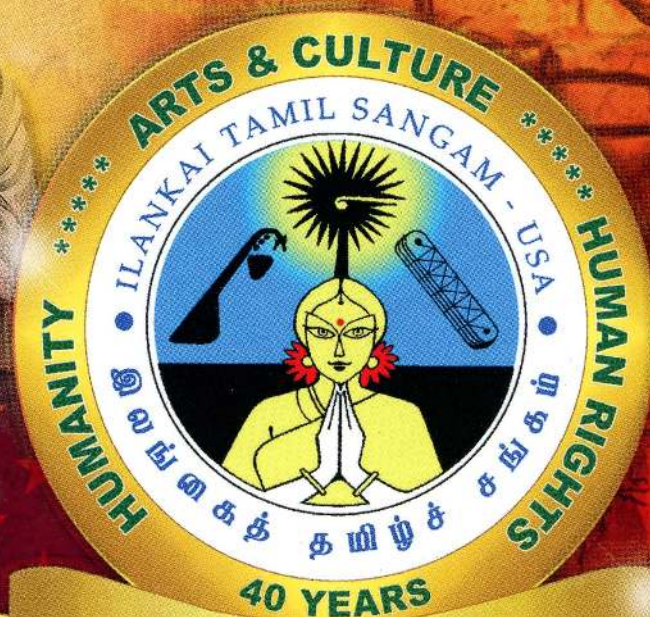


இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் அமெரிக்கா

ILANKAI TAMIL SANGAM USA



"மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு"  
"Ruby Jubilee Year"  
(1977 - 2017)

மாணிக்க விழா மலர்

Ruby Jubilee Souvenir

November 4<sup>th</sup> 2017



உடல் மண்ணிற்கு உயிர் தரும்பதற்கு, அமைதி உரக்கச் சொல்வோம் உலகிற்கு..



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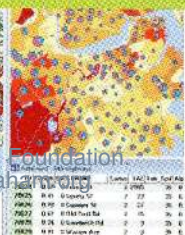
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“ This book is dedicated to all the men, women and children killed in Mullivaikkal and elsewhere in the Vanni in the final phase of the civil war in Sri Lanka”

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



**“The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here; while it can never forget what they did here.” – President Lincoln at his Gettysburg Address.**

**Dear Tamil Americans ;**

It is with great honor and pride we welcome you all for the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA and our Ruby Jubilee Celebrations. We are delighted to release this souvenir in marking our Ruby Anniversary.

Four decades ago, our organization was formed as Tamil Americans came together in a small town in New York in the aftermath of the vicious violence unleashed on the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka. Our founding principles were to promote Tamil culture in this nation, to protect the human rights of the Tamil speaking minority in ilankai and to provide humanitarian aid to them. In forty years, Sangam has achieved what any other organization could ever imagine to accomplish, spreading its activities in arts and culture, humanity and human rights.

Sangam has started Tamil schools, taught our history and language to our younger generation and hosted hundreds of cultural programs. We have aided to build hospitals, created scholarship funds to help graduates in Jaffna and Eastern Universities, assisted orphanages, war widows and executed numerous projects to assist the war effected Tamil Civilians. Sangam officials spoke against the human rights violations of our people at the United Nations Human rights councils, to State department offices, and congressional and senate offices. Time and again Sangam has mobilized Tamil Americans to support the aspirations of our people.

As we step into the fifth decade, we assure our members and the Tamil American community that Sangam will continue its efforts for a brighter future for our community here in the United States and for our people in Ilankai.

Long live the Ilankai Tamil Sangam and glory to the Tamil Language



**Sincerely**  
**Balan Kugapalan**  
President, Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA



## எமது இனிய தமிழ் மக்களே

இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் அமெரிக்காவின் மாணிக்க ஆண்டு விழாவிற்கு வருகை தந்து ஒருக்கும் உங்கள் அனைவரையும் ஒருகரம் கூப்பி வருக வருக என வரவேற்கிறோம்.

இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் தன்னுடைய மாணிக்க ஆண்டு விழாவில், நாற்பது ஆண்டுகளாக மனித நேயம், மனித உரிமைகள், மற்றும் கலை, கலாச்சாரத்தில் புரந்த நற்சேவைகளையும், அமெரிக்கா வாழ் இலங்கை தமிழ் சமூகம் மற்றும் ஈழம் வாழ் தமிழ் மக்களுக்கு ஆற்றிய கடமைகளையும் கூற பெருமை அடைகின்றது. 1977 ம் ஆண்டில் வன்முறைகளுக்கு உள்ளாக்கப்பட்டு ஒடுக்கப்பட்ட எமது மக்களுக்கு ஆதரவு வழங்கக் கூடிய கூட்டத்தத்தில் தொடங்கப்பட்ட எமது சங்கம், கடந்து வந்த நாற்பது ஆண்டு கால வரலாற்று பாதையை இந்த மலரில் சுருக்கமாக பதிவுசெய்து உள்ளோம்.

கடந்த நான்கு தசாப்தங்களாக எங்களுடைய அமைப்பின் வளர்ச்சிக்காகவும், எங்களுடைய மக்களின் உயர்விற்காகவும் அயராது உழைத்த நிர்வாகிகள், உறுப்பினர்கள், தொண்டர்கள் அனைவருக்கும் எங்களுடைய மனமார்ந்த பாராட்டுகளையும் நன்றிகளையும் தெரிவித்து கொள்கிறோம். மாணிக்க ஆண்டு விழா கண்ட இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் அமெரிக்கா, பொன்விழா கண்டு நூற்றாண்டு விழாகாண உங்கள் ஆதரவை வேண்டுகிறோம்.

வாழ்க இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம், வளர்க தமிழ் மொழி

என்றும் அன்புடன்

சா. குகபாலன்

தலைவர், இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் அமெரிக்கா

## Message from the Editors



In this Souvenir, we have taken on the great task of documenting the history of the Sangam. While not complete by any means, this is a sketch of the work that has been done in the name of our great association. We have documented our history for future generations to see what has come before and for those involved to reflect on the great work that they have accomplished.

Tamils have been in the United States for centuries, but a wave of professionals began arriving in the 1960s when it became clear that there was a bleak future for Tamils in Sri Lanka. It took until 1977, however, for these Tamils to form their own organization to teach their children the wonders of our Tamil language and culture, to meet friends in a warm environment, to mobilize as Tamil Americans and to work on issues for the Tamil community in Sri Lanka.

This booklet is effort at an historical documentation, and is not a judgment from the editors on the content.

Thanks to all those who contributed to this effort by providing historical information and pictures for such a long span of years. We would also like to thank those who have written essays on issues of interest to the Sangam community.

Special thanks to the Book Committee consisting of Dr. Sri Sri-Jayantha, Mr. Sasikaran Sellathurai and other editors for their dedication.

We would like to thank Thiru. Jay K Jayanthan, Executive Chairman, PRIME AE Group Inc. for pledging to cover the cost of this booklet at the outset. Without his generosity, this book would not have come to reality.

Sincerely,

**Mrs. Avis Sri-Jayantha**

**Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

(Editors of the Ruby Jubilee Booklet)



To The Members of The Ilankai Tamil Sangam

I send my heartiest congratulations and good wishes to all of you on the occasion of your Ruby Jubilee Year.

It is indeed a proud achievement ,that for forty years, successive members have, in the true spirit of volunteerism and dedication, built and nurtured the Sangam; and kept alive the system of values and culture, for the benefit of the community. The foundations that you have sustained will undoubtedly carry future generations.

In a deeply fractured world where human rights are not respected, you are a role model for the development of harmonious societies.

My very best wishes to you on this joyous celebration.

**Navanethem Pillay** ( Judge/Dr./Mrs)

Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

September 02, 2017

Durban, South Africa.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Pillay'.



## Office of the Prime Minister Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam

நாடு கடந்த தமிழீழ அரசாங்கம்  
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10-10-2017

இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கத்தின் 40 வது ஆண்டு விழாவிற்கு வாழ்த்துச் செய்தி வழங்குவதையிட்டு நான் மட்டற்ற மகிழ்ச்சி அடைகிறேன். கடந்த ஆண்டு மே மாதத்தின்போது வரலாற்று முக்கியத்துவம் வாய்ந்த வட்டுக்கோட்டை தீர்மானத்தின் 40 வது ஆண்டு நிறைவினை நாம் எல்லோரும் நியூயார்க் நகரத்தில் ஒன்றுகூடி நினைவு கொண்டதையும் இவ்விடத்தில் பதிவு செய்து கொள்ள விரும்புகிறேன். தமிழீழம் என்ற எமது தாயக தேசத்தினை ம் சுதந்திரமும் இறைமையும் கொண்ட தனிநாடாக நிறுவுவதற்கெனப் போராடுவோம் என்ற கோரிக்கையுடன் நிறுவப்பட்ட வட்டுக்கோட்டைத் தீர்மானத்தைத் தொடர்ந்து தாயகத்திலும், புலத்திலும் ஈழத் தமிழ் மக்களால் அடிப்படை மனித உரிமைகளை வென்றெடுப்பதற்காக முன்னெடுக்கப்பட்ட நடவடிக்கைகளில் ஒன்றானதும், முக்கியமானதும் இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கத்தின் உருவாக்கமாகும்.

இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் உருவாக்கப்பட்ட காலத்திலிருந்து இன்றுவரை தாயகத்திலும், புலத்திலும் மனித உரிமைகளுக்காக குரல் கொடுத்தது மட்டுமின்றி அதற்காக சட்டரீதியாகவும் போராடி வந்துள்ளது. 1997 ஆம் ஆண்டு அமெரிக்காவில் தமிழீழ விடுதலைப் புலிகளுக்கு பொருண்மிய ஆதரவு வழங்குவது தடை செய்யப்பட்டிருந்தபோது இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் அமெரிக்காவிலுள்ள மற்றைய தமிழ் சங்கங்களுடன் இணைந்து அமெரிக்க உச்ச நீதிமன்றம் வரை சென்று அத்தடை அமெரிக்காவின் அரசியலமைப்புச் சட்டத்தில் உறுதி செய்யப்பட்ட பேச்சு சுதந்திரம் மற்றும் ஒன்று கூடும் சுதந்திரத்திற்கு முரணானது என வாதிட்டது. அச் சட்டப் போராட்டம் இன்று தமிழீழம் கோருவதற்கு அமெரிக்காவில் எவ்வித தடையும் இல்லை என்ற நிலைப்பாட்டை வெளிப்படுத்தி உறுதிப்படுத்தியது.

இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம், அமெரிக்காவிலுள்ள அமைப்புகள் மட்டுமன்றி புலத்திலுள்ள தமிழ் அமைப்புகள் யாவும் சந்திப்பதற்கும் கருத்துகள் பரிமாறுவதற்குமான அரங்கத்தை அமைத்துக் கொடுத்து வந்திருக்கின்றது. இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் நடத்திவந்துள்ள இணைய தளம் தாயகத்திலும்



புலம்பெயர் நாடுகளிலுமுள்ள முக்கிய வெகுஜன ஆர்வலர்களாலும் ஆய்வாளர்களாலும் வாசிக்கப்படும் கருத்துக் களஞ்சியமாக இன்றும் திகழ்கின்றது.

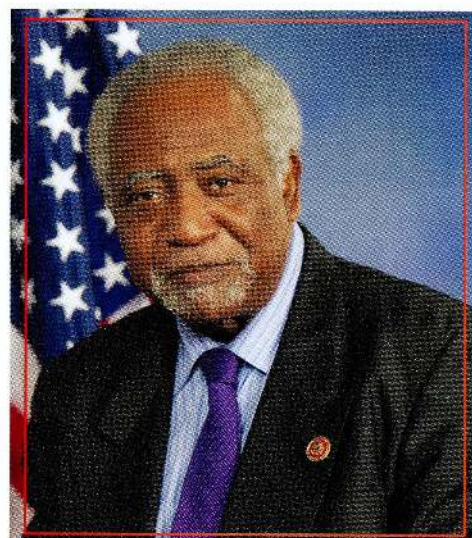
இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் தனது இடையறாத சமூக பொருண்மிய அரசியல் மற்றும் பண்பாட்டுத் தளங்களிலான பணிகளை இன்னும் வீச்சுடன் தொடர்ந்து தனது 50 வது ஆண்டு நிறைவை அடையும்போது ஈழத் தமிழரின் மனித உரிமைப் போராட்டங்களிலும் புலம்பெயர்ந்து வாழும் ஈழத் தமிழ் சமூகதின் எழுச்சியிலும் தொடர்ந்தும் ஒரு காத்திரமான வலுமிக்க சக்தியாக விளங்கவேண்டுமென வாழ்த்துகிறேன்.

தமிழரின் தாகம் தமிழீழத் தாயகம்.

வி. இராஜேசன்

விசுவநாதன் ருத்ரகுமாரன்





**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

October 3, 2017

Dear Sangam members:

On behalf of the Congressional Caucus on Ethnic and Religious Freedom in Sri Lanka, we congratulate the Ilankai Tamil Sangam, the Association of Sri Lankan Tamils in the U.S.A. on your 40th anniversary. Maintaining a vigorous and active organization over such a span of years is indeed an accomplishment. It is a credit to the hard work and dedication of all those who have volunteered their time, effort and funds to providing a forum for Tamil cultural expression, socializing with friends, raising funds for scholarships, development projects and refugee relief, and bringing issues of importance to Tamils to the attention of other Americans.

We know that there will remain a need for such an association of Tamil Americans in the future, as issues both here in the United States and in Sri Lanka call for your attention, and we wish you well in the coming years.

Sincerely,

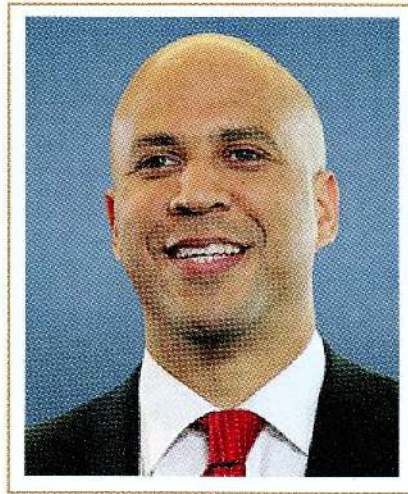
Handwritten signature of Bill Johnson in blue ink.

Rep. Bill Johnson  
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Danny K. Davis in blue ink.

Rep. Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress

Co-Chairs  
Congressional Caucus on Ethnic & Religious Freedom in Sri Lanka



CORY A. BOOKER  
NEW JERSEY



UNITED STATES SENATE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20510

November 4, 2017

Ilankai Tamil Sangam, USA  
P.O. Box 46  
Maryknoll, New York 10545

Dear Friends,

It is a pleasure to send my warmest greetings as you gather for your 40<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and Ruby Jubilee Celebrations.

Since 1977, Ilankai Tamil Sangam, USA has worked to uphold the social and cultural bonds of the Tamil people in the United States. I am grateful to Ilankai Tamil Sangam, USA for serving as a pillar of cultural and spiritual enrichment for countless individuals in our region through your services and events. Over the past four decades, your contributions to communities across New Jersey have deepened our state's diverse cultural heritage.

Again, congratulations, and best wishes for a memorable event.

Best Wishes,

Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



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September 1, 2017

Ilankai Tamil Sangam  
P.O. Box 46  
Maryknoll, NY 10545

Dear Friends,

It is a great pleasure to congratulate the Ilankai Tamil Sangam on the occasion of its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since its inception in 1977, the Ilankai Tamil Sangam has shared its rich Tamil culture with fellow Americans. Tamil American organizations across the country have drawn inspiration from its success and will continue to do so in the future.

I want to thank Ilankai Tamil Sangam for actively participating in domestic and international conversations, bringing the issues of Tamil-Americans and Sri Lankans to the forefront of American thought and further strengthening our commitment to addressing human rights issues. Countless lives have been touched by your efforts, and all who contribute to the success of Ilankai Tamil Sangam can take pride in that. I hope that we can all continue to strengthen America, drawing not only from our common ideals, but from our diversity as well.

Thank you again for all that you do, and I hope for the great success of your 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

Warm regards,

Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



LEONARD LANCE  
SEVENTH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

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FAX: 908-788-2869

November 4, 2017

Hankai Tamil Sangam, USA  
P.O. Box 46  
Maryknoll, New York 10545

Dear Friends,

It is my sincere pleasure to send you my congratulations and good wishes to all of you on the occasion of your Ruby Jubilee Year.

It is indeed a proud achievement, that for forty years, successive members have, in the true spirit of volunteerism and dedication, built and nurtured the Sangam; and kept alive the system of values and culture, for the benefit of the community. The foundations that you have built will foster veneration in future generations, thankful to be the beneficiaries of such a proud heritage.

My very best wishes to you on this joyous celebration.

Best Wishes,

Congressman Leonard Lance  
United States Congressman



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

**Gary Anandasangaree**

Member of Parliament  
Scarborough—Rouge Park



November 2017

### **Greetings from Gary Anandasangaree**

#### **Member of Parliament for Scarborough-Rouge Park, Toronto, Canada**

It is my pleasure to extend my greetings to the members of the Ilankai Tamil Sangam as you celebrate your 40<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting.

The Ilankai Tamil Sangam has been instrumental in highlighting and promoting Tamil Arts and Culture, contributions of Tamil-Americans and advocating against the human rights violations and genocide faced by Tamils on the island of Sri Lanka. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to work closely with many of you and the pleasure of attending previous Annual General Meetings, which have hosted international leaders such as Her Excellency Navi Pillay.

You have inspired generations of leaders to advocate on behalf of Tamils in the United States and around the world. Just last year, the US elected Congressman Raja Krishnamoorti and Senator Kamala Harris, the first Tamil Congressman and Senator respectfully. These achievements speak to the enormous influence of the Tamil-American diaspora. You have been the beacon for upholding our language, culture and tradition while encouraging civic participation in the political process.

I am deeply touched by your continuous support and encouragement in my journey as a Tamil-Canadian Parliamentarian. While we may be separated by an international border, we are eternally bound by the love of our language, and our march together for the betterment of the community in North America and around the world.

Yours very truly,

Gary Anandasangaree  
*Member of Parliament*  
*Scarborough-Rouge Park*



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# உலகத் தமிழ்ப் பண்பாட்டு இயக்கம்

## INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT FOR TAMIL CULTURE

Non-Profit, Non-Political, Non-Religious, Charitable, Worldwide Registered, Tamil Cultural Organization - Est. in 1974.

Head Office: Thanaludchumy Place, Maruthanagar, Karachchi, Kilinochchi, Sri Lanka

Chairman trustee Board Office: Siruppiddy, Neervely, Jaffna, Sri Lanka

Tel: (94) 21-205-8839 / (USA) 1 609-964-9954 Email: velpilai@hotmail.com



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#### IMTC - News Magazine

IMTC - World Tamil Voice

### எமது பாராட்டும் வாழ்த்தும்

அமெரிக்கா இலங்கைத் தமிழ் சங்கம்  
அமெரிக்காவில் இயங்குகின்ற இலங்கைத்  
தமிழ் சங்கத்தின் 40வது ஆண்டுகள்  
பூர்த்தியின் நிறைவு விழாவும்  
கொண்டாட்டமும் சிறப்புடன் நடைபெற  
எங்கள் வாழ்த்துக்களும் பாராட்டும்  
உரித்தாகுக !

அமெரிக்கா கண்டத்தில் அதுகும் அமெரிக்க  
நாட்டில் ஒரு தமிழ் சங்கம், இலங்கைத்  
தமிழரின் பெயரில் இயங்குகின்றது 40  
வருடங்களாக, என்றால் மெச்சாமல்  
இருக்கமுடியாது.

வட இந்தியாவில், சிந்து வெளி நாகரிகமாக  
வாழ்ந்த தமிழர் தென் திசையில் உள்ள தமிழ்  
நாட்டிலும், குமரி கண்டத்தின்  
முனைப்பாகமாக உள்ள இலங்கை (ஈழ  
நாடு)யிலும் ஆதி குடிகளாக வாழ்ந்து  
சரித்திரம் படைத்துள்ளனர்.

