriculture into a system of larger, more specialized farms that depend heavily on machinery.



Figure 1: A bird's eye view of a Canadian crop farm

Canada is one of the global leaders in feeding the world.

Did you know Canada is the world's largest producer and exporter of several key crops, including canola, flaxseed, peas, lentils, durum wheat, and mustard seeds? In fact, Canada produces nearly seven times more wheat than it consumes domestically. Therefore, a large portion of that surplus is destined for international markets.

As a global agricultural powerhouse, Canada also is a major producer of livestock products, including beef and pork. In addition, Canada proudly holds the title of for the world's leading producer and exporter of maple syrup, contributing approximately 70% of towards the global supply.

In 2024, Canada remained as the world's fifth-largest agricultural and food exporter, following the European Union, the United States, Brazil, and China. With its vast farmlands, cutting-edge farming technologies, and rigorous quality standards, Canada continues to play a vital role in supporting global food security.

Canada is supplying high-quality agricultural products to more than 200 countries. The United States is Canada's top agricultural trading partner, accounting for approximately 60% of Canada's agricultural exports, while China remains the second-largest market for Canadian agricultural products.

The farming industry is an important contributor to the Canadian economy.

The Canadian farming and food industry generated approximately \$150 billion, equivalent to around 7%, of the country's economy (gross domestic product) in 2023. Agricultural and food exports alone accounted for nearly \$99 billion that year. The industry supports around 2.3 million jobs, meaning that one in every nine jobs in Canada is linked to farming, which includes food processing. Beyond the farming Industry, the food and beverage processing sector is Canada's largest manufacturing industry, generating a significant ripple effect across the broader economy.



Canadian farms cover thousands of acres.

Canada is home to approximately 190,000 farms, spanning 62.2 million hectares—about 6.2% of the country's total land area. According to the 2021 Census of Agriculture, the average farm size in Canada has nearly doubled over the past five decades, rising from 463 acres in 1971 to 809 acres. Some large crop farms in Western Canada even exceed 5,000 acres.



Figure 2: A cattle ranch in Alberta

Animal production also accounts for a significant share of the Canadian farming industry. As of January 2025, there were 10.9 million cattle and 13.9 million pigs lived in Canadian livestock farms. Additionally, the sheep and goat industries are a notable part of Canadian livestock farming.

What do Canadian provinces produce?

Canada's agricultural landscape is diverse, with the Prairie provinces dominating crop production. Ontario and Quebec, on the other hand, lead in livestock and dairy production, while British Columbia excels in fruits and vegetables.

The Canadian Prairies are often considered one of the most productive farming regions in the world. More than 80% of Canada's wheat production comes from the Prairie Provinces. For example, Saskatchewan, known as Canada's "breadbasket," is a major grain producer and home to over 40% of Canada's cultivated farmland.

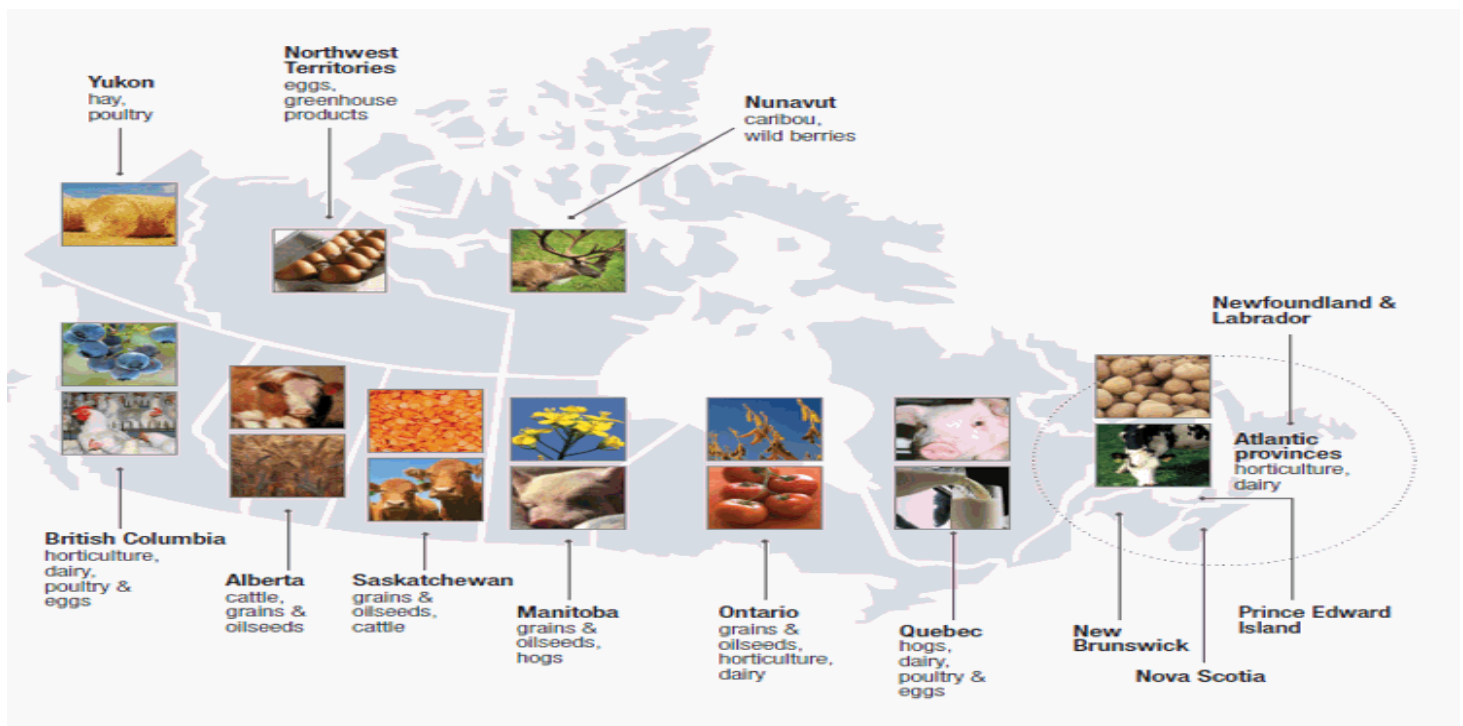


Figure 3: Canadian provinces specialize in various agricultural products



Ontario is a leading agricultural province in Canada, renowned for its diverse agricultural production, which includes grains, fruits, vegetables, and livestock. Quebec is another major agricultural producer, renowned for its maple syrup, dairy products (including milk, yogurt, and cheese), and a variety of crops, including berries and vegetables. Alberta is Canada's largest cattle-producing province, with its beef industry renowned for its high food safety and quality standards, as well as its animal care practices, which collectively contribute significantly to the province's economy and exports.

Organic farming is growing in Canada

Organic farming in Canada is on the rise, driven by growing consumer demand for healthier and more sustainable food options. With over 7,000 certified organic operators, the Canadian organic market now exceeds \$8 billion annually. Organic farming generally accounted for 2.3% of the country's total agricultural land and 3.3% of the fruits and vegetables production.

Canadian farmers also produce organic dairy, eggs, poultry, and beef—all raised without the use of antibiotics or synthetic hormones. Additionally, organic honey and maple syrup are popular local products. While organic foods offer environmental and health benefits, they often come with a higher price tag due to increased labour demands and typically lower yields than conventional farming.

Canadian farmers are getting older

The average age of a farmer in Canada is 56, with a significant number of farmers being over 70 years old. There has been a downward trend in the number of kids in farms who are interested in agriculture. However, some of the next generation of kids recognize opportunities in agriculture, and significant numbers of young people are returning to the farm. For example, 11% of farmers in Manitoba are under 35 years old, the highest percentage of young farmers in the nation.

While many aging male farm operators are leaving the industry, the number of female farm operators has only seen a slight increasing trend in Canada. The 2021 census indicated that 30.4% of Canada's farm operators were female, up from 28.7% in 2016.

Canadian farms are becoming high-tech operational units.



Figure 4: Canadian farmers use driverless machines and drones to address labour shortages and improve production.

The Canadian farming industry is undergoing a significant technological transformation, driven by innovative practices. Cutting-edge tools and systems are being adopted to boost productivity, enhance sustainability, and improve overall efficiency in the farming industry. To revolutionize food production, farmers across Canada are integrating digital technologies, including automation, data analytics, precision agriculture, artificial intelligence (AI), and robotics. Technologies like GPS and other smart systems have been instrumental in addressing ongoing labour shortages, which is a growing challenge for

the industry. Furthermore, these innovations have empowered Canadian farmers to achieve the highest crop yields per hectare, maximizing the productivity of their land. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of Canadian farmers, millions of families enjoy access to safe, nutritious and quality food, both here at home and around the globe.



