

Press Kit

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Location: Springer Market Square, Kingston, ON

Start Date: July 30, 2025

Title: Local Man Begins Hunger Strike to Protest Legal Injustice in Ontario Courts

Kingston, ON — [July 28, 2025] — Starting July 30, 2025, local author and activist Jude Thangarajah will begin a water-only hunger strike at Springer Market Square to protest what he calls a “systematic failure of justice” within Ontario’s legal system.

Thangarajah, a racialized man of South Asian descent, is protesting the denial of his right to appeal a 2017 conviction. He maintains that his guilty plea was made under duress due to untreated psychological injuries, which were exacerbated during his time in pre-trial detention, and that he received ineffective legal representation.. Despite credible legal arguments, he was recently denied an extension of time to appeal by the Ontario Court of Appeal.

“This goes beyond my case,” says Thangarajah. “It reflects a broader failure affecting those who are marginalized—whether by race, mental health, economic hardship, or lack of advocacy.”

Thangarajah will remain at Springer Market Square every day starting on July 30th, consuming only water and peacefully protesting until his concerns are heard—or until his body gives out. He is calling for:

- A fair hearing of his appeal, especially regarding the sexual threat allegation
- Public scrutiny of racial and mental health bias in Ontario courts
- Judicial accountability and systemic reform

He invites media, legal professionals, human rights advocates, and the public to visit him, learn his story, and support the fight for legal equity.

For interviews or additional information, please visit www.YodaTheProphet.com or contact him directly.

“Why I Am Doing a Hunger Strike for Justice”

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter not as an act of defiance, but as a final expression of desperation, conscience, and truth. My name is Jude Thangarajah. I am a former Canadian Armed Forces medic, a university graduate, a published author, and a citizen who once believed in the integrity of Canada’s justice system.

But after eight years of suffering under the weight of malicious accusations, broken legal processes, and systemic neglect, I no longer have faith in the fairness or humanity of the Ontario legal system. I have exhausted nearly every legal remedy available to me: I filed a human rights complaint. I attempted to appeal my conviction. I sought to bring my case before the Ontario Court of Appeal. Most recently, my motion for an extension of time to appeal was dismissed, and with it, the system closed its doors again without addressing the deeper injustices in my case.

I have been psychologically tortured by years of delay, indifference, and betrayal by those meant to protect justice. My mental health has deteriorated. My attempts to speak truth to power have been ignored or ridiculed. I have been treated as though my suffering is inconvenient – rather than real, complex, and deserving of redress.

The media, the courts, and even those who once represented me have perpetuated a version of events that I contest profoundly – one that has painted me as a monster without allowing for my humanity, moral injury, or truth to be heard.

I am now left with no choice but to engage in protest. Inspired by the example of Mahatma Gandhi and others who have resisted injustice through peaceful means, I intend to begin a hunger strike to demand the following:

1. The right to address the malicious, humiliating, and career-ending accusations made against me in court and in public record.
2. Recognition of the procedural unfairness, lack of effective legal counsel, and systemic discrimination I have faced.
3. Access to a fair and impartial re-examination of my 2017 conviction under a process that respects the rule of law and human dignity.
4. Accountability for the years of deprivation of legal options, and the silencing of my voice in legal, media, and public forums.

This is not an act of self-harm. This is a protest rooted in conscience. I would rather risk my life than continue living with lies forced upon me. If my actions lead to arrest or punishment, let them serve only to shine a light on a deeper truth: that I am not alone, and that Canada’s justice system must confront its failures—especially in its treatment of vulnerable, racialized, and psychologically traumatized defendants.

To anyone reading this who still believes in justice: I ask you to hear me. I ask you to stand with me – not in pity, but in solidarity.

Sincerely,
Jude Thangarajah, Kingston, Ontario
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MEMORANDUM OF ARGUMENT

I. STATEMENT OF FACTS

The Applicant, Jude Thangarajah, is a Canadian Armed Forces veteran who pled guilty in 2017 to several charges arising from a domestic incident. He asserts that his plea was not voluntary, informed, or unequivocal due to his psychiatric condition, coercive jail conditions, and ineffective assistance of counsel. Following his sentencing, he remained in jail unaware of his right to appeal or the requirement to file a notice of appeal within 30 days. Subsequently, after his release, he operated under the mistaken belief that he was out of time to appeal, a misunderstanding affirmed by numerous lawyers. Only in April 2024 did he learn, through competent appellate counsel, of his right to seek an extension.

II. QUESTIONS IN ISSUE

1. Does the principle of finality in criminal proceedings unjustly override access to appellate review where the applicant has documented psychological trauma and received ineffective legal assistance?
2. What are the responsibilities of courts and counsel in ensuring that psychologically traumatized, under-represented or detained individuals understand and can exercise their right to appeal?
3. What is the legal threshold for a plea to be considered involuntary or uninformed under section 606 of the Criminal Code, and what safeguards are necessary when psychological injury or coercion are at play?

III. STATEMENT OF ARGUMENT

This case raises issues of public importance regarding the intersection of pre-trial detention, psychological injury, guilty pleas, and delayed access to appellate justice. Despite clear jurisprudence emphasizing that the interests of justice are paramount in motions to extend time (e.g., *R. v. Menear*), the Ontario Court of Appeal took a rigid approach. The Applicant's prolonged delay stemmed from his psychiatric condition (Complex PTSD involving moral injury), poor legal advice, and lack of awareness of his rights. These factors have consistently been recognized by courts as mitigating in procedural default contexts.

The Applicant's plea was equivocal—he objected to material facts read into the record, expressed confusion, and suffered under mental duress. The plea process contravened the requirements of section 606 of the Criminal Code. His sentencing was similarly flawed, as he was not shown the Victim Impact Statement beforehand and was unable to meaningfully respond to it in court.

This case further highlights systemic barriers for veterans and individuals with psychological trauma to access the appeal process. The Applicant made continuous efforts through human rights complaints, police reports, and ultimately this motion once he learned of the correct procedure. A refusal to consider his appeal on the merits, under these circumstances, risks denying justice to the most vulnerable.

IV. RELIEF SOUGHT

The Applicant respectfully seeks the following relief:

1. That the public be made aware of the injustice he has faced since 2017, including a guilty plea entered while he was suffering from psychological trauma and receiving poor legal representation.
2. That public voices and legal advocates call for his case to be heard on its merits, so that the justice system does not shut out those who are most vulnerable—especially veterans, people living with trauma, and those who were poorly represented by counsel.
3. That any other relief be granted as the justice system—or the public guided by conscience—finds fair and appropriate under the circumstances.

This is not only a legal request—it is a call for moral accountability. The Applicant's experience highlights what can happen when a person living with moral injury and complex PTSD is caught in a system that prioritizes procedure over people. He asks for your attention and your support to help bring truth and justice to light.

Sincerely,



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