இவ்வாதிக்குடி இலங்கைத் தமிழர்கள் பல  
நாடுகளிலும் குடிபெயர்ந்து வாழ்கின்றனர்.  
இவ்வாதிக்குடித் தமிழரின் பெயரில் ஒரு  
தமிழ் சங்கம் அமைத்து அதை 40 வருடமாக,  
தமிழ், தமிழ்க் கல்வி, தமிழ் கலை, தமிழ்

பண்பாடு, தமிழ் கலாச்சாரம், இன்னும் பல  
தொண்டு சேவைகளை நடத்திவரும்  
சங்கத்திற்கு நன்றியை தெரிவிக்கின்றோம்.

உலகத் தமிழ் பண்பாட்டு இயக்கம், 1964ல்  
தமிழ் ஆராய்ச்சியாக தொடங்கி 1974ல்  
பண்பாட்டு இயக்கமாக இலங்கையின்  
தமிழ் தலை நகரமாகிய யாழ்ப்பாணத்தில்  
தொடங்கி, 64 நாடுகளில் கிளைகள்  
அமைத்து நடை முறையில் இயங்கி  
வருகின்றது.

உங்கள் சேவையும் தொண்டும் மேலும்  
மேலும் வளர எங்கள் ஆசிகளும்,  
வாழ்த்துக்களும்.

நன்றி  
வணக்கம்

வேல் வேலுப்பிள்ளை

தலைவர்

அறவாரியம்

உலகத் தமிழ் பண்பாட்டு இயக்கம்

யாழ்ப்பாணம்

ஈழம்



# உலகத் தமிழ் அமைப்பு

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(A Non-Profit Organization registered in USA, Established 1991 )

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18-செப்.-2017

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டென்னசி

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நியூ செர்சி

கடந்த நாற்பது ஆண்டுகளாக நடைபெற்றுவரும் இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச் சங்க விழா, தொடர்ந்து நூற்றாண்டுகளைக் கடந்து நடைபெற வேண்டுமென உலகத் தமிழ் அமைப்பு தனது பாராட்டுதலையும் நல்வாழ்த்தையும் தெரிவித்துக்கொள்கிறது. மாபெரும் இனப்படுகொலைக்கு ஆட்பட்டத் தமிழினத்தின் மீட்சிக்கும் விடுதலைக்கும் இவ்விழா உறுதுணையாக இருக்கும் என்பதை உறுதியாக நம்புகிறோம். அமெரிக்கா உள்ளிட்டப் பல மேற்குலக நாடுகளில் ஏதிலிகளாக வந்து குடியேறிய அல்லது தொழில் சார்ந்து குடியேறிய ஈழத் தமிழர்களும், தமிழ் நாட்டுத் தமிழர்களும் ஒருங்கிணைந்து தாயகத்தில் வாழும் தமிழர்களின் விடுதலைக்கு உற்ற துணையாய் இருக்க வேண்டியது காலத்தின் கடமை. அதற்கான கருத்துப் பரிமாற்றமும், திட்டமிடலும், அமைப்புகளின் ஒற்றுமையும் அடிப்படைத் தேவை.

புலம்பெயர்ந்த தமிழர்களிடத்தில் இருக்கும் மிகவும் பழமையான அமைப்புகளில் ஒன்றான இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச் சங்கம், தமிழ்மொழி தமிழின நல்வாழ்வுக்கும் விடுதலைக்கும் தேவையான நடவடிக்கைகளை மேற்கொள்வது இன்றியமைதாதது. புலம்பெயர்ந்தும் தாயகத்திலும் (தமிழீழத்திலும், தமிழ்நாட்டிலும்) வாழும் அரசியலாளர்களையும், அறிஞர்களையும் ஊக்குவித்து, அனைத்து அமைப்புகளுக்கும்மிடையே ஒற்றுமையை உருவாக்கும் ஒரு பாலமாக இருக்க வேண்டுகிறோம். மொழிவிடுதலையும், இனவிடுதலையும் ஒன்றோடொன்று பின்னிப்பிணைந்தது, இவையிரண்டையும் விருப்பு வெறுப்பைக் கடந்து தொய்வுவின்றி இலக்கை நோக்கிப் பயணிக்க வைப்பதில், அனைவரும் முனைப்பாக இருக்க வேண்டும்.

1991 ஆம் ஆண்டு உலகத் தமிழ் அமைப்பு தொடங்கப்பட்டது முதல் உலகளாவிய தமிழர்களின் அடிப்படை உரிமைகள், நீதி மற்றும் நலன்களைப் பாதுகாப்பது, முன்னெடுப்பது, மீட்டெடுப்பது ஆகியவற்றின் பொருட்டு ஒரு சிந்தனைத் தளமாகச் செயற்படுவதே உலகத் தமிழ் அமைப்பின் தலையாயக் குறிக்கோள் ஆகும். தமிழர்களின் அரசியல் அதிகார மாண்பு, குமுகாய மேம்பாடு மற்றும் பண்பாட்டுத் தெளிவு ஆகியவற்றுக்காக உலகத் தமிழ் அமைப்பு தொடர்ந்து அயராது உழைக்கிறது.



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நியூ செர்சி

தமிழர்கள் தங்களுடைய தாயக மண்ணில் பட்டயமாகப் பெற்று இருக்கவேண்டிய சம உரிமைகள் மற்றும் சமநீதி பற்றிய விழிப்புணர்வை தமிழர்கள் இடையிலும் ஏனைய மக்கள் இடையிலும் வளர்த்தல்; உலகின் எப்பாகத்தில் வாழும் தமிழர்கள் எப்பொழுது துன்புற்றாலும் எவ்வகையில் துன்புற்றாலும் சட்டத்துக்கு உட்பட்டு எல்லா உற்றுழி உதவியும் உறுபொருளும் முன் நின்று வழங்குதல்; தமிழர்களுக்கும் உலகின் ஏனைய நாட்டின மக்களுக்கும் இடையில் ஒத்த புரிந்துணர்வை வளர்த்தலும் பேணுதலும்; நேர்மையான, சம நிலையான தீர்வை அடைவதற்காக விழிப்புடன் தமிழர்களின் அரசியல் சிக்கல்களைத் தொடக்கக் கட்டங்களிலேயே உலக அரங்கத்துக்குக் கொண்டுவருதல் ஆகிய பணிகளைத் தொடர்ந்து உலகத் தமிழ் அமைப்பு செய்யும்.

ஒவ்வொரு ஆண்டும் உலகத் தமிழ் அமைப்பும் இவ்விழாவில் பங்கு பெறுவதில் பெருமகிழ்ச்சி கொள்கிறது. இவ்விழாவில் கலந்துகொள்ளும் அனைத்துத் தமிழ் உறவுகளுக்கும், ஈழத்து அரசியல் தலைவர்களுக்கும் எமது நல்வாழ்த்தைத் தெரிவித்துக்கொள்கிறோம்.

**எங்கள் வாழ்வும் எங்கள் வளமும்  
மங்காத தமிழென்று சங்கே முழங்கு !  
எங்கள் பகைவர் எங்கோ மறைந்தார்  
இங்குள்ள தமிழர்கள் ஒன்றாதல் கண்டே !**

அன்புடன்,  
வை. க. தேவ்  
முனைவர் வை. க. தேவ்  
தலைவர், உலகத் தமிழ் அமைப்பு



## வட அமெரிக்கத் தமிழ்ச்சங்கப் பேரவை

Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America  
(A Registered Non-profit and Tax-exempt Organization, EIN# 36-3759132)  
1803 Grayscroft Dr, Waxhaw NC 28173  
www.fetna.org

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Vice-President

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திருமதி. இராமாணி செயபாலன்  
Mrs. Ramamani Jayabalan  
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Bay Area Tamil Manram  
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Metroplex Tamil Sangam  
Mid-South Tamil Sangam  
Minnesota Tamil Sangam  
New England Tamil Sangam  
New Jersey Tamil Arts and Cultural Society  
New Jersey Tamil Sangam  
NewYork Tamil sangam  
NewYork Albany Tamil Sangam  
Oklahoma City Tamil Association  
Oklahoma Tamil Sangam  
Panai Nilam Tamil Sangam  
Richmond Tamil Sangam  
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San Antonio Tamil Sangam  
Seattle Tamil Sangam  
South Florida Tamil Sangam  
South Jersey Tamil Association  
Tamil Association of Greater Delaware valley  
Tamil Center of America  
Tamil Makkal Mandram, Inc  
Tamil Sangam of Michigan  
Tamil Sangam of Carolina Inc  
Tamil Sangam of Greater Washington  
Tamil Sangam of Missouri  
Tennessee Tamil Sangam  
Twin Cities Tamil Association  
Utah Tamil Sangam  
Wisconsin Tamil Sangam

09/19/17

சங்கமம் விழா 2017 – வாழ்த்து மடல்!!!

தமிழர் சங்கம் என்று அழைக்கப்படும் இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச்சங்கத்தின் 40-ஆம் ஆண்டு விழாவினை, மாணிக்க விழாவாக, நவம்பர் திங்கள் நியூசெர்சி மாநிலத்தில் நடைபெறுவது அறிந்து, வட அமெரிக்கத் தமிழ்ச்சங்கப் பேரவை பேருவகை கொள்கிறது.

ஒவ்வொரு ஆண்டும், பல்வேறு தமிழ் அமைப்புகள், சங்கமம் நிகழ்வில் கலந்து கொண்டு விழாவை சிறப்புடன் நடத்துவது நாம் அறிந்ததே.

ஈழத்தமிழர்களும், தமிழ்நாட்டு உணர்வாளர்களும் சங்கமிக்கும் இவ்விழாவானது, மொழி, கலை இலக்கியம் அரசியல் பண்பாடு என்று அனைத்துக் கூறுகளையும் உள்ளடக்கி நடக்கும் ஓர் தமிழர்த் திருநாள் எனில் அது மிகையாகா. தம் மண்ணையும், மக்களையும் விட்டுப் பிரிக்கப்பட்டு வாழும் ஈழத்தமிழர்கள், தத்தம் தமிழ் உறவுகளுடன் ஒன்றுகூடி கொண்டாடும் சங்கமம் விழாவை வாழ்த்துவதில் பேரவை பெருமையடைகிறது.

குறிப்பாக, இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச்சங்கத்தின் பணிகளான, கல்விப் பணியும், தாயகத்தில் வாடும் மக்களுக்குச் செய்து வரும் உதவிகளும் போற்றத்தக்கது. மேலும், ஈழ மக்களுக்கு அரசியல் தீர்வு கிடைக்க, ஏனைய தமிழ் அமைப்புகளுடன் இணைந்து செயலாற்றி வருவது நாம் அறிந்ததே. இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச்சங்கம் தமிழர் நல்வாழ்விற்காக முன்னின்று, எடுத்து நடத்தும் செயற்பாடுகள் அனைத்தும் வெற்றி அடைய பேரவையின் வாழ்த்துகள் உரித்தாகுக.

இத்தருணத்தில் பாவலரேறு பெருஞ்சித்திரனாரின் கூற்றான,

"என்மொழி, என்னினம், என்னாடு நலிகையில்  
எதனையும் பெரிதென எண்ண மாட்டேன் - வேறு  
எவரையும் புகழ்ந்துரை சொல்ல மாட்டேன்! - வரும்  
புன்மொழி, பழியுரை, துன்பங்கள் யாவையும்  
பொருட்டென மதித்துளம் கொள்ள மாட்டேன்! - இந்த(ப்)  
பூட்கையில் ஓரடி தள்ள மாட்டேன்!

என்று தமிழ்மொழியின் வளர்ச்சியைவிட, தனக்கெனத் தனியான ஒரு வளர்ச்சி இல்லை என்ற வைரவரிகளை இங்கு நினைவு கூறல் பொருத்தமன்றோ! ஆகவே, நாம், நம் இனம் மற்றும் மொழிக்காக ஒருங்கிணைந்து கொண்டாற்றுவோம்!!! வாரீர் தமிழின உணர்வுகளே!!!

அன்புடன்,

திருமதி செந்தாமரை பிரபாகரன்

தலைவர், வட அமெரிக்கத் தமிழ்ச்சங்கப் பேரவை.



**New Opportunities for Wounded, Widowed and Orphans of War**  
Email: [info@nowwow-us.org](mailto:info@nowwow-us.org) Web: <http://www.nowwow.org/>

---

**September 1, 2017**

Dear President of ITS,

On behalf of the board of directors of NOW-WOW, congratulations for completing 40 years of success. It is certainly a great accomplishment. The Sangam has always been on the top of the list of well respected Tamil diaspora associations serving the Tamil community, both in the USA and back home.

With your commitment, unselfish services and sincerity you have made positive impacts to the lives of Tamils. Your impressive accomplishments over the 40 years were important, relevant and tailored to the Tamil community's needs of the time, specifically the initiatives that Sangam took towards addressing the humanitarian issues during and after the civil war of Sri Lanka. We are honored to be part of some of those initiatives.

NOW-WOW, as a 501c3 charitable organization committed to empower the poverty stricken Tamils in North and East of Sri Lanka, is always thankful to the generous support we continue to receive from the Sangam. We wish you all the success for many more years to come.

Sincerely,

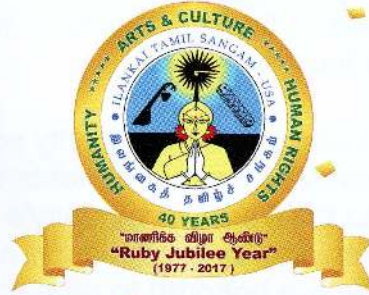
Chris James,  
Secretary and Board Member of NOW-WOW  
P.O. Box 1014, Winchester, MA 01890, USA  
Phone: +1 (617) 286 4794  
Email: [info@nowwow-us.org](mailto:info@nowwow-us.org)



USA Federal EIN: 45-3574608

CONGRATULATIONS ON

‘மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு’  
“Ruby Jubilee Year”



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'OUR GREATEST GLORY IS NOT IN NEVER FALLING,  
BUT IN RISING EVERY TIME WE FALL' – NELSON MANDELA



‘மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு’  
“Ruby Jubilee Year”

*Congratulations on a remarkable  
journey of forty years. With best wishes*

**MR. AIYATHURAI JEYAKUMAR &  
DR. MRS. ANUSUYA JEYAKUMAR**

New Jersey

# Windsor Medical Center, PA

339 Princeton-Hightstown Road, Building B  
East Windsor, NJ 08512

## Rajaram Kandasamy, M.D.

Internal Medicine Practice  
Specialist in Kidney Disorders  
and Hypertension



## Sri Sujantha Rajaram, M.D., M.P.H.

(FCCP, FACP)

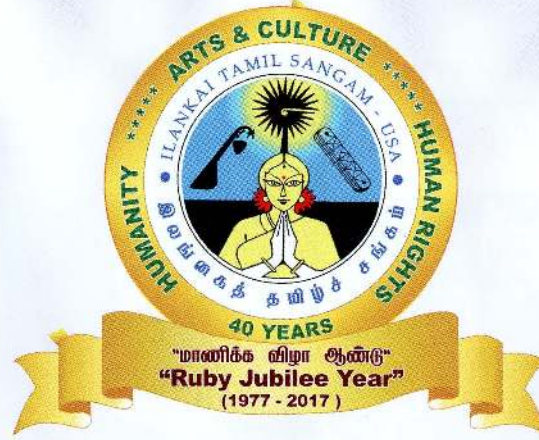
Specialist in Sleep Disorders  
Internal Medicine and Critical Care

Associate Professor of Medicine



**Tel: 609-443-3900**

*Congratulations to Ilankai Tamil Sangam*



*‘மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு’*  
*“Ruby Jubilee Year”*

*On your Ruby Jubilee Anniversary*

**DR. THAVENDRA RAJAH &  
DR. MRS. VASANTHY RAJAH**

Ohio

# SANGAM & YOU

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On Twitter - [@sangamUSA](https://twitter.com/sangamUSA)



Google Groups  
Ilangai Tamil Sangam, Tamils

# அன்றாடம் - இன்றாடம்



**SANGAM OFFICIALS AT 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Second row from left :** Dr. K. Jegathesan, Mr. J.M. Rajaratnam, Dr. A. Balasundaram,  
Dr. T. Vijayanathan, Dr.S.Nagendra, Mr.Balendran, Dr.I,Ananthasabathy,  
Mrs.Dr. Pathmini Panchacharm

**First row from left :** Dr. K. Iswara, Dr. Edward Benedict, Mr. D.S. Ambalavanar,  
Dr. T. Sivanandarjah, Mr.S.E. Haran

# அன்றாடம் - இன்றாடம்



## SANGAM OFFICIALS OF THE RUBY ANNIVERSARY YEAR

**Standing from left :** Mr. A. Rajendra (Treasurer), Mr. B. Balasingam (Asst. Treasurer),  
Mr. Sasi Sellathurai (Asst. Secretary), Mr. A. Jeyakumar (Committee member),  
Dr. R. Kandasamy (Committee member)

**Seater from left :** Mrs. Dr. S. Rajaram (Public Relations), Mr. T. Nagarajah (Secretary),  
Mr. B. Kugapalan (President), Mr. N. Rajendra (Vice President),  
Mrs. K. Vaakaran (Public Relations)

# **Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA**

**Est.1977**

**(An Association of Tamils in the USA)**

## **Mission Statement**

To provide a meeting ground for Tamils and Tamil speaking people from Ilankai resident in the United States of America.

To promote & study the appreciation of Tamil culture, language and music among the Tamils resident in the USA

To foster the growth and development of art, culture, economy, human rights and general welfare of Tamils and Tamil speaking people resident in Ilankai.

To publicize facts about the condition and welfare of the Tamil speaking people of Ilankai.



# Sangam Story



**T**he year was 1977, The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) an alliance representing Tamil parties in Sri Lanka sweeps the election in Northern Sri Lanka and becomes the main opposition party in Sri Lanka. The election victory takes place less than year after the TULF adopted the historic “Vaddukoddai Resolution” calling for the restoration and reconstitution of the Free, Sovereign and Secular State of Tamil Eelam based on the right of self-determination inherent to every nation. With the TULF winning the election on the promises of a separate state for Tamils, The Sri Lankan Government unleashes the most ruthless ethnic program to that date. Tamil civilians, along with their homes, businesses and religious establishments are attacked and burned down throughout the country. India expressed concern but no protection given to Tamils.

As the violence was unleashed the Tamil Americans are restless and become concerned for their people back home and search for ways to act in solidarity. With the lack of a wider network or political power, they huddle in homes all around the United States in small groups. A particular group that met in a private home in Nanuet, New York takes the initiative to bring the Tamil Americans together to create a nationwide network to work towards protecting the freedom and safety of Tamils in Sri Lanka and organize a larger meeting at a near by public school in New York. In October of 1977, Tamil Americans from all over the country meet in Nanuet, New York and announced that a Tamil American Organization called ‘Ilankai Tamil Sangam America’ is being created to protect the human rights of the Tamil speaking minority in Ilankai, to provide humanitarian aid to them and to promote Tamil language and culture in the U.S. At that team meeting a president, secretary, treasurer and a committee were elected. In the following months a constitution was prepared and Sangam was registered as a charitable organization in the state of New Jersey. That was the beginning of four decades of relentless effort and our historic journey to serve Tamil Americans and Tamils in Ilankai.