Government support

To ensure the continued success and profitability of the farming industry, the Canadian government offers a range of support programs, including funding, subsidies, research initiatives, and risk management tools. One key example is the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership—a \$ 3.5 billion, five-year agreement (2023-2028) between federal, provincial, and territorial governments. This initiative aims to enhance the competitiveness, innovation, and resilience of Canada's agricultural sector. The Sustainable Agriculture Strategy is another government initiative aimed at improving environmental performance and enhancing resilience to climate change in the agricultural sector.

Looking forward...

Over the next decade, Canada's agricultural sector is expected to experience significant productivity gains, even as more farmers retire and the workforce changes. This transition presents both challenges and opportunities. Beyond traditional farm skills, the next generation of agricultural workers will require expertise in digital production, product design, and digital literacy to keep pace with rapid technological advancements. At the same time, the food and beverage manufacturing industry will increasingly rely on professionals skilled in digital literacy, critical problem-solving, systems analysis, and real-time monitoring, to ensure Canada's agri-food value chain remains globally competitive.

Sources: [Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#); [Statistics Canada](#);





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Hidden Voices in Literature

Anya Pathiraja (Grade 8)

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There's something irresistibly charming about the past. People sipped tea out of floral teacups, wrote in leather-bound journals, and posted filtered photos of old bookstores mimicking lives lived in a sepia-tinted novel. Whether it's vintage fashions we would be selecting or rereading *Pride and Prejudice* for the fifth time, many of us seem to be caught in a quiet love affair with the days before iPhones and fast-moving everything in day-to-day life. But we tend to forget the hardships of those who lived in the past, which many of us are apt to brush off. It is noteworthy that there was a time, not so long ago, when a woman's voice in literature was something to be hidden. Not because she had nothing to say, but because the world wasn't ready to listen.

Imagine a young woman in the early 1800s: sitting by a candlelit desk, fingers ink-stained, and mind full of stories. Her brothers running wild in the fields outside, her father reading a newspaper by the fire, and she is filling scraps of paper with the voices in her head, those emotions that she can't say aloud. She's writing because she has to. It's a secret burning in her chest. But she knows that if she dares sign her own name as the author for her writing, the world will dismiss her as "Improper" or "Unfeminine". As a result, she has no choice but to pick a man's name. Perhaps a name that symbolizes strength, like George, or quiet and scholarly, like Ellis. Because, her words must wear a 'mask', if she wishes to express her capability to the world secretly.

Still, women wrote. Against expectations. Against silence in reciprocation. Against time.

For example, Charlotte Bronte (*Jane Eyre*) published her work under the name Currer Bell, while her sisters, Emily (*Wuthering Heights*) and Anne (Agnes Grey) Bronte, wrote under anonymous identities, to prevent their work being rebuffed. Jane Austen, despite being one of the most praised authors in the present time, was forced to publish her books during her time anonymously, but they were recognized posthumously. Also, Louisa May Alcott, who presented *Little Women* to the literary world, was allowed to publish it under the name A. M. Barnard.

Such past writers, and their efforts are worth remembering.

The efforts made in a prohibited society for women writers are what draws us in. Not just the charm of pressed flowers in forgotten books or the clicks of typewriter keys, but the people behind it all. The young women who dreamed in silence and who wrote in secret, and tucked their written pages away, not because they weren't proud,



but because they were scared. Scared of being laughed at. Dismissed. Afraid that they will be criticized as being too much, or not enough.

It's easy for us to romanticize those past women writers. To imagine them as the heroines of their time, with all grace and quiet strength. But they were real. They had messy handwriting and second-guessed. Some cried over rejection letters, or never even dared to send one. Some gave up. Some kept going. Some only wrote in their heads.

And yet, somehow, their stories—those that made it through—still have managed to reach us. And that's what makes them powerful. They remind us of that writing—creating anything, really— isn't about having the right name, gender, or the right time. It's about their audacity to say something when they were not sure if anyone would listen or read, or once written, whether they could outlast silence.

Their message for us: the bravest thing a woman can do is write anyway.



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Career Choices

By Sanchita Ghosh, BCom, CPA, MBA

Life provides us many different paths to choose a suitable career. Yet, it is human nature to embark down one path while pondering whether that is the right one. It is also common to wonder about any other paths that were not taken.

While my interest in my high school years was to study English Literature and History, career prospects for those areas seemed limited — it would either be teaching or conducting research. In retrospect, an education in those fields would provide a suitable background for policy development, diplomatic work etc.

In the 1980s, as computers became more prevalent in the mainstream, teachers and parents steered students towards studying business related subjects. With the globalization of trade, studying subjects related to Information Technology (IT) became critical.

Based on the technological advancements, in January 1986, I followed the current trends to explore where I could fit in. I followed courses in Accounting and Information Systems. Those helped me to learn about the Certified General Accountant (CGA) program, which would direct one to study and work as an accountant. In that program, in addition to following courses and sitting for exams, it was also a requirement to gain two years of work experience in the accounting field at a senior level, to prepare and analyse financial statements, in order to graduate.

As I was anticipating the birth of my first child, the CGA program (now Chartered Professional Accountant – CPA) attracted me, because it allowed me to follow night classes, while I cared for the baby at home. Eventually, I joined the workforce to gain experience to graduate.

Working full time, while raising a young child and studying for the CGA was challenging, as the expectation of the CGA program was to spend 15-20 hours a week studying, and using additional time to prepare for exams. Furthermore, it was an essential requirement to progress in the field to gain experience for graduation. It should be recognized that without the support from my family, I could not have graduated with a CGA certificate.

I enjoyed accounting as a profession, though during periods of economic downturns I felt vulnerable compared to other technical professionals, as I did not specialize in specific areas such as tax preparation, mergers and acquisitions, forensic accounting, etc. In the workplace, I realized that other professionals — engineers, IT specialists, etc. — were capable of taking on a role in accounting. As a CPA, I was able to offer project management and financial reporting; however, I could not fully address the technical aspects of those fields outside my certification.

I am happy with the career choice that I made as a CPA, where related skills are transferable to all sectors and industries. However, I encourage others with the CPA certificate, to add value in the business world by focusing on areas such as data and technology, ethics and governance, financial reporting, audits, sustainability, tax, etc. I wish them all the best.



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එය අන්තර් සරසවි Mini-Olympic ක්‍රීඩා පැවති උත්කර්ෂවත් කාල පරිච්ඡේදය විය. ඊට තරඟකරුවන් තෝරා ගැනීම සඳහා අප පියයේ Inter-batches ක්‍රීඩා උළෙලක් පැවැත්විණි. සති ගණනක මනා පුහුණුවකින් පසුව එවකට තෙවැනි වසරේ සිටි අප, තම තමා තුළ පැවති විශේෂ ක්‍රීඩා දක්ෂතාවයන් අනුව පැවති ක්‍රීඩා තරඟ සියල්ලක්ම සඳහා කණ්ඩායම්වලට බෙදී තරඟ වැදුණෙමු. මේ රසවත් සිදුවීම් මාලාව සිදු වූයේ එකී තරඟාවලියේ අවසන් දින සවස පැවති මැරතන් තරඟයේදී ය.

දින ගණනාවක මනා පුහුණුවකින් පසුව අපේ කණ්ඩායම එකී මැරතන් තරඟයේ ආරම්භක ස්ථානය වූ ක්‍රීඩා පිටියට ගියෙමු. අපේ කණ්ඩායම වූයේ ලෝකයා, බැලුමා, කවිරාජ්, මැක්කා, ගෙම්බා, පුසා, බාවා, ගෝරිල්ලා, බල්ලා, ගෙලිඔය හැන්ඩියා, ඉබ්බා, බුවලිකඩ කොලුවා, වැල් සිරා, බක්කා, ගස් පාලිත, වැල් පාලිත හා වෝෂ්පයා බවට මතකයේ සටහන්ව ඇත. සාමාන්‍ය මැරතන් තරඟයක දුර සැතපුම් 26.2 ක් හෙවත් කිලෝමීටර 42 ක් වුව ද පේරාදෙණිය සරසවියේ මැරතන් ධාවන මාර්ගයේ දුර කිලෝමීටර 10 ක් පමණ විය.

