



Sangam

ILANKAI TAMIL SANGAM, USA, INC.
ASSOCIATION OF TAMILS OF SRI LANKA IN THE USA

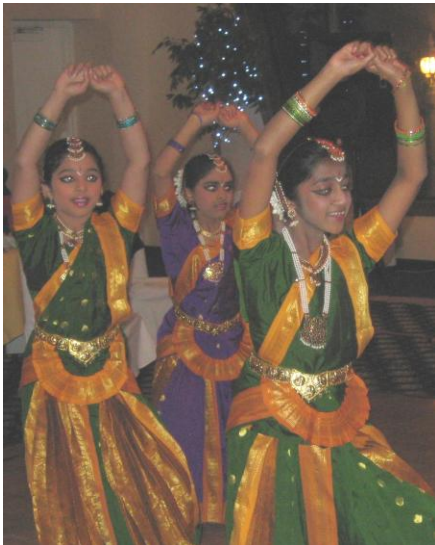
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 21, 2010

The Sangam celebrated the 'Thamizhar Sangamam' along with our 33rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Monmouth Junction, New Jersey on Friday and Saturday to renew the ties of our community and to present programs of interest to our members and well-wishers. The Sangam invited all the Tamil organizations in North America, such as the NJTS, USTPAC, TAG, TGTE, CTC, FETNA and WTO to participate in the Thamizhar Sangamam. The US Tamil Political Action Council, an advocacy and political action group, also held its AGM at the same venue.

The event was very successful with participation from many different Tamil organizations. There were a wide variety of programs such as lectures on Tamil literature, classical dance, speeches, informative sessions, panel discussions and a music program. Due to overwhelming response, the reserved capacity of the banquet hall was reached and the online registration was closed 5 days ahead of the event.

"The Sangam event was well-attended, interesting and smoothly run, and compares well to some of the best programs of previous years," said one long-time Sangam member. A more recent member noted that he particularly enjoyed the youth mixer on Friday where he reconnected with old friends and made new ones.



A prominent member of the Indian American community was given the year's honorary award for "service to the Tamil people," noting that other members of the Indian community have also contributed their time, energy and expertise on an exceptional scale. Tamil Nadu politician Vaiko of the MDMK gave an enthusiastically received keynote address to the assembled members and guests via video link, while TGTE PM V. Rudrakumaran gave a second keynote in person to wide applause. The UK Tamils Against Genocide spokesperson, Jan Jananaygam gave the first afternoon keynote on the general political ideology used to frame the Sri Lanka situation by the international community. During the second afternoon keynote, Canadian Tamil Congress officer Gary Anandasangaree discussed ways for us to join the international discussion more vigorously in United Nations bodies, etc., and exhorted us to self-reflection and self-criticism in how we deal with the wider world.

A wide variety of programs to please all tastes and to stimulate discussion followed each other in smooth succession throughout the two days, beginning with a youth mixer and a well-acclaimed new film done by a Tamil Canadian on Friday, followed on Saturday by, among many others, "Leading a Purposeful Life: the PuraNaaNuru and Tirukkural, etc.," a panel on crimes against humanity, a film on Muttukumaran who self-immolated in India in 2008 to bring attention to the coming tragedy for Tamils, a panel on humanitarian efforts on the

island, a presentation on their work by the World Tamil Organization, a light-hearted, yet competitive sari auction, singing, dance, light music, good food, good company and a general wonderful time.

The Thamizhar Sangamam was well-attended by Tamil Americans from all over the country, who came together to celebrate our community in all its multiple facets

Undoubtedly the success of the AGMs will be followed by many more in future years.

For more information, please email secretary@sangam.org .