**Nanuet, New York**



**October 1977**

# *Ilankai Tamil Sangam, USA*

## PAST OFFICE BEARERS

1977

President : Mr. D.S.Ambalavanar  
Secretary : Dr. Edward Benedict

1978

President : Mr. D.S.Ambalavanar  
Secretary : Dr. Edward Benedict

1979

President : Dr. K. Arulanantham  
Secretary : Dr. Edward Benedict

1980

President : Dr. Edward Benedict  
Secretary : Dr.K. Iswara

1981

President : Dr. A. Balasundaram  
Secretary : Dr. T. Sivanandarajah

1982

President : Dr. K. Jegathesan  
Secretary : Dr. I. Anadasabapathy

1983

President : Dr. A. Balasundaram  
Secretary : Dr.M. Ganeshanathan

1984

President : Dr. K. Iswara  
Secretary : Dr. R.K. Sriskandarajah

1985

President : Dr. S.Nagendra  
Secretary : Mr. S.E.Haran

1986

President : Dr. S.Nagendra  
Secretary : Mr. S.E.Haran

1987

President : Dr. I. Anadasabapathy  
Secretary : Dr. N. Jeyalingam

1988

President : Dr. I. Anadasabapathy  
Secretary : Dr. N. Jeyalingam

1989

President : Mr. S.E.Haran  
Secretary : Dr. N. Jeyalingam

1990

President : Mr. J.M.Rajaratnam  
Secretary : Dr. K. Jegathesan

1991

President : Mr. J.M.Rajaratnam  
Secretary : Mr. S. Selvachandran

1992

President : Mr. Wakely Paul  
Secretary : Mr. P. SriHaran

1993

President : Mr. Wakely Paul  
Secretary : Dr. F. A. Christopher

1994

President : Dr. N. Jeyalingam  
Secretary : Mr. V.T. Alaganar

1995

President : Dr. N. Jeyalingam  
Secretary : Mr. V.T. Alaganar

1996

President : Dr. N. Jeyalingam  
Secretary : Mr. V.T. Alaganar

# Ilankai Tamil Sangam, USA

## PAST OFFICE BEARERS

1997

President : Dr.M.Ganesh  
Secretary : Dr. M. Sri Jayantha

1998

President : Dr.M.Ganesh  
Secretary : Dr. M. Sri Jayantha

1999

President : Dr. F.A Christopher  
Secretary : Dr. M. Sri Jayantha

2000

President : Dr. F.A Christopher  
Secretary : Dr. M. Sri Jayantha

2001

President : Dr. T. Sivanandarajah  
Secretary : Dr. M. Sri Jayantha

2002

President : Dr. T. Sivanandarajah  
Secretary : Mr. T. Pathmakumar

2003

President : Mr. P. Chandranathan  
Secretary : Mr. T. Pathmakumar

2004

President : Mr. P.Chandranathan  
Secretary : Mr. T. Vaseeharan

2005

President : Mr. P. SriHaran  
Secretary : Mr. T. Vaseeharan

2006

President : Mr. P. SriHaran  
Secretary : Dr. T. Manivannan



2007

President : Mr. P. SriHaran  
Secretary : Dr. T. Manivannan

2008

President : Dr. T. Manivannan  
Secretary : Mr. A. Rajadeva

2009

President : Dr. T. Manivannan  
Secretary : Mr. A. Rajadeva

2010

President : Mr. A. Rajadeva  
Secretary : Mr. B. Kugapalan

2011

President : Mr. A. Rajadeva  
Secretary : Mr. B. Kugapalan

2012

President : Dr. N. Selliah  
Secretary : Mr. B. Kugapalan

2013

President : Dr. N. Selliah  
Secretary : Mr. B. Kugapalan

2014

President : Dr.K. Rajaram  
Secretary : Mr. B. Kugapalan

2015

President : Dr.K. Rajaram  
Secretary : Mr. B. Kugapalan

2016

President : Mr. B. Kugapalan  
Secretary : Mr. T. Nagarajah

2017

President : Mr. B. Kugapalan  
Secretary : Mr. T. Nagarajah

# வெற்றி மேல் வெற்றி



ஓய்வது இன்றி போதும் என்றாலும்  
ஒவ்வொரு நிலையிலும் துயரம் என்றாலும்  
தேய்வது கால்கள் பயணம் என்றாலும்  
தேடுவது ஒன்றே அது வெற்றி மேல் வெற்றி

மூண்டதோர் நெருப்பு மார்க்கம் என்றாலும்  
மீண்டுமாய் இருட்டு மேவும் என்றாலும்  
காண்பது கானலின் காட்சி என்றாலும்  
கேட்பது ஒன்றே அது வெற்றி மேல் வெற்றி

வஞ்சகம் வந்தே சூழும் என்றாலும்  
நெஞ்சம் அதிலே வேகும் என்றாலும்  
சிந்தனை துயரில் மூழ்கும் என்றாலும்  
சிந்திப்பது ஒன்றே அது வெற்றி மேல் வெற்றி

இலங்கைத் தறித்  
சூக்க உறுப்பினர்



## Year 1979

PRESIDENT : **Dr. K. Arulanantham**

SECRETARY : **Dr. Edward Benedict**

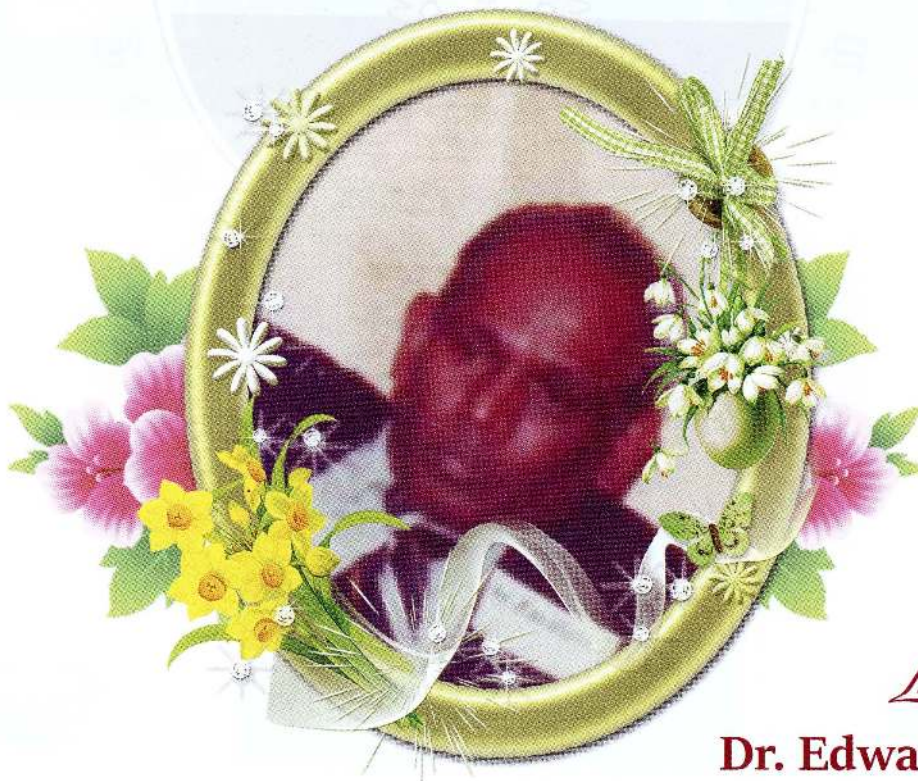
### Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam engaged Churches in New York to bring awareness on religious prosecution and ethnic cleansing of Tamils in Sri Lanka.
- Sent funds to Tamil Refugee Rehabilitation Organization, Rotary Club in Batticaloa, Northern Province cancer society, Ghandiyam Society Vavuniya, YMCA Trincomalee, Citizens Committee Jaffna, Refugee Camp Viswamadu
- Arranged a symposium on Tamils of Ceylon on May of 1979 at the Fordham University, Bronx. Speakers included TULF MP Siva Sithamparam, Mr. Neelan Thiruselvam, Professor Jeyaratnam Wilson and Dr .KarunyanArulanantham
- Encouraged investment in North and East of Sri Lanka through 'Consultancy and Finance and Development Ltd'. The organization was focused on socio economic development in North and East. The organization was started by the legendary Bank of Ceylon Chairman of the Board Mr. C.Loganathan.
- Started Sangam newsletter

## Year 1980

PRESIDENT : **Dr. Edward Benedict**

SECRETARY : **Dr. K. Iswara**



*Late*

**Dr. Edward Benedict**

# Year 1981, 1983

PRESIDENT : **Dr. A. Balasundaram**

SECRETARY : **Dr. T. Sivanandarajah (1981)**  
**Dr. M. Ganeshanathan (1983)**

## Accomplishments/Events

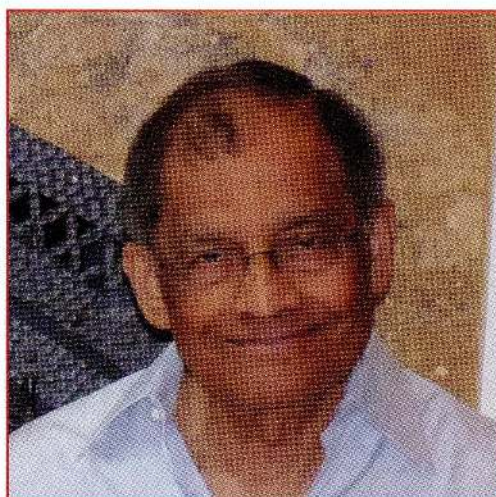
- Sangam created dedicated funds to send medical journals to the Jaffna Medical Association and to send equipment to the Jaffna University Hospital.
- Sangam created the 'Tamil Youth Organization' to encourage young Tamil Americans to join the Sangam.
- After the anti-Tamil riots in 1983 in Sri Lanka, Sangam organized massive protests in New York and Washington D.C. calling for international influence for the protection of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka



Protests in NYC



Protests in NYC



Late Dr. Appiah Balasundaram  
(1938- 2016)



**PRESIDENT : Dr. K. Iswara**

**SECRETARY : Dr. R. K. Sriskandarajah**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam works very closely with Indian Prime Minister Hon. Mrs. Indra Gandhi and her advisor Dr. Panruti S. Ramachandran to expose the ethnic cleansing in Sri Lanka and to gain the support of India and the United Nations to achieve justice for the Tamil people of Sri Lanka.
- Hon. Mrs. Gandhi visits New York to address the United Nations about the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka.
- Sangam officials work hard to bring awareness on the human rights violations in Sri Lanka and arranged a congressional hearing on Sri Lanka with the help of the Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Congressman Solarz from Brooklyn.
- Sangam worked with the New York City Council to pass a resolution condemning the human rights violations in Sri Lanka. Then Mayor Ed Koch handed over the resolution to the visiting President of Sri Lanka Mr. J.R. Jayawardana.



**Sangam officials with Mr. G. Parthasarathi,  
Advisor to Mrs. Indira Gandhi,  
Prime Minister of India**



**Sangam President Dr. Iswara with  
Mr. Amirthalingam, M.P. and Leader of the TULF**

# Year 1985-1986

**PRESIDENT : Dr. S. Nagendra**

**SECRETARY : Mr. S.E. Haran**

## Accomplishments/Events

- With the civil war in Sri Lanka escalating, Sangam initiates various efforts to protect the human rights of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka. Sangam's President traveled to India several times to inform Indian officials about the human rights situation and aspirations of the Tamils.
- Sangam initiates efforts to assist Tamil refugees arriving in the United States due to the civil war in Sri Lanka.
- Sangam Committee invites TULF leader Mr. Amirthalingam to the United States and arranges meetings at the US State Department for him to explain the plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka and the current human rights situation.



**Sangam President  
Dr. S. Nagendra speaking at the AGM**



**Attendees at the AGM**



**Cultural program at the AGM**

# Year 1987-1988

PRESIDENT : **Dr. I .Anandasabapathy**

SECRETARY : **Dr. N. Jeyalingam**

## Accomplishments / Events

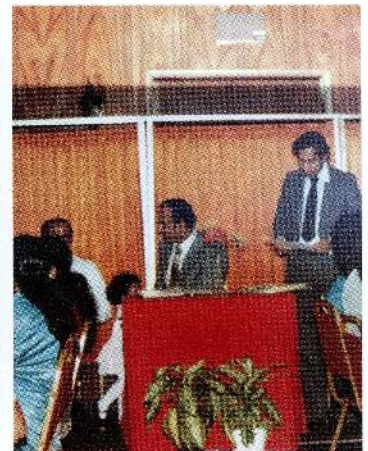
- Sangam continued to provide funds to send medical journals to the Jaffna medical association.
- Sangam joined Tamil Nadu Sangams and created Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FETNA). Ilankai Tamil Sangam is a founding member of FETNA together with Tamil Association of Delaware Valley, Tamil Sangam of Washington & Baltimore, New York Tamil Sangam, and Harrisburg Tamil Sangam. An assembly of over 400 Tamils Americans met near Philadelphia and celebrated the inauguration in the spring of 1988. Since then the FETNA has organized an annual convention in each of the subsequent years.
- Sangam hosted and arranged for Mr. Appapillai Amirthalingam - then the leader of the opposition in the Sri Lanka Parliament to meet with the EDITORIAL BOARD of the NEW YORK TIMES.
- Sangam facilitated a meeting for Mr. David Selbourne, then lecturer in English at Balliol college Oxford university, UK to meet with the editorial board of the NY Times & explain the situation in Sri Lanka pertaining to the Tamil minority. Also, facilitated Mr. David Selbourne to speak at the Princeton university, New Jersey. Similar meetings were arranged in California, Toronto -Canada, Fordham university in the Bronx, NY as well.
- Sangam arranged and participated in the Vision of Asia TV program



Sangam officials with the  
TULF leader  
Mr. Appapillai Amirthalingam



Sangam officials with Mr. David Selbourne



Sangam AGM

# Year 1989

**PRESIDENT : Mr. S.E. Haran**

**SECRETARY : Dr. N. Jeyalingam**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam provided funds for providing artificial limbs for the victims of war via Jaffna Branch of Colombo Friend in Need Society.
- Assisted families settled in Sampur following ethnic conflict between 1985 and 1987. Worked with Eastern Rehabilitation Organization based in Trincomalee.
- Funded orphanage assistance program run by Thangammah Appacuti based in Thellipallai Duruga Amman Temple, Jaffna
- Partnered FETNA annual meeting held in Maryland and addressed the audience explaining the Tamil issues of Sri Lanka to the Indian Community to get their support.
- Organized and sent several medical books and magazines to Jaffna Hospital doctor's library and to the Rotary Club based in Jaffna and Kilinochchi
- Tamil Voice survey conducted among past presidents about their assessment of the Tamil problem and their recommendations for a resolution to the problem.



**Sangam President Mr. S.E.Haran speaking at an event**

# Year 1990-1991

PRESIDENT : **Mr. J.M. Rajaratnam**

SECRETARY : **Dr. K. Jegathesan (1990) | Mr. S. Selvachandran (1991)**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Ilankai Tamil SangamUSA formed chapters of its organization in Florida, Texas and Northern California. They are called Ilankai Tamil Sangam Florida Chapter, Ilankai Tamil Sangam Texas Chapter and Tamil of Northern California. Sangam president traveled to those areas personally to sponsor the formation of the chapters.
- Sangam started a University Scholarship Fund to help students at Jaffna University and Eastern University.
- Sangam started a Refugee Relief Fund to help the displaced Tamil population in Sri Lanka and India.
- Sangam started an Orphans Funds and adoption of orphans project .
- Sangam issued a directory of Eelam Tamils in the USA.
- Sangam initiated a landmark activity of initiating a petition by the Global Organization of Persons of Indian Origin along with the National Federation of Indian American Associations, and the Friends of Indian Society International to the United Nations on behalf of the Tamils in Sri Lanka.
- Sangam President Mr. J.M.Rajaratnam passed away in 2014. Mr. J.M. Rajaratnam was an icon for generosity and compassion among Tamils from Ilankai residing in the United States. A lifelong Tamil activist, Mr. Rajaratnam voiced his support for the Tamil people in Ilankai throughout his life. His contribution to alleviate the suffering of Thamils was immense. His legacy of generosity and compassion will reflect in many individuals in years to come.



Late Mr. J.M. Rajaratnam (1928-2014)

# Year 1992-1993

**PRESIDENT : Mr. Wakely Paul , Esq.**      **SECRETARY : Mr. P. Sri Haran (1992) | Mr. F.A. Christopher (1993)**

## Accomplishments / Events

- At the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Sangam President presented the case of ethnic genocide and systematic violence against the Tamils in Sri Lanka.
- Sangam officials also meet State Department officials numerous times to raise the issue of the economic blockade to the Tamil areas in Sri Lanka and massive bombing campaign carried out by the Sri Lankan army on the densely populated areas.
- Doctors from the organization 'Doctors without Borders' who worked in the North and East of Sri Lanka, were the guest of honors and keynote speakers at the Sangam AGM.
- Sangam organized massive protests in New York in front of the United Nations protesting the killing of civilians together with the blockage of food and supplies to civilians by the Sri Lankan Government.
- Sangam President Mr. Wakely Paul passed away in 2009, but his voice will always echo from the corridors of the United Nations building in Geneva to the State Department offices in Washington D.C. for the liberation of Eelam Tamils.



Mr. Wakely Paul with Congressman Gilman, NY



Late Mr. Wakely Paul, Esquire  
(1930-2009)



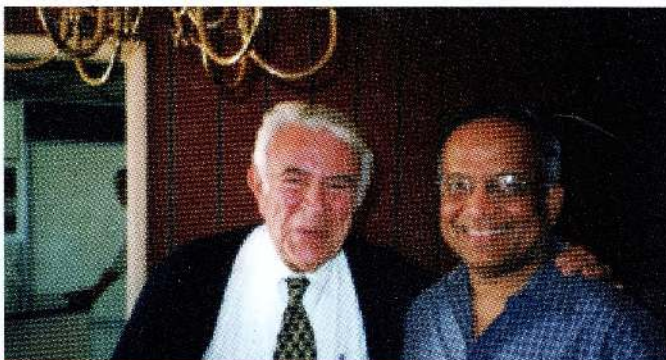
# Year 1994 - 1996

**PRESIDENT : Dr. N. Jeyalingam**

**SECRETARY : Mr. V.T. Alaganar**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam members were very affected by the destruction of livelihood, infrastructure and the economy due to military activity against civilian targets and a severe economic blockade. Large sums for refugee relief funds were raised, along with contributions for the scholarship & orphan funds.
- Sangam organized a Genocide Day for education of the American public and officials on the dire circumstances of Tamils in Sri Lanka.
- Sangam organized a successful demonstration in Washington, DC to draw attention to the human rights abuses and war crimes being committed.
- Sangam contributed to a convention in Australia to discuss Tamil issues.
- The Tamil Voice continued to be produced & distributed.
- The Sangam.org website was inaugurated in December.
- Sangam encouraged members to be in regular touch with their legislators to inform them of the need for US influence to push for a negotiated settlement and an end to human rights abuses. Of particular note was the relationship developed with the Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee by a constituent.
- The Sangam website became one of only two sources of information on Tamil issues easily available.
- Sangam encouraged members to accompany visitors to meetings with UN, US & NGO officials to alert them to problems for Tamils in Sri Lanka.
- Sangam sent letters to UN & US officials drawing their attention to the abuses taking place against our community in Sri Lanka.



**Sangam President Dr. Jeyalingam with House Foreign Relation Committee Charmin Congressman Gilman**



**Sangam President Dr. Jeyalingam releasing a book at the AGM**

PRESIDENT : **Dr. Manikam Ganesh**

SECRETARY : **Dr. Sri M. Sri-Jayantha**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam renews effort to broaden its appeal to all Tamil community members. Implements incentives for more community participation. Organizes committee meetings and events at geographically easy-to-reach locations, including expansion of host families. Various cultural events are considered: exhibition of traditional dress, spring cultural event etc. (Under prevailing conditions many potential members remained aloof to avoid politically sensitive debates.)
- Mailing of “Sangam Newsletter” started in 1996 continues with vigor and dedication by a Sangam member on a monthly basis. About 5-10 pages of Eelam news was assembled and mailed. Goal was to forcefully counter news blockade on HR violations by SLA imposed by GOSL, and to develop a working relationship with important US policymakers with the hope of mitigating atrocities committed against Tamils.
- “Sangam Research” team formulates graphical material to introduce Eelam history.
- Sangam informally hosts many leaders and journalists visiting US from Eelam preparing grounds for active participation with US Congress and NGOs (like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International). Except for a few congressional relationships, wider membership remained disconnected from US political discourse on Tamil issues.
- Sangam members develop a working relationship with UN officers for South Asia and organizes frequent visits to brief them on ground level HR violations in Eelam.