තරඟය නියමිත වේලාවට ඇරඹිණි. ක්‍රීඩා පිටියේ වට තුනක් කැරකී අල්විස් පොන්ඩ් හරහා සරසවි උයන දුම්රිය ස්ථානයෙන් දුම්රිය පාර හරහා ගොස් කෘෂිකර්ම පීඨය මැදින් ඇති මාර්ගයෙන් ඉදිරියට ගොස් දකුණට හැරී මෙඩිකල් ෆැකල්ටිය අසලින් සරසවි මාවත නැතිනම් ගලහා පාරට පිවිසෙන විටත් half boiled බිත්තර හයක් හා උණු වතුරේ දියකරන ලද ඩිස්ට්‍රික් පෙති 4 ක් පමණ ගිලදමා සිය දේහදාරී ශරීරයේ ශක්තිය මනාව පුබුදුවා ගෙන තරඟයට පිවිසී ගෝරිල්ලාගේ රේඩියෝටරය බොයිල් වන්නට වීමෙන් සෙම පෙරමින් වේගය අඩාල කරගත් නිසා කණ්ඩායමේ අනෙක් උන්ටද අකමැත්තෙන් හෝ උගේ වේගයට අනුගත වන්නට සිදුවිය. එකෙකෙහිම පළමු වසරේ කණ්ඩායමේ ක්‍රීඩකයින් කිහිප දෙනෙක් අප පසුකරමින් සෙමෙන් ඉදිරියට ඇදුණි. තවත් කණ්ඩායම් දෙකක් අපව ලුහුබැඳ ළඟ ළඟම පියඹා එන්නට විය.

කෙසේ හෝ අප කාගේත් වාසනාවට ගෝරිල්ලාගේ පෙම්වතිය හා සමඟ මෙඩිසියෝ රංචුවක් මෙඩිකල් ෆැකල්ටියට අවතීර්ණ වන ප්‍රධාන පිවිසුම් මාර්ගයෙන් ගලහ පාරට පිවිසියේ මේ අතරතුරේදී ය. වෛද්‍ය පීඨයේ දෙවැනි වසරේ සිසුවියන් වූ ඔවුන් එවිට නවාතැන් ගෙන සිටි රාමනාදන් ශාලාව වෙත යාමට එසේ පැමිණියා විය හැක. බඩේ නොමීමර 7 අංකය ගසාගෙන මැරතන් ධාවනයේ බඩගා යන ගෝරිල්ලා දුටු විගස, කෙල්ලෝ සෙටි එක;

"කමෝන් ගෝරින් අයියා; කමෝන් ගෝරින් අයියා, Keep going! Keep it up!" යැයි කෑ මොර දෙන්නට විය.

ඉන් ගෝරිල්ලා ලැබුවේ එසේ මෙසේ උත්තේජනයක් නොවේ. දූවන පෝතියෙකුගේ පස්සා පැත්තට පැටුල් ගැසුවාක් මෙන් ගෝරිල්ලා අපෙන් මිදී හිසරක වේගයෙන් ඉදිරියේ වූ විජේවර්ධන ශාලාව අසල දුම්රිය පාලමේ වංගුවේ නොපෙනී ගියේ ය. ජයතිලක හෝල් එක අසලින් අප උඩ පේරාදෙණිය මාර්ගයට පිවිසෙන විටම එම මාර්ගයේ ධාවනය වන පාන් බාගයක් බඳු වූ බස් රථය අප පසුකොට ටකරං හඬ නඟමින් සෙමින් කන්දේ ඉදිරියට ඇදුණේ ය. අපි කණ්ඩායමක් ලෙස වේගය අවැසි පදමට තබාගෙන කඳු මාර්ගය තරණය කළෙමු. ජයතිලක හෝල් පසුකොට කිලෝමීටර් දෙකක් පමණ ගෙවා සරසවියේ මුස්ලිම් පල්ලියට පිවිසෙන පියගැට පෙළ අසලට අප පැමිණෙන විට අප පසුකොට ගිය බස් රථය පාර මැද නවතා රියදුරු, කොන්දොස්තර, හා මගීන් කිහිපදෙනෙක්ද බසයෙන් බැස යමක් පරීක්ෂාකරමින් සිටිණු දක්නට ලැබිණි. ඒ අසලට පැමිණිවිට දුටු දර්ශනයෙන් අප සැවොම තිගැස්සී ගියෝ ය. ගෝරිල්ලා කුරුසිය ගසා සෙම පෙරා ගෙන පාර මැද ඇද වැටී සිටියේ ය. වැගිරූ සෙම දහරාව උභ්‍යාසයට පාරේ පහළට ගලාගෙන ගොස් ය.

"තමුසෙලා මෙයාව හැප්පුවා නේද?" අපේ එකෙක් කෑ ගැසී ය.

"පිස්සුද මහත්තයෝ අපි එනකොටත් මෙයා මෙහෙම මෙතන වැටිලා හිටියේ. හොස්පිටල් ගෙනියනවද කියලා අපි කතා වුණේ. කොහොමත් පාර හරස් වෙලා හින්ද අපිට බස් එක හරෝගෙන යන්නත් බෑ."

කොන්දොස්තරවරයා බයාදු ලෙස පැවසී ය. මගීහුද එය අනුමත කළෝ ය.

"හුස්ම වැටෙනවා බය වෙන්න දෙයක් නෑ." ප්‍රථමාධාර ගැන දැනුමක් ඇති බැලුමා පැවසීය.

රියදුරුතැනගේ වතුර බෝතලයද අපිට නොමිලයේ ලැබුණි. ගෝරිල්ලා පාර මැදින් අයිනට ගත් අපි බස් රථයට අවැසි ගමන යාමට පාරේ ඉඩක් සාදා දුන්නෙමු. ගෝරිල්ලාට පියවි සිහිය එනවිට අප හඹා පසු පසින් පැමිණි තවත් මැරතන් කණ්ඩායමක් අප පසුකොට කන්දේ සෙමින් ඉදිරියට ඇදී ගියේ ය. විනාඩි කිහිපයකට පසුව ගෝරිල්ලාද වත්තම් කොට ගත් අපි ඇවිදින වේගයෙන් කන්ද තරණය කළෙමු. ඉදිරියේ ඇති දෙවැනි තුංමං හංදියෙන් දකුණට හැරුණු විට සංසමිත්තා හා රාමනාදන් හෝල් අතරට වැටෙන මේ මාර්ගයේ අවසන් කිලෝමීටර දෙක පහළට තද බෑවුමකි. සිය පෙම්වතියගේ වාසභවන වූ "රාමනාදන් සුවද" ඉව වැටුණු ගෝරින් අප දෙදෙනාගේ කරෙන් ගිලිහී ස්වචාරුවෙන් සෙමින් ඉදිරියට ගාටන්නට විය.



අපගේ වාසනාවට එදා නම් මහා අරුම පුද්ගල දවසක් විය. සංසමිත්තාව හා රාමනාදන් අසළින් නැවත ගලග මාර්ගයට පිවිසි අපට රාමනාදන් දෙසට පිය නඟමින් සිටි ගෝරින්ගේ පෙම්වතිය හා සමඟ මෙඩ්ඩියෝ රංචුව නැවතත් දෛවෝපගත ලෙස මුණ ගැසිණි.

"කමෝන් ගෝරින් අයියා; කමෝන්, Hay Keep Going! Call your stamina! Keep Going!"

කෙල්ලන්ගේ හඬ ඇසුණා පමණි. මද කිපුණු අස්වයා සේ ශක්තියක් ලද ගෝරින් Kissing Bend එකේ නැවතත් අප දර්ශනයෙන් භීසරක වේගයෙන් නොපෙනී ගියේ ය.

අප කණ්ඩායම Kissing Bend එක පසුකර සෙනෙට් ගොඩනැගිල්ල අසලින් මල් පාරේ වමට හැරී එම ලේන් එකේ ජිම් එකවටේ ගොස් වූස් කැන්ටිම හා ජියෝලොජිකල් ෆැකල්ටිය ඉදිරියෙන් නාමල් පිපී සුවඳ හමන මාවතේ දිවගොස් නැවත ගලහ පාරට පිවිසිය ද ජිල්ලුවා දැක ගත නොහැකි විය. කෙසේ වෙතත් ගෝරිල්ලාගේ උත්තේජනයෙන් අප කණ්ඩායම ලද වේගය නිසා අප පසුකොට ගිය සෙකාලා සෙට් එක අභිබවා යාමට අපට හැකිවිය. තරඟය නිමා කළ යුතු වූයේ නැවත ක්‍රීඩා පිටියට අවතීර්ණ වී Running Track එකේ වට තුනක් දිව යාමෙන් පසුව ය.