Late J.M. Rajaratnam introduces  
Late Adrian Wijemanne at AGM



Youths Showcasing Tamil Traditional Dresses at 1997 AGM

# Year 1998

PRESIDENT : **Dr. Manikam Ganesh**

SECRETARY : **Dr. Sri M. Sri-Jayantha**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sustained presence in the field of human rights and cultural activities.
- The Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, late Lakshman Kadirgamar was publicly challenged on US soil on GOSL military actions against Tamils during Q&A session at the Asia Society in New York (Oct. 02, 1998) by a Sangam member. Kadirgamar was painting a picture of normalcy to the western audience while crude barrel bombs were unleashed on Tamil civilians.
- Mailing of "Sangam Newsletter" on a monthly basis to counter news blockage on Tamil struggle by GOSL. New emblem established to reflect Eelam freedom effort.
- For the first time AGM program is extended to include performances from accomplished artists as well as from modern liberation-themed dancers.
- AGM held at Chand Palace, NJ has Actress Padmini as special guest, and honors her with a special video "Tribute to Padmini" which was well received by the audience.
- Ulahathamilar Canadian troupe invited to perform dances celebrating Eelam freedom struggle – a new component Sangam was reluctant to embrace openly until now.
- Presented a recorded speech by then India's Foreign Minister George Fernandes expressing solidarity with Eelam Tamils.
- Representative of Jesuit Refugee Agency Mr. William Coley speaks of INS Detention Center, NY holding Tamils. Sangam donates books for the detainees.



Kumar Ponnambalam visiting  
NY-NJ Tamil Community



Actress Padmini (left) and dancers from Canada at AGM 2008



Coley receiving books for INS Detainees (left.) and  
release of a book by the author Thevathasan Antony.

PRESIDENT : **Dr. Felix Christopher**

SECRETARY : **Dr. Sri M. Sri-Jayantha**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Participated in a rally in front of UN commemorating 50th anniversary on Declaration of Human Rights (observed as the best organized event among many other groups including groups linked to Tibet and East Timor struggle).
- Sangam participated in US Congressional HR Caucus Hearing on Sri Lanka (Feb.'99). Effort by the GoSL to scuttle this open hearing failed for the first time.
- Disturbingly, GoSL establishes a SL Caucus to counter Eelam Tamil effort.
- Sangam organizes a large scale letter writing campaign to US Congress (2000 letters sent).
- Sangam periodically mailed "Sangam Newsletter" to 250 media, NGO and government policymakers, sending about 1500 hard copies. Intent was to build a solid foundation of relationship through well researched material to counter SL propoganda against Tamils.
- Sangam joined in a legal battle in US through renowned lawyer Prof. David Cole.
- Subcommittee formed to address the challenges faced by Tamils in immigration detentions centers in NY and NJ.
- Key Sangam committee member established working relationships with Amnesty International (Princeton Chapter).
- First "Spring Cultural Event" organized successfully by Sangam providing a model for geographically separated Tamil communities to replicate the model. Kumar Ponnambalam attends the event and gives a speech about Eelam situation. (Year later he was assassinated.)



Building a working relationship with  
late Congressman Benjamin Gilman, NY



Letter-writing campaign to US Congress

# Year 2000

PRESIDENT : **Dr. Felix Christopher**

SECRETARY : **Dr. Sri M. Sri-Jayantha**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam organized a memorial event commemorating Kumar Ponnambalam's contributions after he was assassinated in Colombo, Sri Lanka on Jan. 5, 2000, presumably by Chandrika Kumaratunga's personal security apparatus. Surprisingly there were handful of community members who were not so enthusiastic about the memorial event reflecting the ongoing rift within the community!



Memorial to Mamanithar held in NJ by Sangam



Memorial event to Kumar Ponnambalam in US



10 Part of Folk Costumes Presentation of Eelam at  
AGM. Mala (right) the Event Coordinator

# Year 2001

**PRESIDENT : Dr. T. Sivanandarajah**

**SECRETARY : Dr. Sri M. Sri-Jayantha**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Participated in congressional briefing, May 2001, with the support of late Congressman Benjamin Gilman, NY
- Sangam continues to mail (hardcopy) about 300 “Newsletters” per month to US media, NGOs and government officials while the GoSL imposed a news blockade on Tamil Eelam. Following the Norway-mediated ceasefire, news flow from Eelam improves and Sangam ramps down the hardcopy mailing project in the following year.
- Maintained well-regarded website Sangam.org (Recognized by Library of Congress).
- Regular group meetings with elected US Government officials.
- Provided forum for Tamil children through Spring Cultural program in May.
- Assisted Tamil refugees in Batticaloa – through the Ramakrishna Mission.
- Assisted Tamil refugees & asylum seekers detained by US immigration.
- Provided artificial limbs for Tamil victims in Sri Lanka – children and adults.
- Doubled the Sangam membership.
- Supported the victims of World Trade Center tragedy of 09/11/2001.



Spring Kallai Villa:  
Late Prof. Manogaran  
Chelvadarai lighting lamp  
following Dr. Siva's welcome



Kuthirai Aattam by Canadian Dance Troupe



Contributions to Kallai Villa by Children



Mirudangam (South Indian Drums) Recital



Late Congressman Benjamin  
Gilman arriving at pre-hearing lunch on Capitol Hill



Frequent gatherings at Dr. Jeyalingam's  
residence with Rane and Rajanadjoining

# Year 2002

PRESIDENT : **Dr. T. Sivanandarajah**

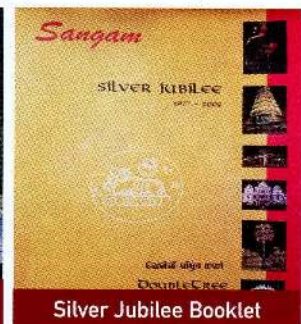
SECRETARY : **Mr. T. Pathmakumar**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Year 2002 was a historic year for Sangam, as Sangam celebrates our 25th year (Silver Jubilee).
- At the FeTNA convention in July, Sangam organized a speech by Professor Francis Boyle to bring awareness on the human rights issues in Sri Lanka. Sangam also arranged to showcase a "Patti Manram" and several other programs performed by Eelam Tamils.
- From the proceeds of the Silver Jubilee, sangam provided additional scholarship money to the already functioning Sangam Bursar fund at the University of Jaffna.
- Sangam also donates USD 10,000 from the silver jubilee proceeds to to 'Mallakam Blinded War Victims Shelter"
- Sangam organized local volunteers in New Jersey to visit the refugees and asylum-seekers from Eelam held at the Elizabeth Detention Center.
- Sangam's silver jubilee AGM was held at the Double Tree Hotel and Convention Center in Somerset, New Jersey. Mr. Raj Rajaratnam was the Guest of Honor and Prof. Valentine Daniel of Columbia University gave a keynote speech.
- Silver Jubilees is the first large scale AGM organized by Sangam, Catalyzed by Secretary Mr. T. Pathmakumar and supported by other organizing committee members.



Silver Jubilee Committee



Silver Jubilee Booklet



Past presidents of Sangam



Guest of Honor :  
Raj Rajaratnam.



Invited Speaker Prof. Valentine Daniel.

# Year 2003

PRESIDENT : **Mr. P. Chandranathan**

SECRETARY : **Mr. T. Pathmakumar**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam donates money to the Association for Rehabilitation Of the Disabled (AROD) in Jaffna to buy sewing machines and bicycles.,
- Sangam launches Tamil Health Organization (THO) within Sangam to provide medical assistance to victims in North and East under the leadership of Dr. ThavamThambipillai and Dr. Raguraj. Sangam holds a meeting in Morristown, NJ to initiate activities for THO. During the year and at the 2003 AGM THO leaders speak about the activities of THO and Sangam raises funds for THO.
- Sangam AGM 2003 was held at the Royal Albert's Palace in New Jersey.
- A large gathering of Tamil Youth from different parts of the county is held as part the Sangam AGM.
- Rev. Dr. S.J.Emmanuel is the key note speaker at the 2003 AGM.
- Tamil Music group Shakthi was launched was the first time at the AGM 2003 with singers Aynkaran and Anitha Krishna performing.



Youth Event 2003



Sangam Official Logo  
introduced in 2003



Youth Event 2003



THO Inauguration at Sangam AGM



2003 AGM Booklet



# Year 2004

PRESIDENT : **Mr. P. Chandranathan**

SECRETARY : **Mr. A. Vaseekarn**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam donates USD 8,800 to the Jaffna University medical faculty to provide Scholarships to medical students.
- Tamil Health Organization started by Sangam decides to rebrand with a new name called International Medical Health Organization (IMHO) and a decision is made that IMHO will operate independently as an organization with a president and an executive team.
- 2004 AGM was held at the Royal Albert's Palace in New Jersey. Highlights of the AGM include a keynote address from Rev. Fr. M.X.Karunaratnam, Chairman of the North East Secretariat on Human Rights (NESHoR). He was killed in Sri Lanka in a later year by a Sri Lankan Army Claymore mine attack.
- Sangam held a Medical camp at the AGM which included education on dementia, Alzheimer and other illnesses.
- VanniTech updates were provided Mr. Sooryakumaran, Chairman, ITTPO. Sangam contributed towards the Vanni Tech project during the year.
- 2004 AGM featured a parallel youth event at the Hilton Hotel organized by the Tamil Youth Organization (TYO).
- TYO planned a trip for Tamil youth to travel to Vanni, Sri Lanka to spend time there teaching and learning.



Sangam Officials with TNA Leader  
and M.P. Mr. Sampanthan



AGM at the Royal Albert Palace



Sangam President Mr. P. Chandranathan



Cultural program at the Sangam AGM



Sangam officials with the TNA  
M.P. Mr. G. Ponnambalam

PRESIDENT : **Mr. P. Sri Haran**

SECRETARY : **Mr. T. Vaseeharan**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam donates USD 15,000 to purchase a van for medical relief work in Vanni following the December 2004 Tsunami disaster.
- Sangam President and other officials travel to Vanni several times after the Tsunami to assess the damages and discuss the rebuilding and rehabilitation efforts.
- Their visits lead to a larger fund raising effort among the Sangam members in the United States. Sangam collects and donates one million U.S dollars to the post Tsunami rebuilding and rehabilitation work. One of the major rebuilding effort using these funds was to rebuild houses for Tsunami victims.
- Sangam working with other Tamil organizations in coordinating the visit of Congressman Danny Davis from illinois to North and East. It should be noted that Congressman Davis was the only congressman to visit the war effected Tamil areas
- 2005 AGM was held at the Double tree hotel and executive meeting center in Somerset, New Jersey.
- Sangam organizes a Continuing Medical Education (CME)event at the 2005 AGM. The CME program bring awareness and prevention measures on hearts deceases and other common deceases. CME program also provide onsite testing for bone density, blood pressure and blood sugar.
- Congressman Danny Davis speaks at the AGM as a chief guest.
- Professor John P Neelsen, of the Tuebingen Uuniversity and a strong supporter for the self determination of Tamil in Sri Lanka was the key note speaker at the AGM.



Sangam President Mr. Sri Haran with Congressman Danny Davis



Professor Neelsen speaking at Sangam Dinner



தமிழர் புனர்வாழ்வுக்கழக நலன்புரி நிலையங்களுக்கான பொருட்கள் இறக்கப்படுகின்றது



Sangam President Mr. Sri Haran leading a prayer for Tsunami Victims

# Year 2006 - 2007

**PRESIDENT : Mr. P. Sri Haran**

**SECRETARY : Dr. T. Manivannan**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam appealed to the State Department in April of 2006, seeking help in stopping the shelling and aerial bombing of civilians in Trincomalee by the Sri Lankan Army.
- 2006 AGM was held at the Marriott Hotel in Somerset, New Jersey
- Director of the movie 'My Daughter the Terrorist,' Beate Arnestad was a keynote speaker at the 2006 AGM and was honored at the AGM. Her movie was also screened.
- Human Rights Activist Dr. Brian Senewiratne, M.D. from Australia was the Chief Guest at the 2006 AGM.
- At the AGM 2007, Sangam paid tribute to political activist Thiru. Thamil Selvan. Joining the tribute were human rights activist Ms. Karen Parker, Dr. Elyn Shander, Member of Parliament Mr. Eelaventhana, Congressman Rush Holt and Ms. Beate Arnestad. They also participated in a human rights panel discussion.
- Fr. Chandrakanthan was the keynote speaker at the 2007 AGM. Joining him was Congressman Rush Holt of New Jersey.



Dr. Elyn Shanders paying respect to political activist Thamil Selvan



Sangam President Mr. Sri Haran honoring Ms. Beate Arnestad



Human Rights Activist Ms. Karen Parker, Former Member of Parliament Mr. Eelaventhana, Ms. Beate Arnestad and Congressman Rush Holt and his wife.



Attendees at the AGM



Mr. Eelaventhana



Panel Discussion

# Year 2008-2009

PRESIDENT : **Dr. T. Manivannan**

SECRETARY : **Mr. Ahilan Rajadeva**

## Accomplishments / Events

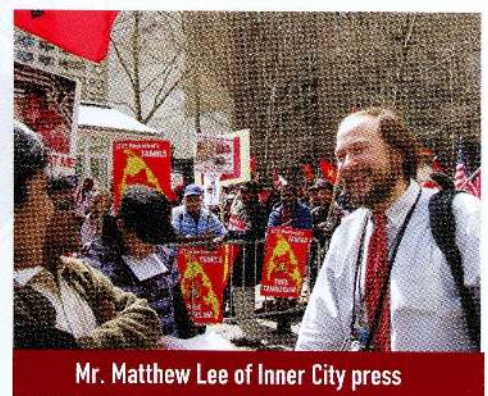
- Sangam AGM 2008 was held at the Ukrainian Cultural Center in Somerset, New Jersey.
- Human rights activist Dr. Brian Seneviratne from Australia and Award Winning Journalist Ms. Anita Pratap from India deliver key note addresses.
- As the civil war in Sri Lanka was raging and the Tamil civilian casualties were mounting, Sangam together with the organizations, mobilize Tamil Americans and hold several protest marches in Washington D.C. and New York calling for the Sri Lankan Government to stop the massacre of innocent civilians.
- Few weeks after the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka, Sangam organizes a large protest march in New York City in front of the United Nations calling for the release of all civilians kept in internment camps in Vanni.
- Sangam AGM 2009 was held at the Chutney Manor banquet Hall in New Jersey. Key note speaker of the event is Ambassador Dewey, former member, International Independent Group of Eminent Persons on Sri Lankan Human Rights.
- Human Rights lawyer Mr. V. Rudrakumaran was awarded with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the AGM.



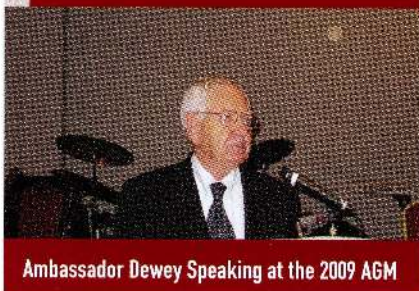
Sangam President  
Dr. T. Manivannan



Tamil Americans protest in front of the U.N



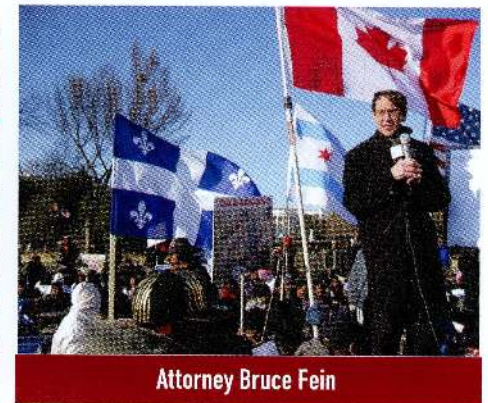
Mr. Matthew Lee of Inner City press



Ambassador Dewey Speaking at the 2009 AGM



Protests in front of the White House



Attorney Bruce Fein

# Year 2010

**PRESIDENT : Mr. Ahilan Rajadeva**

**SECRETARY : Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Organized Mobile Billboard Project in NYC to create awareness of War Crimes and Tamil Genocide committed against Eelam Tamils.
- Held a NYC Vigil Rally in memory of the Eelam Tamil War Victims of Sri Lanka.
- Organized Tamil cultural event (Kalai Vizha) in NJ for Tamil Americans, and donated the net proceeding to Mahadeva Ashrama Saivach Chiruvar Illam, Kilinochchi to build 8 toilets to be used by 150 Orphaned kids. Also, assisted Sri Ramakrishna Sarada Sevashrama for orphans in Pt. Pedro.
- Sangam funded Tamil History Preservation Project lead by Dr. Murugar Gunasingham to recreate some of the lost materials from archives around the world and consolidate them into a book.
- Sangam organized first “Thamizhar Sangamam” event in NJ, and brought other Tamil organizations such as WTO, FETNA, CTC, NJTS, NJTACS, USTPAC, TAG, TGTE and PEARL.
- At the AGM Sangam Premiered “January 29” – Documentary of Muthukumar and released the DVD in USA . Also premiered award winning Eelam Tamil movie “1999” in USA directed by Mr. Lenin Sivam.
- At the AGM Sangam Introduced Eelath Tamil musical group called “Shakthi” in NJ which consists of Tamil musicians.
- At the AGM “Tamils in Sri Lanka” – A Comprehensive history (300 B.C – 2000 A.D) was released and MDMK General Secretary, Thiru. V. Kopalasamy (Aka Vaiko) from India gave the keynote speech .



Human rights panel discussion at the AGM



BharathaNatyam performance at the AGM



Sangam president Mr. Ahilan Rajadeva speaking at the event



Sangam Billboard in Manhattan for the boycott Sri Lanka initiative



Toilets build with Sangam Funding for an orphanage



Mullivaikkal Remembrance Day Rally poster

**PRESIDENT : Mr. Ahilan Rajadeva**

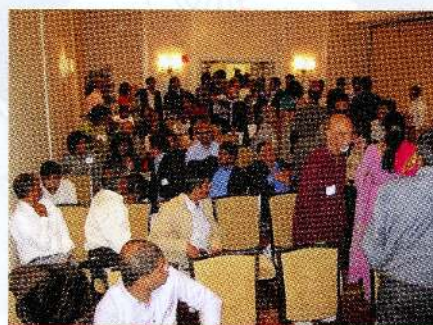
**SECRETARY : Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam organized a “Tamil History Workshop.” The workshop was conducted by Dr. Murugar Gunasingham, author of the book ‘Tamils in Sri Lanka – A Comprehensive History.’ The event was attended by over twenty young Tamil Americans from the tri state area, while over twenty adults also attended this full history workshop.
- Sangam, together with other organizations, held a NYC Vigil Rally in memory of the Eelam Tamil War Victims of Sri Lanka. Sangam was responsible for collecting funds and reimbursing expenses for the rally. Sangam took responsibility to arrange food and water from the New Jersey, New York area.
- Our 34th Annual General Meeting was held at the Crowne Plaza Conference Center in Monroe Township, New Jersey. The major highlights of the AGM was the “Thamilar Sanagamam” event where diaspora organizations from Canada, United Kingdom and United States participated. Panel discussions on humanitarian efforts in Ilankai and the human rights situation were held. Sangam also held a workshop on U.N. Accountability.
- Tamil National Alliance Members of Parliament Mr. Senathirajah and Mr. Premachandran spoke at the evening event.



Tamil History Workshop



Attendees after a panel discussion at the AGM



Congressman Rush Holt speaking at the AGM



Congressman Rush Holt speaking to the TNA delegation at the AGM



Shakthi group performing at AGM



Humanitarian panel discussion at the AGM

# Year 2012

PRESIDENT : **Dr. Nithianandan Selliah**

SECRETARY : **Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Our annual cultural show “Kalai Vila 2012” held in June was our first initiative to incorporate performances from students outside of the Sangam community. Students from New Jersey Tamils Arts and Cultural Society (NJTACS) and various dance and music schools participated in the Kalai Vila. All together over 75 students participated in the show that lasted for six hours and was attended by over 400 attendees. The show was hosted at the Nash Theater in Branchburg, New Jersey.
- Sangam donated proceeds from our cultural show to the NOW WOW organization to provide school supplies to children from poor families in Batticaloa.
- Our 35th Annual General Meeting was held at the Double Tree Hotel in Somerset, New Jersey. Highlights of the AGM included a panel discussion on human rights violations in Sri Lanka - Past, Present and Future, a panel discussion on improving the lives of our people, and a TAG workshop on war crimes investigation. Evening program included a keynote address by Mr. Guruparan Kumaravadivel (Lecturer, Department of Law, Jaffna University) and Mr. P. Ariyanenthiran, Member of Parliament of the Tamil National Alliance from the Batticaloa District.
- Human rights panel included Dr. Julian Vigo and attorney Bruce Fein of Tamils Against Genocide (TAG).
- It should be noted that the 2012 AGM was held less than ten days after super storm Sandy ravaged the eastern seaboard. Monitoring the situation and the disaster caused by the hurricane, the Sangam leadership team took a wise and timely decision to host the AGM as planned as the recovery efforts went quickly and the state of New Jersey returned to normal.



Kalai Vila 2012 Poster



AGM 2012 Poster



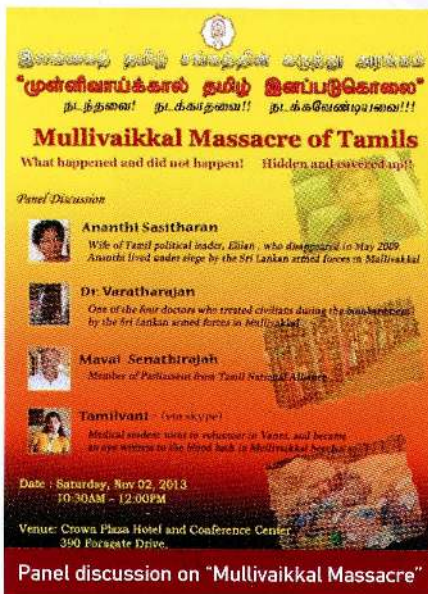
Tamil new year 2012

PRESIDENT : **Dr. Nithianandan Selliah**

SECRETARY : **Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam donated \$19,000 from its endowment fund for the human rights work carried out by Sangam members, especially to cover the cost of travel to the United Nations Human Rights council meeting in Geneva.
- As part of our “Tamil History Preservation” project Sangam donated money to digitize the work of Dr. Murugar Gunasingam, author of several historical books including the “Tamils in Sri Lanka – A Comprehensive History.”.
- Sangam members from Central Jersey hosted a local Tamil New year celebration in South Brunswick, NJ in April.
- Sangam initiated an essay writing competition on Tamil Arts, Language and History at our Annual General Meeting. The purpose of this competition is to bring raise awareness on Tamil arts, cultural, history among the young Tamil Americans and to enable them to articulate their cultural background and heredity.
- Our 36th Annual General Meeting was held at the Crowne Plaza Conference Center in Monroe Township, New Jersey. Highlights of the AGM included a panel discussion “Mullivaikkal Massacre of Tamils.”. Panelists included Mrs. Ananthi Sasitharan (wife of Tamil political leader Elilan, who disappeared in May 2009) and Dr. Varatharajan (one of the doctors who treated civilians in the last pages phases of the war in Vanni).
- Evening highlights included keynote addresses from former parliamentarian Mr. Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam, Members of Parliament from the Tamil National Alliance Mr. M.A.Sumanthrian and Mr. Mavai Senathirajah.





PRESIDENT : **Dr. Kandasamy Rajaram**

SECRETARY : **Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

## Accomplishments / Events

- "Isai Priya Memorial Kalai Vila 2014" was held in May 2014 at Crossroads middle School in South Brunswick to promote Tamil culture and language. Various dance and music schools participated in the Kalai Vila. Over 50 students participated in the show which was attended by over 300 attendees from the tristate areas. This program was organized by the Sangam to promote Tamil drama, dance and music among tri-state Tamil Americans, specifically the Tamil American children.
- Donated money to typhoon victims from the Philippines through Mano-a-Mano International Relief Organization.
- Our 37th Annual General Meeting was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Monroe township, New Jersey. The Keynote address was given by the Minister Mr.P. Aingeranesan of the Northern Provincial Council. A lifetime achievement award was given to Father Rev. S.J. Emmanuel for his service. A special recognition award was given to SMT.Selvy Chandranathan of the Kala Shethra.
- Sangam executed a cattle farm project in alliance with the NOW WOW organization, to which Sangam donated \$20,000 towards. This project supported forty families of widows, amputees and war victims.
- We created an athletics program for children in the Vanni and Batticaloa area; in Vanni, with the assistance of our donations, six schools were funded with athletic equipment which they previously could not obtain. The children learned and participated in organized sporting events such as cricket, soccer, netball and badminton. In the Batticaloa district, a remote village school with children from families below poverty level received a donation from the the Sangam (ITS) which enabled four of their table tennis teams to compete in a provincial championship which that they later went on to win. With our help the previously ill-funded badminton team received new equipment which enabled them to win the National Championship for badminton.
- Sangam donated a Multimedia projector to Chenkaladys school.
- Sangam (ITS) Sangam initiated to the tradition of have planting in East Windsor. Sangam intends to expand similar projects in other states of the country.
- Sangam continued to provide support for the "Tamil History Preservation" project.
- An essay writing competition on Tamil Arts, Language and History took place at the AGM hall in which more than 20 students participated.
- Sangam donated \$2,500 to a flood victim project in the Eastern province.
- The Sangam educational fund was initiated.

# Year 2014



Kalai Vila 2014



Sangam President Dr. K. Rajaram



'Lifetime Service Award' to  
Father Rev. S.J. Emmanuel



Human Rights Panel Discussion



NPC Minister Mr.P. Aingeranesan



SMT. Selvy Chandranathan with special recognition award



Sports Equipment assistance to Children

**PRESIDENT : Dr. Kandasamy Rajaram**

**SECRETARY : Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Illankai Tamil Sangam (ITS) hosted a joint Pongal villa event with the New Jersey Tamil Sangam on January 2015. It was well attended by the Tamil community from the Tristate area. This included both Indian and Ilankai Tamils alike.
- Northern Provincial Council Chief Minister Hon. C.V. Vigneswaran visited the United States. A town hall meeting was held in New Jersey where the Chief Minister spoke and took questions from the local audience.
- Sangam essay writing competition was moved from the AGM location to local Tamil schools. This year more than 75 students participated in the competition
- Our 38th Annual General Meeting was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Monroe township, New Jersey. Key note address was delivered by Mr. S. Shriratharan M.P. Highlights of the AGM included our focus is to empower the people back at home by supporting livelihood Projects. Illankai Tamil Sangam (ITS) funded several projects.
- A lifetime achievement award was given to Olympian Dr. N. Ethirveerasingam for his contribution to sports and education in the Northern Province. He contributed immensely to the field of education and Sports in the northern Province.
- "Meritorious Award for Music" was given to super singer Jessica Judes. She gave a special performance at the AGM.
- Sangam has received an urgent request from the Northern Provincial Council, to help obtain water testing equipment for oil contamination. Sangam with the help of Group of Engineers and a chemist in North America purchased a water testing equipment. Two Chemists received additional training in the U.S. and visited the Northern Province to provide hands-on training to the local technicians.
- Sangam initiated a project to set-up 1000 poor Tamil families in Eastern Sri Lanka with Solar Panels that would provide electricity in their shacks. Project will be executed in partnership with the U.S. Rotary clubs in Northern New Jersey. Sangam collected donations through a saree auction at the AGM and contributions from donors.



NPC CM Mr. Vigneswaran Speaking  
at Sangam Townhall Meeting



Thamil Thai Vaalththu



Water Testing equipment  
handed over to NPC

PRESIDENT : **Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

SECRETARY : **Mr. Thaya Nagarajah**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam initiated the “Pongal Vila” Celebrations in the Tri State Area and declare the Pongal to be the Tamil National Festival for the Tamil American Community. Pongal Vila events were held in Bridgewater, NJ, Queens, NY and Staten Island, NY. All together over 100 students participated in the cultural programs and over 500 people attended the program in the three events.
- Ilankai Tamil Sanagam started a weekend Tamil education school in Staten Island, NY with the help of the local members and volunteers. 32 students were enrolled at this school and the school continues to grow and provide weekend tamil education to children.
- Sangam in close co-operation with the U.S Rotary clubs in Northern New Jersey continued the multi-year mega project to set-up 1000 poor Tamil families with Solar Panels that would will provide electricity in their shacks. First phase of the project is completed as 100 war affected tamil families received the solar powered lamps. Rotary club initiated the 2nd phase of the project.
- Sangam members hosted “Mullivaikkal” remembrance events in Central Jersey and Staten Island, NY
- Sangam created a Youtube channel to broadcast its event videos
- Sangam hosted the Mega Kalai Vila 2016 and Grand Super Singer Night at the West Windsor-Plainsborough High school in New Jersey. Over 100 students from different parts of New Jersey and Staten Island participated in the Kalai Vila showcasing their talent in Tamil language, music and arts. Over 700 people attended the combined event that went from 3:00 PM to 11:00 PM. Turnout for this mega event is one of the largest for a Sangam event
- New Jersey members of Ilankai Tamil Sangam initiated a donation drive to collect backpacks with school supplies for the children (ages 4-19) in foster care in the south jersey area. The donations will be distributed by our partner, South Jersey Center for volunteer service.
- Sangam Central Jersey Members held the “ThiyagiThileepan” Memorial Day at the East Windsor memorial tree.

PRESIDENT : **Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

SECRETARY : **Mr. Thaya Nagarajah**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam's Annual Essay Writing Competition on its 4th year expanded out of the Tri State Area to Boston, Massachusetts and Columbus, Ohio. Over 125 students participated in the competition. Sangam declares their our goal to expand this competition to be a national competition.
- Our 39th Annual General Meeting was held at the Crowne Plaza Conference Center in Monroe Township, New Jersey. Major Highlights of the AGM was the arrival of Former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Hon. Judge Navanethem Pillay as the keynote speaker. Judge Pillay participated in various panel discussions and delivered the well-received keynote address at the evening event.
- Sangam recognized Judge Navanethem Pillay with a 'Life Time Service Award' for her decades-long dedication to seeking truth, justice and human rights around the world and her contribution to all humanity. Judge Pillay was the first recipient of the 'Life Time Service Award'.
- Sangam recognized Eelam Tamil Singer Late Mr. C. Ainkaran with the posthumous title of "Voice of Isai.". His daughter received the recognition at the AGM.
- Sangam reinitiated the "Tamil American youth meet" as part of the AGM.



Congressman Leonard Lance at the  
'Pongal Vila'



Judge Pillay Receiving  
'Lifetime Services Award'



'Mullivaikkal' Remembrance Day



Mega Super Singer Concert



Sangam President  
Balan Kugapalan  
Speaking at the AGM



Judge Navi Pillay  
Delivering  
Key Note Address



Thiyagi Thileepan Memorial

**PRESIDENT : Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

**SECRETARY : Mr. Thaya Nagarajah**

## Accomplishments / Events

- Sangam initiates a disabled war veteran fund to assist the disabled freedom fighters in Ilankai. At the first phase of the project Sangam provides financial assistance to the two veterans who lost their eye sight and hands during the war. Financial assistance included assistance to their children education and assistance to their small farm.
- Sangam expands the “Pongal Vila” Celebrations outside of the Tri State Area. This year five Ilankai Tamil Communities from Northern New Jersey, Queens, NY, Staten Island, NY, Boston, MA, Columbus, OH and Maryland joins Sangam in Celebrating the Pongal Vila.
- Joining hands with the New Jersey Tamil Sangam and TamilnaduTamils, our central jersey members held a peaceful meet in support of the ‘JalliKattu’ protests at the Tamil War Victims Memorial in East Windsor, NJ.
- Sangam in a joint effort with several tamil diaspora cultural organizations initiated an international essay writing and drawing competition in Tamil. The competition was held in the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, France, Switzerland and Ilankai.
- Sangam members hosts “Mullivaikkal” remembrance events in Central Jersey and Staten Island, NY
- Sangam annual cultural show ‘Kalai Vila’ was held in Staten Island, NY. Over 100 students from four Tamil schools and various Tamil dance and music schools showcased their talent in Tamil arts and language. This is the first sangam ‘Kalai Vila’ to be held outside the state of New Jersey. Sangam announces plans to hold the show in future in other states.
- In marking their Ruby Jubilee Celebrations, Sangam initiates a multiyear mega program in the Amparai district to provide various assistance to 44 Tamil villages. The program consists project such as providing financial and fishery equipment assistance to Tamil fishermen, fishery marketing project to assist other families that are living under poverty, financial and technical assistance to farming families headed by single mothers and educational and technical assistance to younger generation. Sangam Plan to initiate the implementation of projects from the village of “Karaitheevu”. Sangam declared its intention to go from Village to village liberating them from poverty, social injustices and colonization.

PRESIDENT : **Mr. Balan Kugapalan**

SECRETARY : **Mr. Thaya Nagarajah**

## Accomplishments / Events

- New Jersey members of Ilankai Tamil Sangam continue their 2nd annual donation drive to collect back packs with school supplies for the children (ages 4-19) in foster care in south jersey area. The donations will be distributed by our partner South Jersey Center for volunteer Service.
- Sangam holds the 30th annual remembrance of “ThiyagiThileepan’ who died fasting unto death without water demanding equal rights for tamils in Sri Lanka.
- Sangam announces the “Lifetime Service Award” to the team of medical professionals (doctors, nurses, technicians, ambulance drivers and other volunteers)who worked in Vanni during the last phase of war. Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA on behalf of the Tamil American Community awards their highest recognition award to this team of brave and selfless team of men and women for their immense service to humanity and also for their act of valor in the face oppression, intimidation and violence.
- Sangam announces the “Lifetime Service Award” to Channel 4 Documentary Producer Mr. Callum Macrae for his work on the documentary series ‘Killing Fields of Sri Lanka’ and for his lifelong dedication in bringing awareness on social injustices, state sponsored terrorism and human rights violations.



Solar Panel recipients



Solar Panel recipients



2nd Annual Back Pack Drive



Sangam President speaking at a 'Pongal Vila'



'Mullivaikkal' Memorial Day



'Kalai Vila 2017'



'Jallikattu' protest in support of Tamil Nadu Tamils



'ReNu' project recipients

# Ilankai Tamil Sangam Awards



Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA recognizes individuals, groups and organizations that have contributed significantly to the common cause by awarding them with our highest recognition awards. Following awards are given by Sangam :

## **LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD :**

Awarded for the first time in 2016, the Lifetime Service Award recognizes individuals, groups or organization for their contribution to human rights or humanity, or for an act of valor. This is the Sangam's highest recognition award for service.

## **MOST EMINENT TAMIL AMERICAN AWARD / TITLE :**

Awarded was the first time in Sangam history in 2005, Sangam's "Most Eminent Tamil American Award" is a posthumous title bestowed to Tamil Americans in recognition of their life-long dedication and service to the development and freedom of Tamils in Ilankai.

## **LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD :**

Sangam's Lifetime Achievement Award is awarded to individuals who, during their lifetimes, have made significant contributions to the Tamil Community or to the field of their expertise.



# Lifetime Service Awards



## **Medical Profession Team that served the Civilians in the last phase of civil war in Sri Lanka (awarded 2017)**

Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA recognizes the medical profession team comprising doctors, nurses, technicians, ambulance drivers and other volunteers who have gone above and beyond in their service to the internally displaced and war-affected people during the final phases of the civil war in Sri Lanka. During the times of war and great distress, they heroically stood by their people.

During the first five months of 2009, as an intense war ravaged the densely-populated coastline of northeastern Sri Lanka, more than 300 000 civilians were trapped in between. A government-imposed media blackout meant the world was largely unaware of what the United Nations later called a "bloodbath." The team established makeshift hospitals and coordinated emergency medical efforts under the most difficult conditions. According to the ICRC, the team coordinated the evacuation of nearly 14,000 patients and their caregivers from the warzone between February and May 2009.

The physicians' team treated acute trauma and burns, performed surgical amputations and provided much needed first aid amidst shortages of food, medicine, clean water and supplies. Compounding the situation was that hospitals were under artillery attack. Although they had the option to leave, the team chose to stay and serve the civilian population who needed them more than ever. At a time when journalists were barred, the team also communicated with the outside world about the casualties they saw.

Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA on behalf of the Tamil American Community awards their highest recognition award of "Lifetime Service Award" to this team of brave and selfless team of men and women for their courageous service to humanity and for their acts of valor in the face oppression, intimidation and violence.

## Doctors

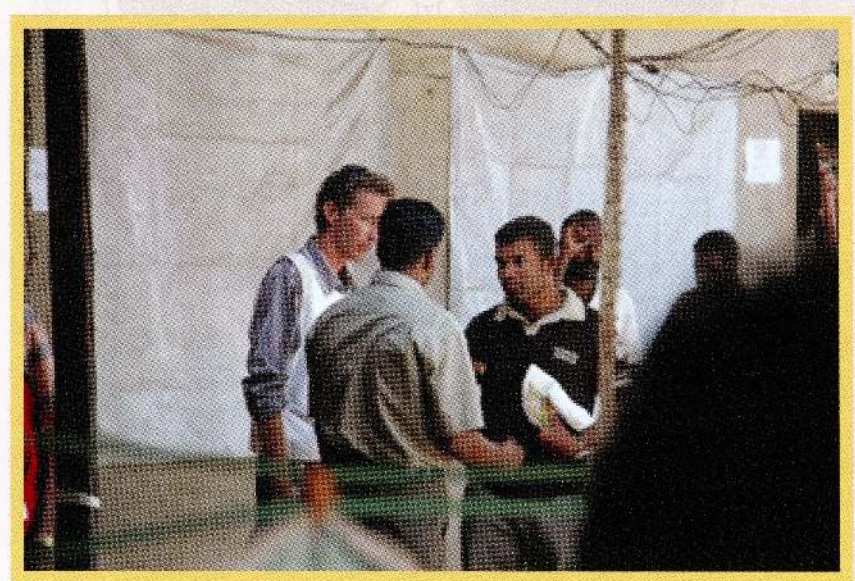
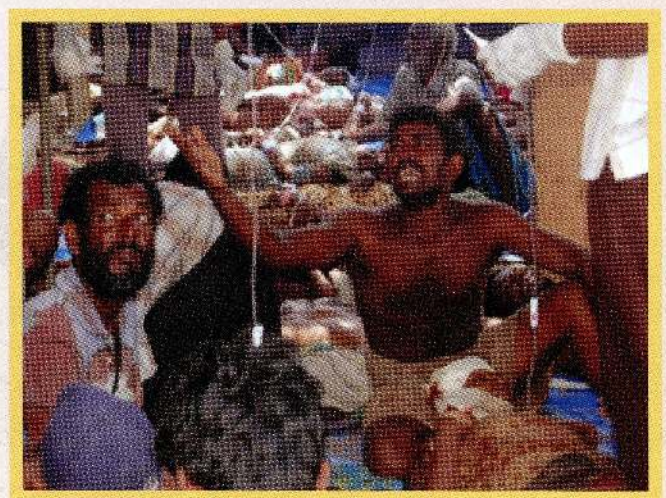
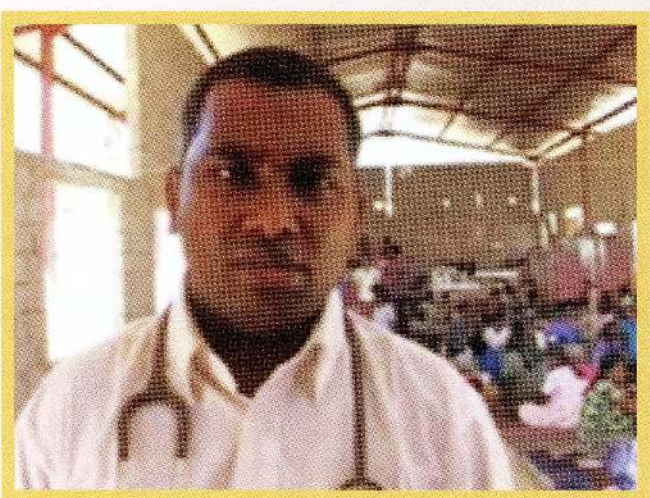
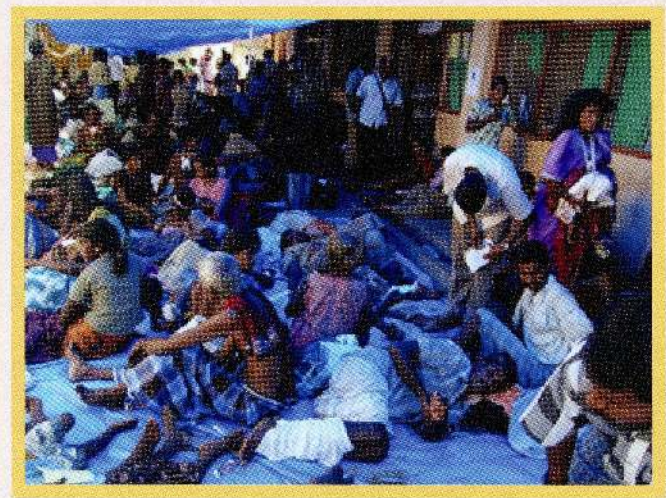
- Dr.Thangamuthu Sathiyamoorthy** - Regional Director of Health Services - Kilinochchi
- Dr. Thurairajah Varatharajah** - Regional Director of Health Services- Mullaitivu
- Dr. Veerakaththipillai Sanmugarajah** - Medical Superintendent, Mullaitivu  
District General Hospital
- Dr. Kasilinkam Sujanthan** - Director of Tamil Eelam Medical Health Services
- Dr.R.Kathirchelvan** - Medical Officer of Health and Doctor at MallaviDivisional Hospital
- Dr. K. Suthakaran** - Medical Officer at District General Hospital - Kilinochchi
- Dr. Tharmalingam Baskaran** - Medical Officer of Health, Kilinochchi
- Dr. Prasathnayagam Brighton** – Medical Officer at District General Hospital-Kilinochchi
- Dr. Sivapalan- In charge** - PonnampalamMemorial Hospital
- Dr. Vettinasan Lumberd** - Medical Officer - Madu
- Dr. K Pathmalogini** - Surrendered to the SL army - missing
- Dr. Sivamanoharan** - Death due to cluster bomb attack on April 21, 2009
- Mr. Anton Benedict Jeyakumar** - Accountant

## Nurses

Sangam also recognizes all the Nurses who worked with the medical profession team. At the time of the book release the names of these Nurses were not published. But a special event will be held in Northern Sri Lanka to recognize their contributions.