අප නැවත ක්‍රීඩා පිටියට පිවිසියේ මහා හු හඬක් හා කෝවොක් පාරක් මාධ්‍යයයේ ය. ඒ එසේ වූයේ අපට විනාඩි ගණනකට පෙර අපේ කණ්ඩායමේ ගෝරිල්ලා හා ප්‍රේෂාලා සෙට් එක තරඟය අවසන් කොට තිබූ බැවිණි. උහුලන්තම බැරි වූයේ අපේම බැවියන්ගෙන්ද අපිට ලැබුණු කෝවොක් පාර ය. කිවේට වැහුණු භිනා හඬය. තරඟය නිමා කොට කෙල්ලන්ගෙන් ගරු බුහුමන්ද සත්කාරද ලැබූ ගෝරිල්ලා ක්‍රීඩා පිටියේ ප්‍රධාන පීඨිකාවට නුදුරින් බැවියන්ගේ හුරතලය ලබමින් වැටී සිටියේ ය.

ගෝරින් සැමට කළින් තරඟය නිමා කොට තිබුණිද, පැවති තරඟ කොන්දේසි වලට අනුව අප කණ්ඩායම තරඟය නිමා කළ කාලය සේ සළකනු ලැබුවේ අවසානට පැමිණි එකා වූ මගේ කාලයයි. එය සාමාන්‍ය මැරතන් ධාවකයෙකු එම දුර සහිත තරඟයක් නිමා කිරීමට ගන්නා කාලය මෙන් දෙගුණයකට ආසන්නව තිබුණි.

එදා සිට "මැරතන් ගෝරින්" නම් වූ අඳුන් නම ලද, එදා තරඟයේ වීරයා වූ ගෝරිල්ලාද ඔසවාගෙන අප අපගේ නවාතැන වූ අක්බාර් හෝල් එකට එන විට හොඳටම රෑ බෝවී තිබිණි.

ඇඟටත් වඩා අවිහිංසකකම දරන - බිච්චොත් හඬක් කුලියට වලි ඇද ගන්න
පොලියක් නැතිව අපිටත් බෙදලා දුන්න - ඇල්මෙන් වැළඳගෙන ඉළ ඇට කටු බිඳින

ෆැකල්ටියේ සැමරුම් දින සිත් ගැනුණා - කොර්ඩෝ දිගේ තැන තැන පන්දම් දිලුණා
ඒ එළි දිගේ රස මසවුළු බෝ පිසුණා - බාර් එකක් ෆැකල්ටියේ ඇර තිබුණා
වියර්ස් අපේ වීදුරු එකිනෙක ගැටුණා - දොළහ කනිසමේ රුව බොදව් වැනුණා
කබරය ඇදල උඩ මහ පුටුවේ උන්නා - පුටුවේ කකුල් හතරම යටවී තිබුණා

වතුපිටි උඹේ බෝමයි සරුසාරයි බං - යකඩත් එක්ක හැප්පුන ඔය මදිද බොලං
ඩොලර ගනේ නැග්ගා හොඳටම ඇති බං - ආදර සොදුරි තනියෙන් ඇළහ හිටහං

By Don Susil Premaratne

An Alumnus of the University of Peradeniya - Faculty of Engineering



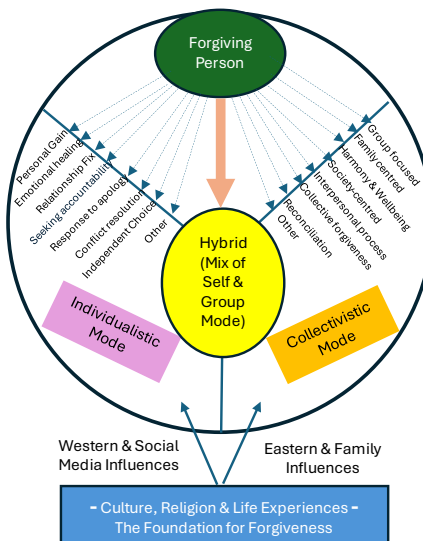
Forgiveness – What has love got to do with it? ⁻¹

By Martin Nicholas
(An Alumnus of the University of Colombo, Science Faculty)

In our lives we may have apologized, asked for forgiveness and forgiven others. The reasons for each of these actions may vary widely from person to person. Let us say two people were to pick their favourite song about asking for or granting forgiveness. The chances are small, it would be the same, even if the two people have had similar life experiences. Especially, since each one is unique and there is a wide selection of songs (e.g., on [YouTube](#)) in English and Sinhalese about forgiveness. The choice of song could depend on the many factors which in turn impact on how we approach forgiveness in our lives.

While religion may play a major role in forgiveness, its influence is not discussed in this article. I am interested in examining non-religious or secular factors which contribute to a culture of forgiveness and suggest new thoughts about its scope.

Figure: Deep-seated Forgiveness Landscape



As shown in the figure above, we are part of a deep-seated forgiveness landscape that is founded on culture, religion and life experiences. In addition, social media and family are great influences on our approach to forgiveness. It is believed that, as shown in the figure, the approach to forgiveness varies substantively from predominantly individualistic cultures of the West to the more collectivistic cultures in the East.

The reasons to ask for or to grant forgiveness: Selected individualistic and collectivistic factors are given on the left-hand side and right-hand side of the figure, respectively. The choices are only meant to be illustrative.

Individualistic mode: Personal gain could be dominant even when the other factors such as emotional healing and conflict resolution are considered. While forgiveness is valued, there may also be a higher likelihood of resentment and a stronger expectation of apologies and reparations.

In many instances a strong emphasis is used to ensure that the offender is held accountable for their actions.

Collectivistic mode: A group or family focus is prevalent. Forgiveness is seen as vital for maintaining social cohesion and preventing further damage to relationships. It is often seen as intertwined with reconciliation, aiming to restore the

¹ I thank Kumudini Nicholas for her editorial review that helped me finalize the article



relationship and maintain social harmony. On average, a collectivistic approach may exhibit lower levels of resentment and a greater willingness to forgive.

The Sri Lankan diaspora's approach to forgiveness is likely to be a complex interplay of individual and collective factors. The collectivistic background of Sri Lanka may influence the group's focus on reconciliation and harmony. However, living as adults in the West and getting exposed to social media will bring individualistic behaviours to the forefront. The diaspora would be then expected to mostly behave in a hybrid mode (see Figure). Such a mix of self and group focus would be further impacted by life experiences, culture and religious priorities and practices. It is a complex combination of all factors that would shape Sri Lankan Canadian perspectives on forgiveness.

What matters to us: In the hybrid mode we may be influenced by both group and individualistic factors. For example, if you are part of a close-knit group, you may act to protect or restore collective peace by forgiving an individual who may have wronged you. Harmony and wellbeing for a group may lead you to forgive even if that was not your individual choice. I believe, in most cases we would be reacting to a mix of the factors listed in the figure when deciding to ask for or to grant forgiveness. It will be interesting to explore whether other cultures have secrets on successfully asking for and giving forgiveness

What could other cultures tell us about forgiveness?

On April 26, 2025, all Canadians were heartbroken to learn of the tragedy that senselessly killed 11 people at a cultural festival in Vancouver. The Prime Minister Carney used the term Bayanihan in his expression of condolences to the Filipino Canadian community, where he highlighted its "strength and resilience. Bayanihan, a Filipino concept meaning "community spirit" or "cooperation," is deeply intertwined with forgiveness. It is a spirit of togetherness and compassion which naturally fosters forgiveness, as the focus shifts from individual grievances to the well-being of the community. This concept of Bayanihan has the potential to help people reconcile with future tragedies they face by instilling a spirit of love for humanity with forgiveness.

In 2020, the BBC published an article which discusses words and concepts from other cultures which have had a profound impact on its people in terms of forgiveness. Two of those listed below could be of value to us.

Reconciliation: The word "ubuntu" in the Zulu language supports a philosophy of forgiveness and reconciliation based on a shared humanity. In fact, this African philosophy emphasizing interconnectedness and shared humanity, played a significant role in South Africa's post-apartheid reconciliation efforts. It used Ubuntu principles to foster forgiveness and healing among victims and perpetrators. We could apply it today as a fundamental driving force, when we try to understand and support reconciliation with the Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

The Hawaiian term "ho'oponopono": The influence of this term in Hawaii is enhanced by teaching it at an early age as a culturally unique saying. It is difficult to translate into English. However, a grossly oversimplified way to describe it is - *I am sorry, please forgive me, I love you.*

So, we have encountered two terms above that suggests that love could enrich the process of forgiveness.