## Other technicians and volunteers

Sangam also recognizes all the other technicians and volunteers who worked with the medical profession team. At the time of the book release the names of these technicians and volunteers were not published. But a special event will be held in Northern Sri Lanka to recognize their contributions.



## Mr. Callum Macrae (awarded 2017)



Mr. Callum Macrae is an award-winning filmmaker, writer and journalist. Mr. Macrae was the producer of a series of documentaries that exposed war crimes committed during the last phase of civil war in Sri Lanka. His first documentary released in 2011 which brought worldwide attention to the war crimes and human rights abuses committed by

the Sri Lankan armed forces won the Current Affairs - International category of the Royal Television Society's Television Journalism Awards 2010–11, won two One World Media Awards and earned a BAFTA TV Award nomination. It has also won other awards, including The Audience Awards at the Nuremberg Film Festival and Watch Docs in Poland, as well as the Human Rights award at the Festival des Liberties in Brussels. McCrae and his team were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012.

Mr. Macrae grew up in Nigeria and Scotland. He studied painting at Edinburgh College of Art for five years, was a dustman for two years, ran a pirate radio station for six months and was a teacher for seven years. He was a member of the Official Edinburgh Festival's governing Council and President of Edinburgh and District Trades Council.

Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA on behalf of the Tamil American Community awards their highest recognition award of "Lifetime Service Award" to Mr. Callum Macrae for his lifelong dedication in bringing awareness on social injustices, state sponsored terrorism and human rights violations.

# Judge Navanethem Pillay (awarded 2016)



Judge Navanethem Pillay, a South African national of Tamil origin, was born in 1941. Ms. Pillay received a BA and a LLB from Natal University South Africa and holds a Master of Law and a Doctorate of Juridical Science from Harvard University. She was the first woman to start a law practice in her home province of Natal in 1967. She acted as a defense attorney for anti-apartheid activists, exposing torture, and helping establish key rights for prisoners on

Robben Island - the notorious prison where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for over 23 years. She also worked as a lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and later was appointed Vice-President of the Council of the University of Durban Westville. In 1995, after the end of apartheid, Ms. Pillay was appointed as acting judge on the South African High Court. Later the same year she was elected by the UN General Assembly to be a judge on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where she served a total of eight years, the last four (1999-2003) as President. She was appointed as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in July 2008.

Judge Pillai visited Sri Lanka, and met with victims of the war and made stern statements on all parties to the conflict and delivered a firm message. Judge Pillay is the first recipient of Sangam's 'Lifetime Service Award' in recognition of her decades-long dedication to seeking truth, justice and human rights around the world and her contribution to all humanity.



**Sangam President Thiru. Balan Kugapalan  
presenting the award to Judge N. Pillay.**

## MOST EMINENT TAMIL AMERICAN AWARD / TITLE

**Dr. Ananthan Satchi** (bestowed November 2015)



Late Dr. Ananthan Satchi (1939-2015)

Dr. Ananthan Satchi was one of the founding members of Ilankai Tamil Sangam. Born in 1945 in Sri Lanka and raised in Malaysia, he received his medical degree from the University of Colombo. He moved to the United States in 1971 and retired as an Anesthesiologist. Since forming the Ilankai Tamil Sangam in 1977 with the other founding members, Dr. Satchi gave his unconditional support to the Sangam for the past 38 years. He has extended his philanthropic activities through the Sangam and his generosity has helped improved the lives of orphans, war widows and disabled freedom fighters.

Ilankai Tamil Sangam posthumously bestow the title of "Most Eminent Tamil American" to Late Dr. Ananthan Satchi in recognition of his decades-long dedication to the development and freedom of Eelam Tamils. In the forty-year history of Sangam, this will be the first posthumous title recognition bestowed. Sangam is honored in recognizing one of our founding fathers.

## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



**Dr. Nagalingam  
Jeyalingam** (awarded 2017)

Dr. Nagalingam Jeyalingam graduated from the University of Ceylon with a medical degree, and specialized in Ear Nose and Throat and Head & Neck Surgery at Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital. He became a Fellow of the American Academy of Otolaryngology and Head & Neck Surgery in 1979. In 2003, he was appointed Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Otolaryngology, Mt Sinai Medical Center, New York, NY. He practiced as Ear, Nose & Throat and Head and Neck Surgeon in Newburgh, NY till Dec. 2011. After his retirement, he worked as Director of Clinical Research at ENT and Allergy Associates for two years.

Dr. Jeyalingam was the President of Ilankai Tamil Sangam from 1994 to 1996. He was also the president of the World Tamil Coordinating Committee (WTCC). He was on the Advisory Committee and is currently a Senator and in the Ethics Committee of TGTE. He is also a Governing Council member of USTPAC. Sangam awards the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' to Dr. Nagalingam Jeyalingam in recognition of his contribution to the Sangam over two decades, to the Tamil community in United States and the Tamils in Ilankai.

## Dr. Nagalingam Ethirveerasingam (awarded 2015)



Dr. Nagalingam Ethirveerasingam represented Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) at the 1952 and 1956 Olympic Games and three Asian Games. He finished eleventh in the 1958 British Empire and Commonwealth Games high jump. He won the first Asian Games gold medal for Sri Lanka in 1958. He taught at universities in Sierra Leone, Papua New Guinea, Nigeria and Sri Lanka. He also worked for UNESCO for five years. He was a student at Jaffna Central College, where apart from his accomplishments in athletics, was a cricketer, which is not

well publicized because of his athletic achievements. In later years whilst lecturing in Sierra Leone he captained the University cricket team in the local cricket tournament and in 1973 was appointed vice captain of the national team that played against the neighboring country of Gambia.

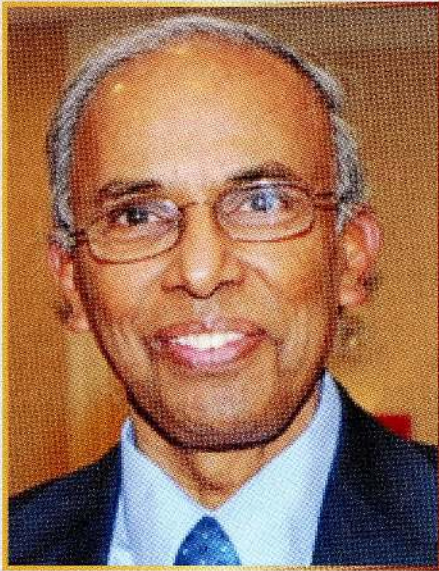
Dr. Ethirveerasingam, only Olympian of Tamil heritage, now lives in the US and Jaffna, Sri Lanka. In addition to engaging in various humanitarian relief efforts in Jaffna and Vanni, he coaches young athletes in that area. He passionately believes that sport can heal trauma and provide hope for the young. Sangam awarded the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' to Dr. Ethirveerasingam in recognition of his achievements in sports, his dedication to the development of sports and education in the Northern Province and humanitarian activities among Eelam Tamils.



**Dr. Ethirveerasingam receiving the award at the Sangam AGM**



## Dr. Nagaratnam Arul Ranjithan (awarded 2017)



Dr. Nagaratnam Arul Ranjithan received his medical degree MBBS from University of Ceylon, in 1969. After an year of internship he emigrated to USA in 1971. Following his residency in Internal medicine, he did Nephrology fellowship in VA Hospital in Bronx, New York. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine and has been in private practice of Nephrology and Internal Medicine from 1976 to the present time in Cumberland, Maryland. He was Medical director of Hemodialysis unit of Western MD Health Systems, over thirty years.

Dr. Ranjithan was the president of Tamils Rehabilitation Organization (TRO) from its inception in 1997 till 2007. He currently serves as a governing council member of USTPAC. Sangam awards the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' to Dr. Nagaratnam Arul Ranjithan in recognition of his generous contributions to the Tamil People in Ilankai and his tireless and dedicated efforts to improve their livelihood for several decades.

## Rev. Dr. S. J. Emmanuel (awarded 2014)



Prof. Dr. S. J. Emmanuel, born in Jaffna, Sri Lanka in 1934, had his early education in Jaffna and later graduated in physical sciences from the University of Ceylon, Colombo in 1958. After a short period as teacher and journalist, he did his studies in Rome, graduating in Philosophy and Theology at the Pontifical Urban University in Rome and was ordained a priest in December 1966. In Sri Lanka, he was then pastor and diocesan director for lay apostolate. From 1976 till 1986,

he was Professor and Dean of Theology at the National Seminary in Kandy, Sri Lanka. From 1986 onwards, he has been a direct victim and witness of the ethnic conflict and war in Jaffna. In October 1995, he along with his staff and students of the Seminary joined the 500,000 in their historic Exodus out of Jaffna. After a year in the jungles of Kilinochchi he moved to Europe in 1997 in self-exile. In 1996 and 1997 he was a visiting Scholar at Heythrop College of the University of London. In September 1997 he moved to Germany.

During these seventeen years in self-exile, besides his lectures in various universities in Europe, he has been bearing credible witness at many international conferences to the horrendous events happening behind closed-doors in the North and East of Sri Lanka. During the last fifteen years he has attended the annual sessions of the UN Human Rights Council held in Geneva and has been lobbying support for his people from the international community. In February 2010 he was elected President of the Global Tamil Forum – a network of Diaspora Tamil organizations around the world. He has given numerous interviews to media and written articles to several journals in English, Tamil and German.

## Mr. Visuvanathan Rudrakumaran, Esq.

(awarded November 2009)



Mr. Visuvanathan Rudrakumaran is a practicing attorney in New York, USA. He studied at Jaffna Central College and Colombo Law College. He holds an LLM in International Law/Comparative Law from the Harvard Law School and is a former co-chair of the Committee on International Law and Comparative Law, New York County Bar Association.

Mr. Visuvanathan has participated in the peace talks between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Government of Sri Lanka as a legal advisor of the LTTE. He is the Prime Minister of the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE). He published and presented papers on self-determination, use of force by non-state entities. He has also been co-counsel in cases challenging the terrorist designations and litigation involved constitutional challenges of 1996 antiterrorism and effective death penalty Act.

He has written extensively on the conflict in the island of Sri Lanka and participated in the Norwegian sponsored Peace Process as Legal Adviser to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam delegation. His published writings include "Secession in Åland, Tamil Separatism, and International Law." Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism XXI, no.1-2 (1994): 11-23

# Dr. Rajan Sriskandarajah

(awarded November 2003)



Dr. Rajan Sriskandarajah graduated from the University of Ceylon with a medical degree and was 'Board Certified' by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, England in 1977. Dr. Sriskandarajah became a Fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in 1980 and was awarded 'Board Certified' by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in 1981. In 1989, he was appointed Clinical Assistant Professor at the New York Medical College. He obtained a Master's degree in Public Health from the New York Medical College in 1993.

Along with his busy medical practice he has been actively involved in Ilankai Tamil Sangam's activities. He was the founder as well as long-time editor of Ilankai Tamil Sangam's "Tamil Voice" publication and of the Sangam website. He has published numerous articles and essays and has given many speeches about the Sri Lankan Tamil issue. Dr. Sriskandarajah has been actively involved in promoting peace and human rights in Sri Lanka.

## Mr. J.M. Rajaratnam

(awarded November 2003)



Mr. J.M.Rajaratnam, a graduate of the University of Ceylon, was the winner of a five-year open Government Scholarship for studies in accounting in the U.K. He was the CEO and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Singer Company's operations in Ceylon, was transferred to the U.S head office and subsequently appointed Vice President of Finance and Accounting of the International Group of the corporation. Mr. J.M. Rajaratnam has been included in Marquis 'Who's Who in America.' After his retirement, he worked as a consultant to the World Bank, as Member of the Roster of Experts on matters related to transnational corporations of the United Nations and as a Member of the U.S Executive Volunteer Services Corps.

Mr. Rajaratnam who had been educating government and international bodies for the Eelam Tami cause, published 'Tamils of Sri Lanka – The quest for human dignity' issued by the U.K.'s Tamil Information Center. He had been a long-time member of Sangam, was a past president and had spoken at various conventions in the USA, Canada, UK and India on the Tamil Eelam cause.



## **Professor Dr. Muttaiya Sundaralingam**

**(awarded November 2004)**



Professor Dr. M. Sundaralingam received his B.Sc. (Honors) from the University of Ceylon in 1956 and Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh in 1961. After a post-doctoral stint in the Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, University of Washington (1962-1963), he was appointed Research Instructor, Department of Biological Structure of the same school (1963-1965).

His research areas included Research Associate in Molecular Biology, Children's Cancer Research Foundation, Harvard University Medical School, Boston, MA; Chairman, Biophysics Ph.D. program, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Professor of Biomolecular Structure, University of Wisconsin; Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and Director, Biological Macromolecular Structure Center of the Ohio State University, Columbus Ohio (1990-2002).

Among his honors are a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship at Oxford (1975-1976) University of Pittsburgh Alumni Distinguished Award, 1986; Ohio Regent's Eminent Scholar Award by the Ohio's Governor. He was among the top 300 of the 1000 most cited scientists for work published from 1965-1978



## **Professor Dr. V. Arunasalam**

**(awarded November 2003)**



Professor Dr. V. Arunasalam, a prominent Research Physicist at the Plasma Physics Laboratory, Princeton University, was a graduate of the University of Ceylon. He completed his Master's degree at the University of Massachusetts and his Ph.D. at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1964. He had taught at William Paterson University and Ryder University in New Jersey. Dr. Arunasalam had been included in the Marquis 'Who's Who in America'.

Dr. Arunasalam's achievements included research in Plasma Physics and controlled Thermonuclear Fusion, Quantum Theory, Quantum Electrodynamics, Cosmology, Foundations of Physics, Particle Physics, Condensed Matter, Theory and Quantum Statistical Mechanics. Dr. Arunasalam had been actively involved in promoting peace in Sri Lanka through the American Government.

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# இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கத்தின் பொங்கல் விழாக்கள்



பழந்தமிழர் ஞாயிற்றையும் (சூரியன்) திங்களையும் (சந்திரன்) அடியாகக் கொண்டு தங்களது வாழ்வியலையும் அறிவியலையும் அமைத்துக் கொண்டனர். எல்லா வளங்களும் நலன்களும் மிகுந்த தை மாதத்தைக் கண்டு தை முதல் நாளை ஆண்டின் பிறப்பாகக் கொண்டு கதிர்வனைப் போற்றிப் பொங்கிப் பொலிந்து மகிழ்ந்தான். அதுவே தைப் பொங்கல்.

தைப் பொங்கல் என்பது இன்பம் பொங்கும் வாழ்வின் தொடக்க நாள் உழவர் திருநாள் எனப் போற்றப்படினும் எவ்வகைத் தொழில் புரிபவராயினும் உழைத்தும் வாழும் மக்களின் நன்னாளே தைப் பொங்கல் நாளாகும்.

தமிழர் வாழ்வின் மிக உன்னத திருநாளான பொங்கலை இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச் சங்கம் மிகவும் பரந்த அளவில் அமெரிக்காவில் தமிழர் வாழும் மாநிலங்களில் பரந்து செய்யும் முயற்சியில் முதற் கட்டமாக 2016ம் ஆண்டு Central Jersey Queens NY மற்றும் starten Island NY ஆகிய மூன்று இடங்களில் வெற்றிகரமாக கொண்டாடியுள்ளது.

இந்த ஆண்டு 2017 இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச் சங்கத்தின் ஒருங்கிணைப்பில் ஐந்து மாநிலங்களில் NY, NJ, Ohio, Boston மற்றும் Mary Land ஆகிய இடங்களில் நடாத்தப்பட்டது.

பொங்கல் நிகழ்வாக காலையில் ஆலயம் முன்பாகவோ மண்டபங்கள் முன்பாகவோ கோலமிட்டு தோரணம் சூழத் தொங்கலிட்டு அடுப்பில் பாணையை வைத்து பால் பொங்கி வழிய அரிசியை இட்டு எல்லோரும் சூழ நின்று பொங்கலோ பொங்கல் என்று கூவி களிப்படைந்து பொங்கல் செய்வது மிகவும் சிறப்பான ஒன்றாகும். அதே தினம் மாலையில் கலை நிகழ்ச்சிகளை நடாத்துவது இன்னமும் பொங்கல் நாளை மெருகூட்டுவதாக இருக்கும்.

எமது தமிழ்ப்பாடசாலை மாணவர்கள் தைப் பொங்கலை தமிழ்ப் பாட புத்தகத்தில் அத்தியாயமாக மட்டும் கற்று வந்தார்கள். இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச்சங்கம் நடாத்தும் பொங்கல் நிகழ்வின் மூலம் அதனைச் செயல் முறையாக காண்பது மிகவும் போற்றப்பட வேண்டிய ஒன்றாகும்.

உலகிலே காணப்படும் பல்லினப் பண்பாட்டு விழாக்களிலே மிக மேன்மையான தைப் பொங்கல் திருநாளை வரும் காலங்களில் நாடு முழுவதும் தமிழர் தமிழர் திருவிழாவாக சமூகங்களை ஒருங்கிணைத்து நடாத்துவது இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச்சங்கத்தின் திட்டமாகவும் உள்ளது.

இனி வரும் காலங்களில் எல்லா மாநிலங்களிலும் எமது வருங்கால சந்ததியினரால் பின்பற்றப்படும் ஒரு நிகழ் வாகவும் எதிர்கால சந்ததியினர் சமூக பலத்துடன் வாழ உறுதுணையாக இருக்கும் என்று நம்புகின்றோம்.