Final word – What has love got to do with forgiveness?

What could constitute a loving apology and loving forgiveness? I am calling on all readers to think about how we could enrich *asking for and granting forgiveness through love for humanity*. For example, kindness has been enhanced by the concept of loving kindness. Could we do the same for forgiveness at a time when there is so much conflict in the world and among people. I am sure such efforts may help reconciliation at an individual, group and societal level. I leave you with a proposal to create two new Sinhala words to reflect this concept – i.e., asking for and granting forgiveness enriched by love:

- (i) සමාව + ආදරය = සමාවාදරය;
- (ii) සමාව ඉදිකවා + ආදරය = සමාඉදිකාදරය

I wish all readers a wonderful summer 2025.



St. Patrick's Home of Ottawa

St. Patrick's Home in Ottawa is a heavenly mansion
It is a long-term care home
I am in Kerry Home being the 4th floor of this institution
This building has 5 floors situated on a flat landscape is attached by other floors
1st is Galway,
2nd is Carlo and Cavin,
3rd is Dublin,
4th is Kerry and Kilkerny,
And 5th is Water ford
It is a place for health and joy
We owe much to the staff and nurses who spend their precious time on us
And grateful to them for the unassuming service they do
Shower twice a week
Cleaning the room everyday laundry and medication are the daily routine
Activities Bingo, Bowling, drum fit are the main activities
Birthday parties are common
Music and dancing by talented artist
Doctors visit us and prescribe medicine
There is a spa and salon to groom on significant days like
Valentine's day and Mothers' days are celebrated
Exercise is common
We go to the church, pray and sing hymns
Residents show their talents in painting, Baking, coloring and decorating
Being an independent inmate, I am supplied with everything necessary
Our friends and relatives visit us, we go home at our wish
We are happy
May God Bless
St. Patrick's Home in Ottawa!

By
Charlotte Gardiyehewa
(Mother of alumna Nayana de Silva)



Rediscovering Purpose: A Journey Beyond Life's Milestones

By Nadee Fernando-O'Driscoll – Author

Have you ever found yourself reflecting on your life's achievements with pride, taking stock and yet somehow feeling that a sense of fulfillment remains elusive? Well, that was me a year and a half ago. There I was, on the cusp of celebrating half a century on this earth. Despite my victories and the life I had diligently built, I felt a twinge of melancholy. It was a Frank Sinatra moment—though not a literal final curtain call.

For years, I had been in survival mode, where my primary focus was to raise my daughter. When she became 18 (17 at the time) and well-grounded, she no longer needed her mother hovering over her like a protective bear. My husband, is my soulmate and the guiding star, whom I shared a good life. Yet, amidst this stability, I sensed an unsettling void, a yearning for a different professional path—something that would nourish my soul.

I always believed that life hands you what you need when you need it. This belief had been my guiding light during the darkest times. And, wouldn't you know it, the universe delivered right on cue: Out of the blue, an extraordinary individual from my mailing list reached out and invited me to join a poetry circle.

Ah, poetry! A long-forgotten love from my youth, buried beneath the practical aspirations expected of South Asians—like dreaming of becoming a doctor instead of a poet or writer. Up until then, my creative spark had been stifled by societal norms. Yet, here I was, receiving an invitation from a stranger to join a poetry circle, and something within me shifted. I instantly realized that the elusive void I had been feeling was indeed a creative one. Suddenly, the path before me became clear, even if I couldn't see all the steps in it just yet.

You know the phrase "a perfect storm," right? Well, in my case, it was entirely apt. I had no idea there was a storm brewing. It was the calm before the storm—literally. Then, a new piece of information—a heartbreaking story—thrust me into chaos. I was in the eye of the storm. I learned a secret, a story of some people integral to me. A heartbreaking tale of a young woman, a mother forced to surrender her child for adoption to save herself and the child from judgment—an infuriating reality of a society so cruel and judgmental that it shamefully ostracizes a child simply for being an adoptee.

A torrential downpour of painful truths, disgust at the cruelty of archaic social biases, created a fervent desire to tell this story; it washed over me like ocean waves fueled by an overwhelming urge to share. Although It wasn't a meticulously planned decision, it surged upon me like a powerful wave.

With the utmost certainty, I declared to my husband, "I'm going to write a book!" And, his approval, as always was immediate. he never once doubted my ability to accomplish the endeavor.

Immediately, I set out on a new challenging adventure, At the age of 50, I became a published author. I embraced my new place in life.

Through writing my very first novel I closed the lid on yesterday's dreams, I found it was not just a passion but a mission—a mission to bring positive change within communities shackled by archaic traditions masquerading as values, continuing to victimize the most vulnerable in society.

Born and raised in Sri Lanka, I am intimately familiar with the insidious societal biases that masquerade as cultural values. Unfitting in the tight confines of these norms, I have navigated the treacherous waters of judgment with sheer will and a circle of kindred spirits. The story behind my novel, the journey of two individuals so close to my heart was a tale that resonated deeply, echoing the harrowing experiences of myself and many I hold dear. We have confronted



the relentless specter of colorism, gender bias, and the pernicious grip of traditional expectations that ascribe a woman's worth to her virginity. These archaic beliefs compel women to lead lives shrouded in secrecy, stifling their voices, and preventing justice for the countless victims of abuse and rape.

Helen and Peter's story, for me, transcended a mere tragic love affair—it was a clarion call to expose and challenge the oppressive societal biases that haunt us. This tale, intertwined with personal and communal scars, propelled me to write not just for therapy, but as a powerful act of advocacy and defiance.

This was the birth of a new dream and a new mission for me. A dream that is bigger than me. Hope you will find your path that would transform your life to realize your personal dream.



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A Scripture in the Sky

By Kumudini Nicholas

(An Alumnus of the University of Peradeniy, Faculty of Science)



(Photo credit: Niroshan Thanthrige)

When southerly wind changed its mind,
Cold gusts from the North pulsated near and far.
Message well received; time to fuel for the odyssey.
Geese pecked to engorge; the pasture embraced all scars.

Will travel the distance to find comfort, they uttered with intent,
No stopovers, together they exclaimed.
The intel was superb, and their responses were in-tune.
Gathered in harmony, and in unison they confirmed.

The enduring unity blazed across the autumn skies,
Away they flew, in a geometric 'v', and said goodbye.
Their consolidated voices echoed a promise, far and wide:
"Be back when pastures are green, ponds are blue, under a sunny sky".

"Season is changing", was the onlookers' elucidation,
While birds' subtle message was lost in their murmuration:
"In the coming dreadful winter, flock, as we do in migration,
Time and time again together,
Aid and assist one another".

En route, Geese scribed an avian scripture,
Did the earthlings discern the perspective of that picture?



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(Mother of alumnus Manoj de Silva)



Can the United States Acquire Canada as its 51st State?

By Ruwantissa Abeyratne DCL, Ph.D., LL.M (Alumnus of the University of Colombo, Faculty of Law)

The proposition that the United States could acquire Canada as its 51st state or unilaterally alter the borders between the two sovereign nations is untenable both legally and politically. This assertion finds foundation in international law, historical precedent, and the legal doctrines that have governed territorial integrity and state sovereignty for centuries. The notion of negotiating or forcibly annexing a sovereign nation such as Canada is fundamentally at variance with the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, customary international law, and numerous bilateral treaties between the United States and Canada. Additionally, constitutional and political considerations within both nations further render such an idea unfeasible by the United States.

THE BIRTH OF CANADA: THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT, 1867

The most significant legal development in the relationship between Canada and the United Kingdom was the passage of the British North America Act, 1867 (now the Constitution Act, 1867). This Act established Canada as a self-governing dominion within the British Empire, creating a federal system of government that divided powers between the national and provincial governments. However, Canada remained a British dominion, with legislative decisions subject to British oversight, and its foreign policy dictated by London.

The Balfour Declaration of 1926 and the subsequent Statute of Westminster, 1931, further expanded Canada's legislative autonomy by recognizing the equality of dominions within the British Empire. The Statute of Westminster granted Canada full legislative independence, though certain constitutional ties, such as the inability to amend its own Constitution without British approval, remained in place until the 1980s.

THE PATRIATION OF THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

The final legal severance between Canada and the United Kingdom occurred with the Constitution Act, 1982. Until this point, amendments to the Canadian Constitution required British parliamentary approval, as illustrated by cases such as the Patriation Reference (1981), in which the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that constitutional amendments required substantial provincial consent. The passage of the Canada Act, 1982 by the UK Parliament officially ended Britain's legislative authority over Canada and resulted in the patriation of the Canadian Constitution.