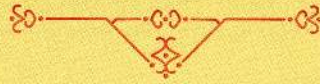
இலங்கைத் தமிழ்ச் சங்கத்தின் இந்த உன்னத மகத்தான சிந்தனைக்கு நாம் எல்லோரும் துணை புரிவோம் என்று உறுதியளித்து வரவேற்பும் வாழ்த்தும் கூறிக் கொள்கின்றோம்.

**நன்றி**

**திருமதி கலையாரச் சுருணாகரன்**

தலைமை ஆசிரியர், நாவல் தமிழ் பாடசாலை

# இலங்கை தர்ப்பு சங்கத்தின் பொங்கல் விழாக்கள்



# இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கக் கலை விழாக்கள்



வரலாற்று தொன்மையும் சிறப்பும் மிக்க தனித்துவமான கலை மரபுகளை கொண்டியங்கும் ஓர் இன மாகத்திகழும் எந்தமிழினம், பெருமையான பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்களையும், மரபுசார் கலைகளையும் கொண்டு மிளிர்கிறது. இருபத்தோராம் நூற்றாண்டில் காலடி எடுத்து வைத்திருக்கும் நாம், எமது பண்பாடுகளையும்-பாரம்பரிய கலைகளையும் இற்றை வரை பாதுகாத்து வைத்திருப்பது வியப்பிடகுரியவிடயமாகினும், தொடர்ந்து இனிவரும் நவீன யுகத்தில், குறிப்பாக எம்புலம் பெயர் தேசங்களில் பேணிப்பாதுகாப்ப தென்பது மிகவும் சவாலான விடயமாகவே இருக்கப்போகிறது.

அமெரிக்க மண்ணில் தமிழ் கலை பண்பாடு விழுமியங்களை பேணும் முகமாக, இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம்கடந்த பல வருடங்களாக கலை விழாக்களை நடாத்தி வருகின்றது. நியூஜெர்சியில் சிறிய அளவில் ஆரம்பிக்கப்பட்ட இம் முயற்சி, இன்று பல தமிழ் பாடசாலைகளையும் இசை நடன பாடசாலைகளையும் ஒன்றிணைத்து, தமிழ் சிறுவர்களும் பெற்றோர்களும், கலை ஆர்வலர்களும் சங்கமிக்கும் ஓர் இடமாக மாற்றமடைந்துள்ளது.

இசைப் பிரியா ஞாபகார்த்த கலைவிழாபோன்ற, அவ்வவ்கால கட்டத்துக்கு ஏற்றவாறான கலை நிகழ்வுகளையும், சூப்பர் சிங்கர் பாடகர்களை கொண்டு நடாத்தும் சிறப்பு இசை நிகழ்வுகளையும் அண்மைக்காலத்தில் அமெரிக்கவாழ் தமிழ் சமூகத்திக்கு விருந்தாக இலங்கை தமிழ்சங்கம் அளித்துள்ளது. சிறுவர் நிகழ்ச்சிகளை கண்டுகளிக்க பணம் ஒருதடையாக இருக்கக்கூடாதென்பதக்காக, நுழைவுக்கட்டணம் எதுவுமின்றியே பல கலைவிழாக்கள் சிலபேருள்ளம் படைத்த அன்பர்களின் துணையோடு நடத்தப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன.

கலை விழாக்களின் முடிவில், பங்குபற்றிய சிறுவர்களிக்கு சான்றிதழ்கள் பரிசுக்கோப்பைகள் வழங்குவதும், ஆசிரியர்களை கௌரவிப்பதும், கலைஞர்களை ஊக்குவிப்பதும் நடைமுறையாக உள்ளது. இனிவரும் காலங்களில், அமெரிக்காவின் பலமாநிலங்களில் உள்ள தமிழ்மக்களை இணைத்ததும், பல பாகங்களில் நடைபெறும் ஒரு விழாவாக இக்கலை விழா பரிணமிக்கும் என்பது எம் எதிர்பார்ப்பாகும்.

சங்ககாலம் தொட்டு இற்றை வரை, தமிழ்கலைகள் அக்காலகட்ட வாழ்க்கை முறைகளுக்கு ஏற்ப சிலமாறுதல் களுக்கு உட்பட்டே பேணப்பட்டு வந்திருக்கிறது. புலம்பெயர் தேசங்களில் காணப்படும் நவீன வாழ்க்கை முறைக்கு ஏற்ப, எவ்வாறான மாறுதல்களை ஏற்படுத்தி, எம் அடுத்த தலை முறைக்கு எமது பாரம்பரிய கலைகளை எடுத்து செல்வ தென்பது போன்ற புலமைசார் ஆய்வுகளுக்கும், இலங்கை தமிழ்சங்கம் முயற்சி எடுக்கும் என்றும் நம்பலாம்.



# இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கக் கலை விழாக்கள்



# ILANKAI TAMIL SANGAM'S ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION ON TAMIL HISTORY, ARTS AND CULTURE



The Drawing and Essay Competition of Ilankai Tamil Sangam was founded in 2013 as an endeavor to encourage Tamil children to proactively learn about their culture and history. In its first two years, the competition was limited to just New Jersey with less than 20 students. In 2015, it was expanded to include Staten Island and Queens and around 90 kids participated in this competition. Boston and Ohio also participated in 2016 with 135 kids and this year Pennsylvania was the newest addition.

The topics presented to the participants have varied through the years but have primarily been focused on Sri Lankan culture. These prompts facilitate participants to not only write about each topic, but also thoroughly research and understand it. They are required to creatively think about how to present their topics thereby allowing them to think independently about what they learned from their research and how to best communicate it.

Some of the topics from this year included Tamil festivals, the biographical history of Tamil poets, Tamil literature, a history of the formation of the Tamil population and the effects of the civil war in Sri Lanka. The goal of these prompts is to help children discover pieces of their cultural identity and think critically about what that means today. Furthermore, we hope that this will motivate them to seek out other topics and have conversations with parents, friends and family members.

Today, our children rarely learn about our culture or history in school. Therefore, the responsibility of communicating that information falls to our community. Through this competition, we hope to spark interest in children to learn more about where they are from and how that ties to their own identities. Every year, we will strive to expand this contest to include as many areas of the country as possible, thereby bringing together our community throughout the nation. We are proud to host this competition in support of Sri Lanka and hope to continue to help them in the future.

**Inthira Emmanuel**

Ilankai Tamil Sangam  
Staten Island Chapter Coordinator



## 2013 / 2014 WINNERS



## 2015 WINNERS



## 2016 WINNERS



The Sangam's website was launched on December 18, 1996 by our founder- editor, Dr. Rajan Sriskandarajah, a long-time Sangam member and contributor. Dr. Sriskandarajah is a physician and had no real background in technology and this was long before the website templates that are available today. Everything had to be done from scratch in HTML. After learning how to code on his own and in his free time from his busy medical practice, Dr. Sriskandarajah set up the website and began posting.



**Dr. Rajan Sriskandarajah**  
Editor : 1996 - 2000

Dr. Sriskandarajah posted many original sources about the Tamil struggle that had been not widely available until that time, including historical, cultural and political documents and pictures, often arranging them in easy to understand formats. Dr. Sriskandarajah was honored for his effort of initiating and maintaining the website and his many other contributions at the 2003 Annual General Meeting.

Because he was such an early adopter, IT was able to obtain the coveted Sangam.org URL. At that time, our website was one of the few that existed on Tamil issues and thus played a very important role in providing news and information. As the number of websites has proliferated, our website is less important for breaking news, but remains an important repository of historical and reference information, and attempts to post material that will be of interest over the long term.

When Dr. Sriskandarajah stepped down as editor in 2000, other editors and web designers stepped in. During this period the website remained the most public face of the Sangam and of Tamil Americans. We have kept up with the enormous changes on the internet by going through three complete revamps of the site, by assuring that the site is viewable on mobile devices and by having new posts noted by Twitter. Posts from all three versions of the website are both viewable and searchable.



Maintaining a credible site in the face of the political challenges of the past few years has been quite a feat. The Tamil community has survived major trauma and steering a course through that trauma and its aftermath has not been easy. Our website posts news for Tamil Americans and other Tamils, but also provides information for academics and researchers (which we know from the inquiries we receive) and is the public face of our organization to the American authorities.

We encourage new people and young folks to become involved and to contribute to this important project to help take our website to the next level of the Tamil experience in the US. We are looking for new contributors and also new members of our Advisory Board.

**Ilankai Tamil Sangam**  
Association of Tamils of Sri Lanka in the USA  
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இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம்  
21st Year on the Web

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**Articles & Analysis**

- S.P. Amarasingam on the 1977 Anti-Tamil Pogrom
- The Legacy of Indian Migration to European Colonies
- War Crimes & Command Responsibility
- Catalans Are Not Alone. Across the World, People Yearn to Govern Themselves
- Catalans and Kurds Discover the Hard Truth About Secession
- Ongoing UNHRC session: What's in store for Sri Lanka?
- [US] Learning to Live With a Changing World Map
- HRW: 2 Years On, Scant Progress on UN Resolution
- IMADR: Enforced Disappearances in Sri Lanka
- Sri Lanka Has Not Kept Promises to UN – Franciscans International
- India's "Like-Minded" Partnerships to Counter China in South Asia
- Sri Lanka Among Asia's Most Undernourished Countries
- CM: Army Holding about 85,000 Acres in North
- The Hateful Monk
- A Question of Command Responsibility
- Sri Lankan Leader Will Protect General Accused of War Crimes
- Interview with Gen. Jayasuriya
- Gen. Jayasuriya Involved in Misdeeds: Field Marshal

**Announcements**

- International Essay & Drawing Competition in Tamil
- SANGAM'S 40<sup>th</sup> YEAR
- Annual General Meeting Nov. 4 in NJ
- See Sangam's **NEW** events page
- Audio CD of Tamil History Available

**Topics**

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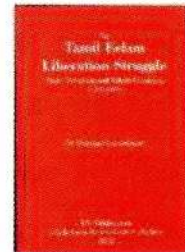
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# Ilankai Tamil Sangam History Project



History - a chronological record of significant events (as affecting a nation or institution) often including an explanation of their causes

- Merriam-Webster dictionary



History of Tamils have not been formally documented in recent years. Successive occupying forces of Tamil Homeland, Portuguese, Dutch, British and Sinhalese, have destroyed many valuable historical land marks and rare historical documents. Pre-independence period of Sri Lanka (then known as Ceylon) has history of occupation by Portuguese, Dutch and British. These rulers were involved in either actively destroying historical evidence or removing and sending back to their countries as needed for their benefits. These kind of destruction continued even after Sri Lanka obtained independence from Britain in 1947. Successful Sri Lankan governments, majority Sinhalese, systematically destroyed ancient historical documents to deny any evidence for the Tamils to claim their homeland, North and East of the country. One of the recent events, burning of the Jaffna Public Library in 1981, showed the intention of the Sinhala governments to deny and annihilate Tamil people from Sri Lanka by erasing the rich history of Tamils in Sri Lanka. Many rare historical documents and many rare books were at the Jaffna Public Library, and the entire library was burned down by the Sinhala Police force with the blessing from a prominent Cabinet minister at that time. This is a deliberate destruction of historical documents of Tamils to erase evidence of Tamil people's rich history in North and East of Sri Lanka. This is part of a structural genocide against Tamil people.

History is not something obscure or unimportant. We learn from our past in order to achieve greater influence over our future. History is to preserve our race, language, culture and our nation. Without History Tamil people will have no identity or a place to call our homeland.

So why we need to invest in preserving, documenting and learning our history?

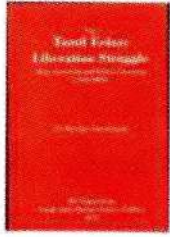
**Because history matters! If we don't do it, who will?**

Ilankai Tamil Sangam established the History Project to support the documentation, preservation and education of History of Tamils. Sangam has collaborated with historian/Professor, Dr. Murugar Gunasingam to document and preserve many rare documents of History of Tamils from all over the world. Dr. Gunasingam has written many books, notably, two books which have documented the history of Tamils from 300 B.C. to 2009.

First book, **Tamils in Sri Lanka – A Comprehensive History (C.300 BC to C.2000 A.D.)**, was written with extensive research from documents found around the world. Dr. Gunasingam traveled to many countries to find rare historical documents for his research. This book is one of the well-researched and well written History of Tamils.



# Ilankai Tamil Sangam History Project

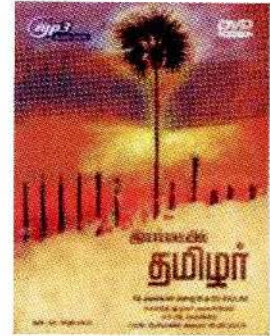


Second book, **Tamil Eelam Liberation Struggle – State Terrorism and ethnic cleansing (1948 – 2009)**, was written to document the discrimination of Tamil people after independence. Dr. Gunasingam wrote this book to document why Tamil people demanded equal rights, and how successive Sinhala governments denied even some basic rights to Tamils.

This book also documents the non-violent form of struggle and why Tamil youth took the path of armed-resistance against the Sri Lankan government to establish an independent state of Tamil Eelam. This book documents the rise of militancy and the brutal end of the armed conflict in May 2009.

Dr. Gunasingam has digitized all of the rare documents and copied into a hard drive to give it to various libraries around the world. Sangam has obtained a copy of the

hard drive with these documents. Sangam has given financial support to this digitization project as well. Sangam will be establishing a method for anyone to access these documents for educational and research purposes only. Please contact any Sangam executive committee member if you are interested in pursuing studies in Tamil History.



Please support Sangam to establish the **“Tamil History Education Project”** to help our future historians to learn and document about Tamil people’s History!

Both books are written in English and Tamil, and audio book is also available for sale by Ilankai Tamil Sangam

Sangam also arranged History Work shop by Dr. Gunasingam in Central New Jersey for the Tristate Tamils.

Dr. Gunasingam speaking to the participants of this workshop:



# முள்ளி வாய்க்கால் நினைவு தினம்

முள்ளிவாய்க்கால் நினைவு தினம், ஈழபோரின் இறுதிக் கட்டத்தில் கொல்லப்பட்டவர்களை நினைவு கூர்ந்து உலகெங்கும் உள்ள தமிழ் மக்களால் ஆண்டு தோறும் மே மாதம் 17 ஆம் 18 ஆம் திகதிகளில் அனுஷ்டிக்கப் படுகிறது. இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்க உறுப்பினர்கள் ஆண்டு தோறும் முள்ளி வாய்க்கால் நினைவு தினத்தை நியூயார்க், நியூஜெர்சி, மற்றும் கலிபோர்னியா பகுதிகளில் அனுஷ்டித்து வரு கிறார்கள்.

எமது வரும் கால சந்ததியினருக்கு, எமது மக்கள் போரில்பட்ட இன்னல்களை எடுத்து செல்வதற்கு இவ்வாறான நிகழ்வுகள் இன்றியமையாதவையாகும். உலகின் பல இனங்களும் இவ்வாறான நினைவு தினங்களை பல நூற்றாண்டாக நடாத்தி வருகிறார்கள். இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கமும் இந்த நிகழ்வினை தொடர்ந்து நடாத்தி செல்வதற்கு திடசங்கற்பம் பூண்டுள்ளது.

போரில் இறந்தவர்களை நினைவு கூருமுகமாக, நியூஜெர்சியில் உள்ள ஈஸ்ட்விண்ட்ஸர் பகுதியில் மரம் ஒன்று நடப்படுள்ளது. இம் மரத்தடியில் ஆண்டு தோறும் சங்கத்தின் உறுப்பினர்களால் முள்ளி வாய்க்கால் நினைவு தினம், மற்றும் தியாக தீபம் திலீபன் நினைவு தினம் போன்றவை கடை பிடிக்கப்பட்டு வரப்படுகின்றன. மிக உணர்வு பூர்வமாக நடைபெறும் இந்த நிகழ்வுகளில், அதிக அளவிலான அமெரிக்க தமிழ் மக்கள் இனிவரும் காலங்களில் பாங்குபற்ற வேண்டும் என்பது எமது சங்கத்தின் எதிர்பார்ப்பாகும். அத்துடன் அமெரிக்காவின் அனைத்து மாநிலங்களிலும் ஈழப்போரில் இறந்த தமிழ் மக்களை நினைவு கூறும் மரங்களை நடுவதும் சங்கத்தின் நீண்ட கால திட்டமாக இருக்கிறது.



# Ilankai Tamil Sangam Amparai Project

In marking our Ruby Jubilee Celebrations, Ilankai Tamil Sangam America initiated a multiyear mega program in the Amparai district to provide various assistance to 44 Tamil villages. The program consists projects such as providing financial and fishery equipment assistance to tamil fishermen, fishery marketing project to assist other families that are living under poverty, financial and technical assistance to farming families headed by single mothers and educational and technical assistance to younger generation. Sangam plan to initiate the implementation of projects from the village of "Karaitheevu" and Sangam will be assisted by the Educational and Cultural Organization for Strengthening Society in Amparai. Proceeds from our Ruby Jubilee AGM will be allocated to run this project for multiple years. Sangam intend to go from Village to village liberating them from poverty, social injustices and colonization. Please contribute generously towards this project by visiting: '[www.sangamevents.org](http://www.sangamevents.org)'



## Project to implement solar powered lights for thousand Tamil homes in Eastern Sri Lanka



In 2016, Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA in close co-operation with the U.S Rotary clubs in Northern New Jersey started executing a project to extend our hands to set-up 1000 poor Tamil families with Solar Panels that would provide electricity in their shacks. Each Solar Panel costs \$50. The Solar Panels are the size of a lap-top (12x15 inches) .

This project is executed with the technical expertise at the Eastern Technical institute (ETI) in Batticaloa. The ETI was set-up by Fr. Lloyd Lorio an American missionary who came to Ceylon 60 years ago. The ETI technical staff will set the equipment. In addition, they will Repair and Maintain the Solar Panels and the associated battery for the families. The ETI technicians can support the panels for over 5 years. This project also provides temporary employment for the local youth.

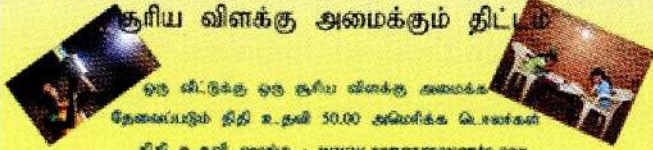
With Solar Panel and electricity; the children can study & read at night. The parents can cook and do house work at night. The parents do not have to buy kerosene any more. They can use the money for buying necessary food/medicines. The parents do not have to live with the fear that a child will knock a kerosene lamp and the hut may catch fire. Children will not get burnt with fire anymore. If a child/adult is sick at night with the flip of an electric switch there is light to take care of the emergency at hand. Most of all, the quality of life of these poor is tremendously improved overnight.

At the time of the Sangam Ruby Anniversary, first phase of the project completed with implementation of the solar powered lamps 100 families with the Sangam funds. Rotary Club Has started the 2nd phase with the objective of providing solar powered lamps for additional 400 Tamil families.