The Constitution Act, 1982, introduced the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, solidifying the country's commitment to civil liberties and the rule of law. With this Act, Canada achieved full sovereignty, yet it retained its constitutional monarchy, with the British monarch serving as the symbolic head of state.

LEGAL RECOGNITION BY THE UNITED STATES

The formal recognition of Canada as a sovereign nation by the United States is enshrined in various bilateral treaties and agreements that define the legal and political relationship between the two countries. Among these, the 1923 Halibut Treaty and the 1931 Statute of Westminster stand as pivotal legal instruments that affirmed Canada's autonomy in foreign relations and established its full sovereignty under international law.

A. The Halibut Treaty of 1923: A Milestone in Canadian Sovereignty

The Halibut Treaty, signed between Canada and the United States in 1923, was the first treaty negotiated and signed independently by Canada without British oversight. Prior to this agreement, all international treaties involving Canada were negotiated and ratified by the British government on behalf of its dominions. The treaty was significant not only for its content—establishing conservation measures for Pacific halibut stocks—but also because it was a diplomatic assertion of Canada's ability to conduct its own foreign affairs. The United States' direct negotiation and signing of the treaty with Canada marked an implicit recognition of Canada's sovereignty.



B. The Treaty of Washington, 1871, and Border Agreements

While Canada was still a British dominion at the time of the Treaty of Washington in 1871, this agreement laid the groundwork for peaceful dispute resolution between the United States and Canada regarding border issues, including fishing rights and navigation. Later agreements, such as the 1908 Boundary Waters Treaty and the establishment of the International Joint Commission, reinforced Canada's standing as a distinct and sovereign negotiating entity. The continued bilateral approach to border management, independent of British involvement, demonstrated the evolving recognition of Canada's sovereignty.

C. The Post-World War II Treaties and Modern Recognition

Following World War II, Canada and the United States further solidified their bilateral relationship through numerous treaties that recognized Canada's sovereign authority in defense and economic matters. The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) agreement of 1958, for instance, positioned Canada as an equal partner with the United States in continental defense, underscoring its recognized sovereignty. Similarly, the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement (1988) and its successor, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), further affirmed Canada's status as an independent economic and political entity.

The legal and diplomatic recognition of Canada's sovereignty by the United States has been solidified through a series of treaties, beginning with the Halibut Treaty of 1923 and culminating in modern agreements that govern trade, security, and border relations. The United States' recognition of Canada as a sovereign nation has been implicit in every bilateral agreement since the early 20th century, demonstrating the strength and stability of the diplomatic relationship between the two nations. The formalization of Canada's independent status through these treaties ensures that Canada remains a fully sovereign and independent state in the international legal order.

INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE PROHIBITION OF TERRITORIAL ACQUISITION BY FORCE

One of the most fundamental principles of international law is the prohibition against the acquisition of territory by force. This principle is enshrined in Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter, which expressly prohibits states from using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of another state. The principle was further reaffirmed in the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States, which underscored that no territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force shall be recognized as lawful.

Canada, as a sovereign nation, enjoys protection under this international legal framework. The United States, as a signatory to the UN Charter, is bound by this prohibition and would face overwhelming international condemnation should it attempt to annex Canada through coercion or force. Furthermore, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has consistently upheld the principle of territorial integrity in cases such as the *Nicaragua v. United States* (1986) decision, which reaffirmed the prohibition of intervention in the affairs of another state.

A. Historical Precedents and Diplomatic Treaties

Historically, the territorial boundaries between the United States and Canada have been defined and upheld through a series of diplomatic treaties and agreements. The Treaty of Paris (1783) initially established the boundary between the newly independent United States and British North America. This boundary was further clarified and modified through subsequent agreements such as the Jay Treaty (1794), the Treaty of Ghent (1814), and the Rush-Bagot Agreement (1817), which helped demilitarize the Great Lakes and prevent conflict between the two nations.

The Oregon Treaty of 1846 formally established the 49th parallel as the boundary between U.S. and British-held territories in the Pacific Northwest, setting a precedent for peaceful negotiations in territorial matters. Most notably, the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 settled disputes between Maine and New Brunswick, while the Treaty of Washington (1871) provided mechanisms for resolving border disputes through arbitration rather than conflict. These treaties collectively



form a robust legal foundation that upholds the existing territorial integrity of Canada and the United States, leaving no room for unilateral alterations.

B. The Constitutional Sovereignty of Canada

Canada's sovereignty is explicitly affirmed in its legal and constitutional framework. The Constitution Act, 1867 (formerly the British North America Act), established Canada as a dominion of the British Empire, with its federal structure and autonomous government. With the passage of the Statute of Westminster in 1931, Canada gained legislative independence, and the patriation of the Constitution in 1982 fully severed any remaining constitutional ties with the United Kingdom, making Canada an entirely self-governing state.

The Canadian Constitution does not provide any mechanism for the country to be annexed or absorbed by another nation. Section 91 of the Constitution Act, 1867, delineates the legislative powers of the federal government, and any fundamental alteration of Canada's sovereignty would require an amendment under the stringent rules of the Constitution Act, 1982. Such an amendment would require the consent of the Parliament of Canada as well as the provincial legislatures, making any attempt at annexation practically impossible.

Furthermore, the Clarity Act (2000) provides a legal framework for any potential secessionist movements within Canada but makes it clear that such a process must be democratic, transparent, and approved by a clear majority of Canadians. This demonstrates that even internal changes to Canada's territorial configuration must undergo rigorous legal scrutiny and democratic validation, let alone external attempts at altering the nation's sovereignty.

C. The Colonial Foundations of Canada

Canada's relationship with the United Kingdom is deeply rooted in history, law, and governance, forming the foundation of its legal and political identity. This connection has evolved over centuries through legislative enactments, judicial interpretations, and constitutional developments that have shaped Canada into an independent nation while maintaining enduring ties to the British Crown.

The British presence in Canada was formally established in 1763 with the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Seven Years' War and transferred control of New France from France to Britain. This was followed by the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which not only outlined British governance over the newly acquired territories but also recognized Indigenous land rights—a principle that continues to influence Canadian jurisprudence today. The Quebec Act of 1774 further reinforced British authority by maintaining French civil law in Quebec while upholding British criminal law, setting a precedent for the country's bijural legal system.

Canada's political and legal institutions were structured under British law. The Constitutional Act of 1791 divided the colony into Upper and Lower Canada, introducing representative government to British North America. This framework evolved with the Act of Union of 1840, which merged the two colonies into the Province of Canada, further consolidating British legislative control.

THE ROLE OF THE BRITISH MONARCHY IN CANADA

Despite its legal independence, Canada remains a constitutional monarchy, with the King of the United Kingdom also serving as the King of Canada. This dual role is enshrined in the Constitution Act, 1867, and reaffirmed in the Letters Patent of 1947, which delegated the monarch's powers to the Governor General of Canada. The Governor General acts as the sovereign's representative, performing ceremonial and constitutional duties, such as granting Royal Assent to legislation and dissolving Parliament.

Canadian courts continue to recognize the monarchy's role within the constitutional framework. The Supreme Court of Canada, in cases such as *Reference re: Succession to the Throne* (2014), has reaffirmed that changes to the monarchy's



structure in Canada require constitutional amendment, further demonstrating the enduring legal link between Canada and the United Kingdom.

A. Canada's Continued Legal and Political Ties to the United Kingdom

While Canada is fully sovereign, its legal system retains significant British influences. The common law system followed by Canadian courts, with the exception of Quebec's civil law system, is derived from English jurisprudence. Precedents from British courts, particularly from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (which remained Canada's highest court until 1949), continue to be cited in Canadian legal decisions.

Furthermore, Canada remains a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, an intergovernmental organization of former British colonies that fosters economic and diplomatic cooperation. Canadian legal and parliamentary traditions, including the structure of the House of Commons and Senate, are modeled after the British system.

Canada's relationship with the United Kingdom is deeply embedded in history, law, and constitutional development. While Canada has achieved full legislative independence, it retains its constitutional monarchy, legal traditions, and political structures inherited from Britain. This enduring link demonstrates the resilience of shared legal heritage and governance, ensuring that Canada's British roots remain an integral part of its national identity even as it continues to chart its independent path on the world stage.

THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF ANNEXATION

Beyond the legal impossibilities, the political and economic ramifications of the United States attempting to acquire Canada would be catastrophic. Canada and the United States share one of the largest and most prosperous trading relationships in the world, governed by agreements such as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) which has already been mentioned. The stability and economic prosperity of both nations are contingent upon mutual cooperation and respect for sovereignty.

Public opinion in Canada overwhelmingly opposes any form of annexation, as reflected in historical polling data. The Canadian national identity is deeply tied to its independent governance, universal healthcare system, and distinct political culture, all of which diverge significantly from that of the United States. Any attempt to absorb Canada into the United States would meet fierce resistance not only from the Canadian public but also from its political institutions, which would refuse to ratify such a proposal.

Moreover, the international community would not tolerate an act of annexation by the United States. Organizations such as the United Nations, the G7, and NATO would view such a move as an aggressive violation of international norms. Given Canada's standing as a respected middle power in global affairs, it is unlikely that its allies and trading partners would remain passive in the face of an attempted territorial expansion by the United States.

THE LEGAL INVIOABILITY OF THE U.S.-CANADA BORDER

The modern U.S.-Canada border is governed by a robust legal framework that includes the Treaty of 1908, which established the International Boundary Commission, tasked with maintaining and demarcating the border. The border is further reinforced by agreements such as the 1925 Boundary Waters Treaty and the 1985 Pacific Salmon Treaty, both of which demonstrate the deeply entrenched nature of cooperative border governance between the two nations.

Unilateral border changes by the United States would violate these treaties, as well as the principles established by the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States (1933), which affirms that no state has the right to interfere with the territorial integrity of another. The principle of *uti possidetis juris*—widely recognized in international law—ensures that existing borders remain intact unless mutually agreed upon by both parties.

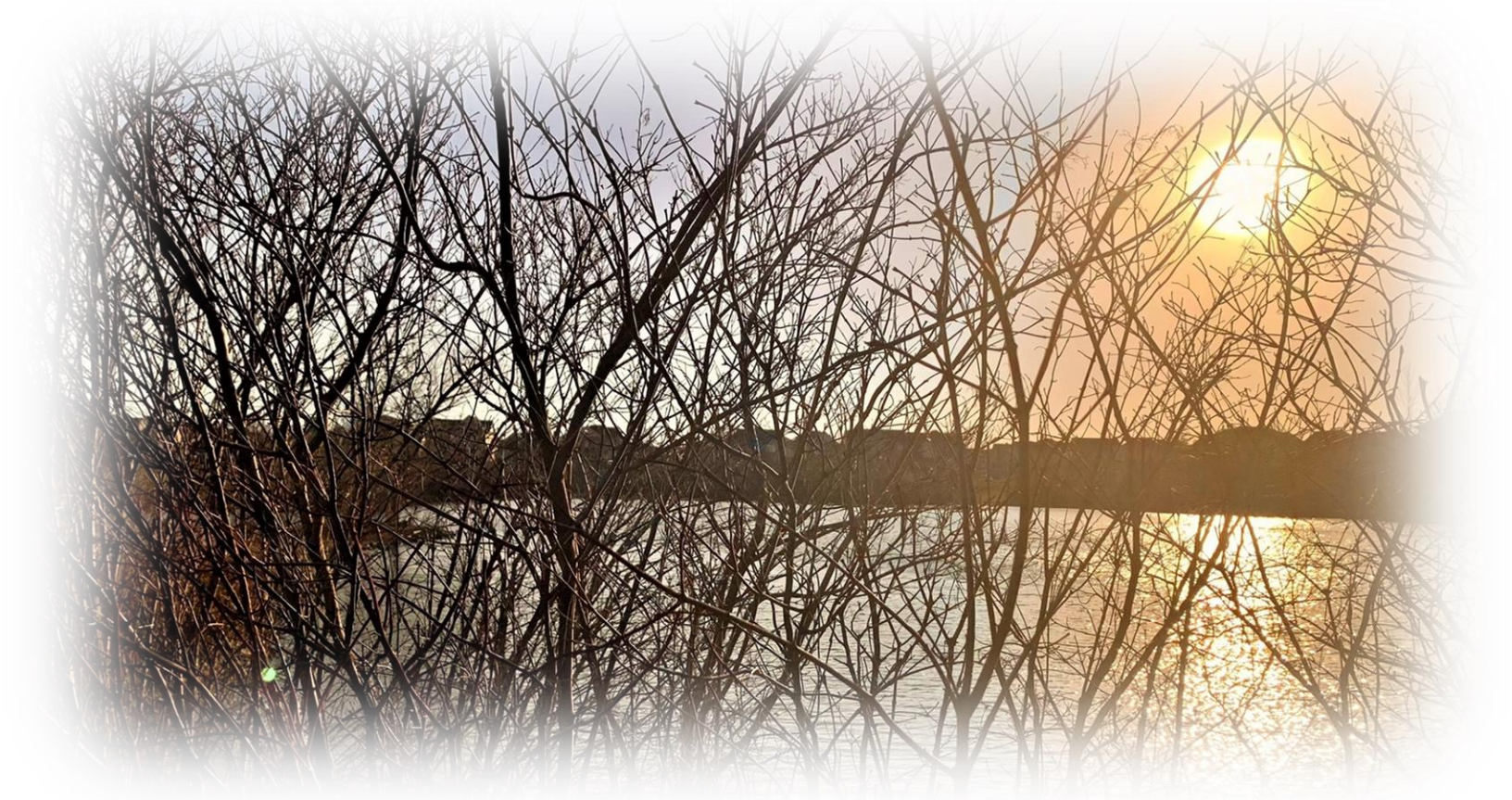


CONCLUSION

The prospect of the United States acquiring Canada or unilaterally altering the border between the two nations is not only implausible but also fundamentally at odds with international law, historical precedent, and the constitutional frameworks of both countries. The principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty, and non-intervention remain sacrosanct in international relations, and any deviation from these norms would invite severe legal, political, and economic consequences.

The principle of constitutional supremacy, entrenched within Canadian jurisprudence, dictates that no foreign power, whether by legislative means or political maneuvering, can unilaterally assert authority over Canada or absorb it into its territory. This assertion is reinforced by the fundamental tenets of international law, which recognize Canada as an independent and self-governing entity, immune from external claims of sovereignty.

The relationship between the United States and Canada is one of the most stable and cooperative in modern history, built upon mutual respect and a shared commitment to peace and prosperity. Rather than entertaining the fantasy of territorial expansion, policymakers should continue to strengthen the diplomatic and economic ties that have defined U.S.-Canada relations for over two centuries. Any attempt to undermine this relationship through annexationist aspirations would be met with insurmountable legal, political, and diplomatic resistance, ensuring that Canada remains an independent and sovereign nation on the world stage.



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Being a Musician in Sri Lanka: Reflections and Suggestions for Improvements

Nadee Dharshana Perera

Homagama, Sri Lanka; A graduate of Ananda College, Colombo; a Guitarist & a Singer



Generally, being a musician means dedicating oneself to the art of music, whether through composing, performing, or conducting, and often pursuing it as a profession, whether solo or as part of a group. But most of all, a musician's primary goal is to create an entertainment product for the marketplace. Unfortunately, the musicians in Sri Lanka do not have an acceptable response from the marketplace, as they would in many other countries. Therefore, the sad reality a Sri Lankan musician would face is the lack of recognition and protection of the craft, and severely restricted stability of the artist's musical career.

I was privileged to be born to a family of musicians. My father's cousin Mr. Rohana Baddage, and the former Arts Education Director, Jayantha Aravinda were my mentors through my father's association with such well-known musically inclined families. Their influence on my early life greatly helped me become a musician.

As a Sri Lankan artist, I was given opportunities to present my talents through reputable Television Channels on multiple occasions, allowing me to take a major role in their programs. Over the years, I was fortunate to be able to telecast one of my original songs and perform many cover songs. I became technically skilled and shared my performances *via* social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok; where my singing has captured the hearts of many audiences.

As a formal recognition and certification of my contributions to Sri Lankan music for over 30+ years, recently I was presented with a National Artist award, which was a prestigious recognition for a Sri Lankan artist. Also, due to my outstanding achievements and skills as an artist, I was awarded the honorary title "Lak Abhiman Kala Vibhushana Kirthi Sri Janaranjana."

Despite receiving such honours, I was not able to entice support from the Sri Lankan marketplace necessary to pursue my career ambitions as a professional musician. Yet, I consider myself to be fortunate for being employed as a professional journalist and online editor by a reputable Television Network in Sri Lanka, which has been financially supporting me for nearly past 20 years, and has provided me the courage to continue to be an active musician using my spare time.

Unfortunately, due to the instability of a formal career within the music industry, some incredibly talented musicians have now left the music field and have looked elsewhere to find employment.

The COVID-19 pandemic had an unexpected negative impact on the music industry when musical events such as outdoor and indoor concerts, weddings, and other events were indefinitely suspended. This worldwide calamity affected the music groups such as 2/3/4/5- person bands as well as full bands that provide music for restaurants, pubs, hotels, and clubs. Also, due to the virtually complete disappearance of various festive celebrations, solo singers, calypso, mats, DJs, etc., also the suppliers of sound-light systems lost their source of income.



By the time the pandemic ended, many could not return to the original infrastructure and standard of income through musical events which was a crisis that no musician had anticipated.

Currently in Sri Lanka, there are many unrecognized talented musicians who make a living with much difficulty by providing music in Star-class hotels and even in small restaurants. Yet, in the current marketplace, their future as accomplished artists is highly unrealistic; therefore, their future as artists may not be fruitful.

The success of any musician in the current day Sri Lanka might depend on the changes that could be implemented within the music industry. Such would include giving proper bargaining power to the musicians and improving the budget for a musical performance in establishments, such as hotels and entertainment venues. In addition, those who individually hire a musician should exhibit respect to the musicians as professionals who earn a living by using their talents, and pay for their service adequately without their service being taken for granted.

In my opinion, music is an art form that should be identified as a career development path from the beginning at the school level. Those who have the natural talent to perform should be considered as fun-loving, sensitive, and disciplined people, who have a great potential to become successful individuals in their fields, as much as a student who is interested in science and other subjects in the school curriculum could. In addition, I believe that placing more emphasis on music in the school curricula, providing greater access to musical instruments, and encouraging children at their early age to pursue their interest in music could improve their cognitive and mental development, and skills in concentration, thereby augmenting their success even in other studies such as science. Overall, it will enhance the quality of education and generate good human beings as a part of a decent society.

Music is a universal language and a form of relaxation that enhances the psychological well-being of a human, because without joy and social interactions supported by music, society lacks what is essential to maintain the balance in human life.

Finally, I would like to highlight that art is not something that is suitable for everyone. But, as an artist I believe that an entertainer is a special person, who has a unique talent to make others happy.

"Art must come from the body itself, without which art cannot be cultivated". This is what my people say in common parlance.



Art Corner



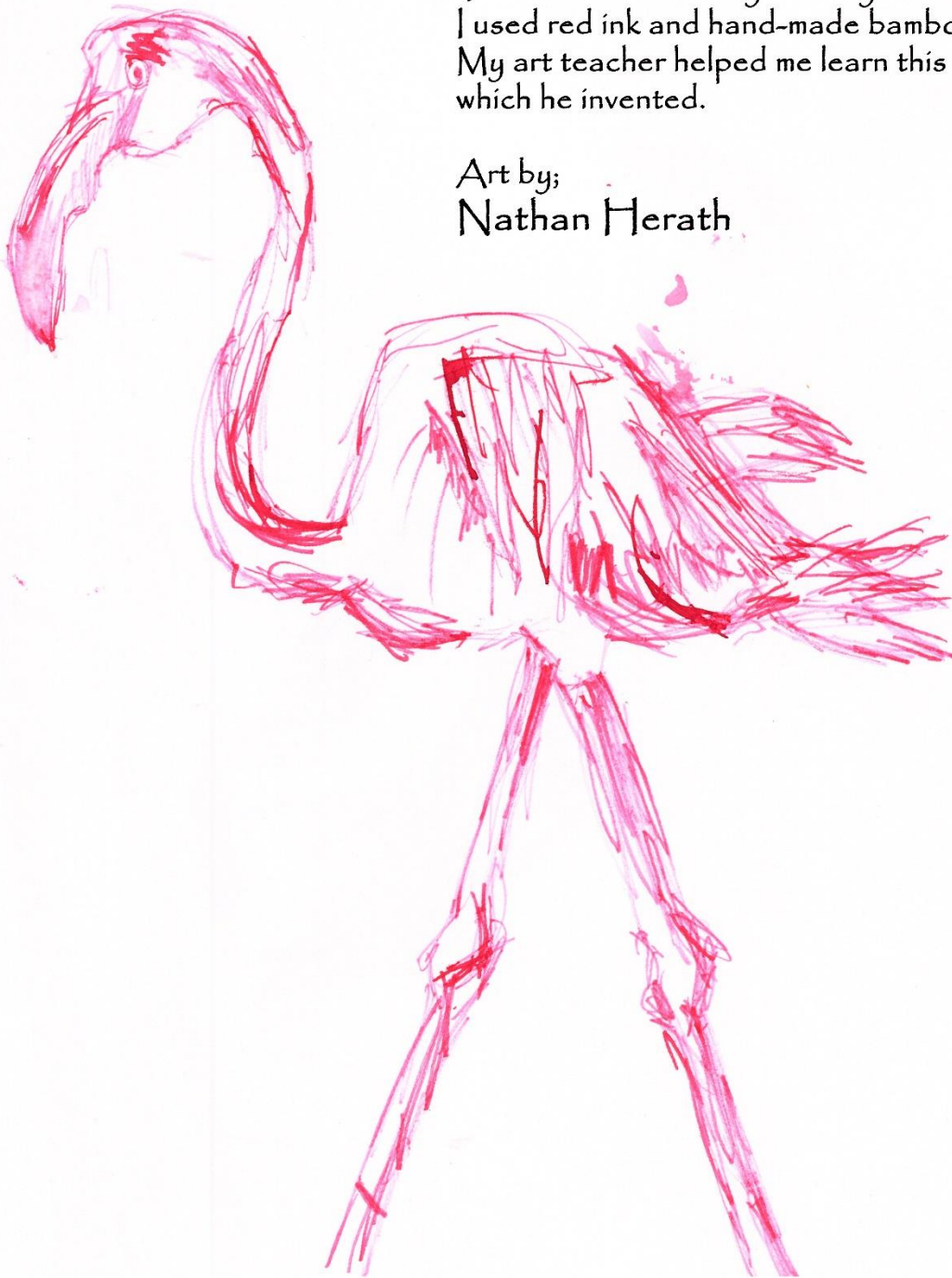
Illustration of a Flamingo

Hi all,

My name is Nathan.

This art form is a very rare style of drawing.
I used red ink and hand-made bamboo pen.
My art teacher helped me learn this method,
which he invented.

Art by;
Nathan Herath



Gree Padura practice

April 20, 2025

- Daddy told me we are going to have a Gree Padura practice. Lots of uncles and aunts came.

Lakshman uncle hummed a note and I said it. Then he played it on the keyboard. It was right! Then all the uncles and aunts practiced their songs.

Then for lunch break, I had brown cake, vadai and a sandwich. Then they practiced again.

I played with Nathan and Angelo in the basement. Then they came home. Lakshman uncle also played the guitar. I loved it!





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Community News

The Sri Lankan community in Ottawa, Canada, came together with devotion and creativity to construct a magnificent 11-feet tall rotating Vesak lantern at the Hilda Jayewardenaramaya Buddhist Temple. Its intricate design and vibrant illumination reflected the community's deep cultural roots and collective spirit. The lantern became a centerpiece of celebration, inspiring both Sri Lankans and the wider Ottawa community with its beauty and spiritual significance.



Editor's Note

Dear Members,

It is with great pleasure that we share with you the latest edition of *හන්තන පවුර*, the biannual newsletter of the Alumni Association of University of Peradeniya – Ottawa Chapter (AAUPOC).

This issue captures the rich diversity and vibrant spirit of our AAUPOC community, featuring contributions that range from insightful discussions on geopolitics to imaginative works of art. From the thoughtful voices of the mothers in our community to the creative expressions of our children, this edition truly reflects the depth and breadth of talent across generations.

This publication comes to life through the creativity of our writers and artists, whose contributions continue to inspire and uplift. The continued support from our sponsors plays a vital role in making this effort possible.

Recognition is also due to our editorial reviewers— Ajith Samarajeewa, Kumudini Nicholas, Nimal De Silva & Susantha Mohottalage—whose careful insights and constructive feedback have shaped the quality of this edition.

The visual elegance of this newsletter is the result of Deepani Waidyaratne's thoughtful and skilled design work, which ties all elements together with clarity and charm.

We hope you find this edition both engaging and inspiring. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome—please feel free to reach out to us at aaupoc@yahoo.ca

Warm regards,

Dayan Herath

Editor, *හන්තන පවුර*

AAUPOC Biannual Newsletter