இலங்கை தமிழ் சங்கம் அமெரிக்காவில் ரோட்டரி தேற்காங் மிஷனும்  
 கிழக்கு தொழில்நுட்ப கல்லூரியும் இணைந்து இயக்கும்

**கிழக்கு இலங்கையில் ஆயிரம் தமிழ் வீடுகளுக்கு  
 சூரிய விளக்கு அமைக்கும் திட்டம்**



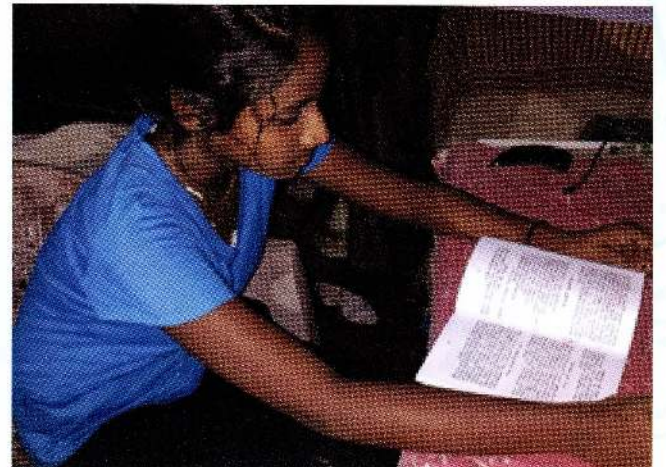
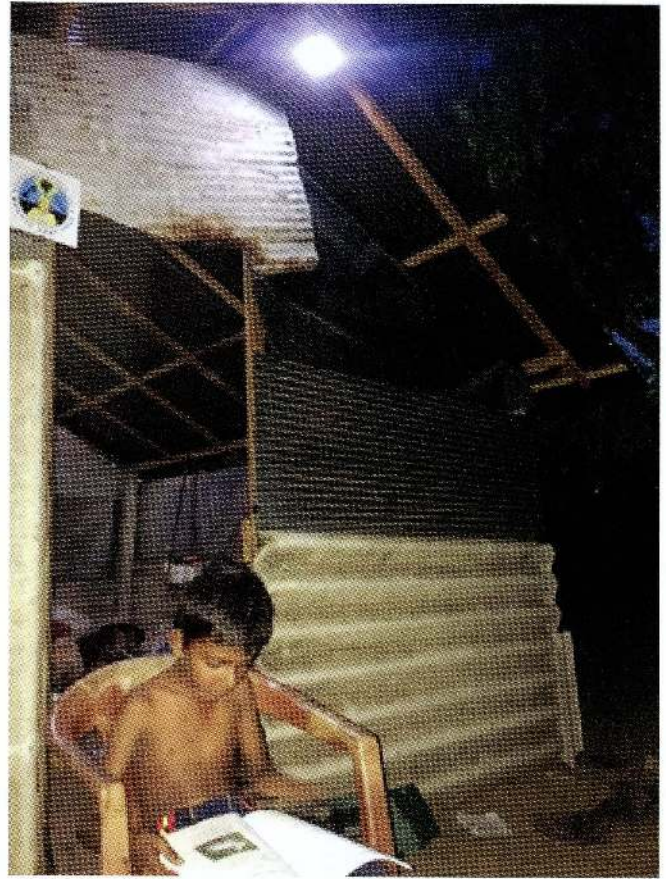
ஒரு வீட்டுக்கு ஒரு சூரிய விளக்கு அமைக்க  
 தேவைப்படும் நிதி உதவி 50.00 அமெரிக்க டொலர்கள்  
 நிதி உதவி வழங்க : [www.sangamevents.org](http://www.sangamevents.org)

Inkai Tamil Sangam America and Rotary Netcong Partnering  
 with Eastern Technical Institute to Implement

**Solar Powered Lights for thousand Tamil homes  
 in Eastern Sri Lanka**

USD 50.00 covers the cost of implementing and maintaining one  
 solar powered panel and lamp for one family for five years

To donate please visit: [www.sangamevents.org](http://www.sangamevents.org)



# Many facets of Thai Pongal Pongal as Tamils' Passover

By K. Thirukumaran



Tamils have celebrated Thai Pongal in one form or the other over millennia. Celebrating Thai Pongal nowadays in its traditional, purposeful piety and outdoor gala continues to evolve as vast number of diaspora Tamil communities exit in far corners away from their homelands. They also live far from ancestral agrarian and village habitats that used to indulge in the age-old Thai Pongal festivities within the homelands as well. In this setting, let the Thai Pongal festivities continue to take centre stage and be celebrated as the key festival of Tamils in emboldening Tamil identity and in fostering kinship now and over our future generations:

## (1) Bountiful prosperity ushers in the time of Tamil Thanksgiving

Tamil month of 'Thai', falling on January 14th or 15th is Pongal day; it is the Tamil Thanksgiving Day celebrating sun, rain, farm cattle and ushering in pureness and prosperity. Thai harvest celebration and thanksgiving are marked by the spillover of the traditional sweet rice cookout and everything good in abundance to follow in the year it joyously indicates.

Celebrated Philosopher-Poet Thiruvalluvar says in the first Kural ~ couplet, under Part I ~ Virtue (1.1.1 The Praise of God),

"As the letter A is the first of all letters, so the eternal God is first in the world".  
(Translated by Rev. G.U. Pope)

அகர முதல எழுத்தெல்லாம்  
ஆதிபகவன் முதற்றே உலகு.  
( குறள்எண் : 1 ).

**"AgaraMuthalaelluththellam  
Athi pakavanmuthatreulagu"**

On Thai Pongal Day, the Sun is the celebrated  
"Athi pakavan", the eternally divine.





## **(2) Thai Pongal is marked with cultural festivities to uphold heritage**

Among other things, Thai Pongal has long become a festival marking or taking gauge of prosperous sentiments in the lands of our roots, as one aspiring to be a farmer declined over a generation or two ago, the time of the year Thai Pongal falls and the traditions associated with its celebration make it an ideal time to take stock of sentiments.

One key aspect of it is that how important "Pongal Santhai" (Pongal market) became when markets in the Jaffna peninsula used to convene on alternate days etc., until a generation or two ago. When the market convened for the final time before Jan 14th, the crowds and spending habits would be the gauges on how well other sectors and the general spirit of the people would be too. The farmers' markets around towns and villages bustle with activity during days preceding Thai Pongal. The bountiful harvests parade the markets, and the final day the market convenes prior to Pongal known as Pongal Santhai (Pongal market) especially lavishes with prosperous sentiments.

They all depended on a bountiful harvest. However tiny, this aspect of our root still exists and it will be a reason to still celebrate Thai Pongal!

## **(3) Celebrating own heritage amid many cultures**

Festivals such as Hanukkah and Kwanzaa gained added significance in their respective diaspora communities to fulfill the calendar of holiday time with one's own heritage. Celebrating the charming Tamil Thanksgiving Festival in January, just after the holiday season of December adds more glitter to Pongal fanfare.

## **(4) Celebrating Thai Pongal, the charming festival of Thanksgiving**

Thai Pongal season has been generationally well documented as an extremely popular time with children in our homelands.

The legendary KullanthaiKavignarAzha. Valliappa, (1922-1989) a pioneer known for dedicated work of children's literature in Tamil, wrote the following poem about Pongal in his collection of poetry for children, MalarumUllam (Blossoming mind)

The poem brings out the charm in preparing for and celebrating Pongal festivities, and roughly translates as follows:

"Walls newly painted

“  
*Floors neatly polished*  
*Day break we shower*  
*Lamp within us flicker*  
*Garner decorated crock*  
*Dazzle around turmeric*  
*Crock atop stove*  
*Milk therein pour*  
*Foaming milk spillovers*  
*Greetings galore*  
*'Pongal 'o Pongal*  
*Offer almighty rice*  
*Coconut sugarcane feast*  
*Together we eat*  
*Singing dancing joyously "*



Greeting on Pongal day saying 'Pongal 'o Pongal' signifies the abundance of milk froth spillover, from the clay pot and other vessels that are used to make the sweet-rice – Pongal, as sign of prosperity and happiness. It is said that "Pongal" is perhaps the only festival in the world to known in the name of a food dish.

**(5) Thai Pongal in Home away from Home and in light of leading non-agrarian life styles "Thai paves the way for good things to follow", is a Tamil proverb.**

Thai Pongal marks the first day of the Tamil month January; it is also the celebrated Tamil month for weddings, lasting into to eternal friendships and love.

In terms of Thai Pongal's "irrelevance" – that may also become a new reason to "celebrate" it. This one festival of Tamils can be said that is causing it to be not celebrated in the same way as our ancestors did, particularly its outdoor events and then also it falls in the colder months to where the most Tamil "exodus" have taken place. Observance of Thai Pongal becomes a commemoration of this historic aspect as well.

In that sense it can become Tamils' own "Passover"!

Ilankai Tamil Sangam to its pride has been coordinating Thai Pongal events in expanded ways here in the United States for the past few years. Kudos to Ilankai Tamil Sangam in these efforts and Best Wishes for further development on the Pongal front going forward! And 'Pongal 'o Pongal', to all!!!

“  
 வெள்ளை யெல்லாம் அடித்துவைத்து  
 வீட்டை நன்கு மெழுகுவைத்து,  
 விடியும் போதே குளித்துவிட்டு,  
 விளக்கு ஒன்றை ஏற்றிவைத்து,  
 கோல மீட்ட பாசையதில்  
 கொத்து மஞ்சள் கட்டிவைத்து,  
 அந்தப் பாசை தன்னைத்தூக்கி  
 அடுப்பில் வைத்துப் பாலை ஊற்றிப்  
 பொங்கிப் பாலும் வருகையிலே  
 ‘பொங்க லோபால் ‘பொங்க” லென்போம்.  
 தேங்கா யோடு கரும்பும், சோறும்  
 தெய்வத் துக்குப் படைத்துவைத்து,  
 ஒன்று சேர்ந்து உண்டிடுவோம்  
 ஒடி ஆடிப் பாடிடுவோம்.



குழந்தை கவிஞர் சி.மு. வள்ளியப்பா எழுதிய “மலரும் உள்ளம்” கவிதைத் தொகுப்பில் இருந்து..

A Page from “Blossoming Mind”: Pongal Poem by Kullanthai Kavignar Azha Valliappa

(November 7, 1922 – March 16, 1989)

# மெல்லத் தமிழினிச் சாகும் என்ற பாரதியாரின் கவலை இப்போதும் இடுக்கிறது !

நக்கீரன்

எங்களில் பலருக்கு தமிழ்மொழியின் எதிர்காலம் பற்றிய கவலை, அச்சம் இருக்கிறது. தமிழ்மொழி வரலாற்றை எடுத்துப் பார்த்தால் அது எதிர்நீச்சல் போட்டி வந்திருக்கிறது. எதிர்நீச்சல் போட முடியாது போனபோது தமிழ்மொழி சிதைந்து வேறு மொழிகளுக்கு வித்திட்டுள்ளது. மலையாள மொழி இதற்கு நல்ல எடுத்துக்காட்டு ஆகும்.

ஐம்பெரும் காப்பியங்களில் ஒன்றான சிலப்பதிகாரம் இயற்றிய சேரன் தம்பி இளங்கோ, ஆதி உலா எழுதிய நாயனார் சேரமான் பெருமாள், திருமொழி பாடிய குலசேகர ஆழ்வார் வாழ்ந்த சேர நாடும், பேசிய செந்தமிழும் இன்று மலையாளம் பேசும் கேரள நாடாக மாறிவிட்டது. பதினேழாம் நூற்றாண்டு வரை கேரளத்தில் தமிழே பேசப்பட்டது. 17 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டில்தான் குஞ்சத்து எழுத்தச்சன் என்பவர் தமிழோடு வட மொழியைக் கலந்து மலையாள மொழியை உருவாக்கினார். இன்று அவர் நவீன மலையாள மொழியின் தந்தை எனப் போற்றப்படுகிறார்.

மலையாள கரையோரம் உள்ள அம்பலக்காட்டில் முதலில் தமிழில் எழுதி வெளியிடப்பட்ட நூல் கிபி 1577 இல் வெளிவந்தது. அந்த நூல் மலவார் அல்லது தமிழில் எழுதப்பட்டது என்று மொழி அறிஞர் கால்டுவெல் குறிப்பிடுகிறார். மலையாளத்தில் இலக்கண நூல் இயற்றப்பட்ட ஆண்டு கிபி 1860 ஆகும். எனவே மொழி அழியக் கூடியது. சங்க கால வடவேங்கடம் தென்குமரி யாயிடைத் தமிழ்கூறு நல்லுக்கத்தின் பல பகுதிகளை இன்று நாம் இழந்து விட்டோம். வட எல்லை இன்று சுருங்கிவிட்டது.

சித்தூர் மாவட்டத்தில் 19,000 சதுர கிலோ மீட்டர் நிலப்பரப்பில் பெரும் பகுதியும் 13,000 சதுர கிலோ மீட்டர் நிலப்பரப்பு உள்ள நெல்லூர் மாவட்டத்தின் கணிசமான பகுதியும் ஆந்திராவுடன் இணைக்கப்பட்டு விட்டது. இதனால் வடபெண்ணாறு, ஆரணியாறு, பொன் வாணியாறு முதலிய வற்றின் வளமான மண் தமிழகத்திற்கு இல்லை என்றாகி விட்டது. ஆரணி ஆற்றின் பாசனப் பகுதி தமிழ்நாட்டில் இருந்தாலும், அணைக்கட்டுப் பகுதி ஆந்திராவுக்குப் போய்விட்டது.

கடந்த ஆண்டு நான் கேரள நாட்டுக்குப் போயிருந்த போது மொழிச் சிக்கல் இருக்கவில்லை. அவர்கள் பறைவது எமக்குப் புரிகிறது. நாங்கள் பறைவது அவர்களுக்கு விளங்குகிறது. மலையாள மொழியில் காணப்படும் வடமொழிச் சொற்களை நீக்கிவிட்டால் எஞ்சியிருப்பது தமிழ் மொழிதான்.

ஏழரைக் கோடி மக்கள் வாழும் தமிழ்நாடு பற்றி நாம் அதிகம் கவலைப்படத் தேவையில்லை. வட்டார வழக்கில் எவ்வளவுதான் வேறுபாடு இருந்தாலும் பாட நூல்கள் தமிழ் இலக்கணத்துக்கு அமைய எழுதப்படுகிறது. திரைப்படங்களில் கூட கதாநாயகன், கதாநாயகி பேசும் மொழி இலக்கணச் சுத்தியோடு இருக்கிறது. பெரும்பாலான திரைப்படங்களும் அவ்வாறே, ஆனந்த விகடன், யூனியர் விகடன் மற்றும் "அவாள்" நடத்தும் கிழமை ஏடுகளே தமிழ்க்கிணற்று. எழுதப்படுகின்றன. அப்படியான கலப்பு நடைக்கு தமிழர்களிடம் இருந்து எதிர்ப்பில்லாததால் அந்த ஏடுகள் தொடர்ந்து தமிழுக்கு கேடு விளைவிக்கின்றன.

தமிழ்நாட்டு மாணவர்கள் தமிழை ஆங்கிலத்தோடு கலந்து பேசுகிறார்கள். மேட்டுக்குடி மாணவர்களுக்கு ஆங்கிலம் நுனி நாக்கில் விளையாடுகிறது. வீட்டில் பெற்றோர்களோடு ஆங்கிலத்தில்தான் உரையாடுகிறார்கள். வீட்டு வேலைக்காரியோடு மட்டும் தட்டுத் தடுமாறி தமிழில் பேசுகிறார்கள். திரைப்படக் கதாநாயகர்கள், கதாநாயகிகள், இயக்குநர்கள் தொலைக்காட்சியில் தோன்றி உரையாடும் போது ஆங்கிலத்தோடு தமிழைக் கலந்து பேசுகிறார்கள். ஒரு காரணம் அவர்களில் பலர் பிறமொழியைத் தாய்மொழியாகக் கொண்டவர்கள்.

என்போன்றோரது கவலையெல்லாம் என்றுமுள்ள செந்தமிழ் தமிழ்மக்கள் புலம்பெயர்ந்த நாடுகளில் வாழ்மா அல்லது மாழ்மா என்பதுதான். இங்கு நடைபெறும் கலை விழாக்களைப் பார்க்கும் போது தமிழ்க் கலைகள் வாழும் என்ற நம்பிக்கை பிறக்கிறது. ஆனால் தமிழ்மொழி வாழ்மா என்பது கேள்விக்குறியே!

கடந்தவாரம் (15-09-2017) கனடா தமிழ்க் கல்லூரியில் படித்த மாணவர்களுக்கு திரு நாராயணசாமி நினைவு பல்கலைக் கழகத்தின் (ஸ்ரீசுஆருளைநளவை) தமிழ்ப் பேராயம் அயக்கத் தமிழ் ஆசிரியர் பட்டப் படிப்புப் படித்த முடித்தவர்களுக்கு சான்றிதழ் வழங்கி மதிப்பளிக்கும் விழா ஸ்காப்பரோ நகரில் நடந்தது. இந்த வகுப்பில் படித்த 51 மாணவர்களில் 34 மாணவர்கள் (33 பெண்கள் ஒரு ஆண்) தேர்வு எழுதி சித்தி பெற்றிருந்தார்கள். அவஸ்திரேலியா, சுவீஸ்தலாந்து போன்ற அயல்நாடுகளிலும் தமிழ் ஆசிரியர் பட்டப்படிப்பு கற்றுக் கொடுக்கப்படுகிறது.

இப்படியான முயற்சிகள் தமிழ் ஆசிரியர்கள் தமிழ்மாணவர்களுக்கு தமிழைப் படிப்பித்துக் கொடுக்க உதவும். இப்போது தமிழில் பயிற்சி பெறாத ஆசிரியர்களே தமிழைச் சொல்லிக் கொடுக்கிறார்கள்.

ஏற்கனவே மனோன்மணியம் சுந்தரனார் பல்கலைக் கழகம், அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் ரொறன்ரோவில் இளங்கலை, முதுகலைப் பட்டப் படிப்புக்கு மாணவர்களை தயார் செய்து பட்டம் வழங்கி வருகின்றன.

தமிழில் பேசவும் எழுதவும் ஒரு சிறு விழுக்காட்டினரே தேர்ச்சி பெற்றிருக்கிறார்கள். ரொறன்ரோவில் உள்ள 40,000 மாணவர்களில் கால்வாசியே தமிழை ஒரு பாடமாகப் படிக்கின்றார்கள். எஞ்சியவர்கள் தமிழைப் படிப்பதில்லை. கனடாவில் மட்டுமல்ல தமிழர்கள் புலம்பெயர்ந்து வாழும் நாடு களில் தமிழ் படிப்போர் எண்ணிக்கை அருகி வருகிறதாகச் சொல்கிறார்கள்.

இருநூறு ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்னர் புலம்பெயர்ந்த தமிழ்நாட்டுத் தமிழர்கள் தமிழை மறந்ததற்குப் பல காரணங்கள் உண்டு. சமூக ஏனையின் அடிமட்டத்தில் உள்ள ஏழைகளே பிழைக்க வழிதேடி கூலிகளாகக் கப்பல்களில் புலம்பெயர்ந்தார்கள். பெரும்பாலும் இவர்கள் படிப்பறிவில்லாதவர்கள். ஊருக்கு ஒரு கடிதம் எழுதினால் அது போய்ச் சேர ஆறுமாதம் எடுத்தது. இவர்கள் இன்று தமிழை மறந்துவிட்டார்கள். இன அடையாளத்தைத் தொலைத்து விட்டார்கள். அண்மைக்காலத்தில் தென்னாபிரிக்கா, மொறேசியஸ் போன்ற நாடுகளில் பிள்ளைகளுக்கு தமிழ் படிப்பித்துக் கொடுக்கும் முயற்சி முன்னெடுக்கப்பட்டு வருகிறது.

மலேசியாவில் இருபது இலட்சம் (7விழுக்காடு) தமிழ்மக்கள் வாழ்கிறார்கள். சென்ற நூற்றாண்டின் மத்தியில் (1950 இல்) 888 தமிழ்ப்பள்ளிகள் இருந்தன. 2011 ஆம் ஆண்டில் 523 தமிழ்ப்பள்ளிகள் தான் இருந்தன. இடைப்பட்ட 54 ஆண்டு காலத்தில் மலேசியாவில் இருந்த 365 தமிழ்ப்பள்ளிகள் மூடப்பட்டன. அதற்கு முக்கிய காரணம் தமிழ் மொழிக்கு அங்கு தகைமை இல்லை.

பியூஜியில் குடியேறிய தமிழர்கள் தமிழை மறந்து இந்தி படித்துத் தங்களது இன அடையாளத்தை தொலைத்து வருகிறார்கள். இந்தி படிப்பதை இந்திய மத்திய அரசு ஊக்குவிக்கிறது. இந்தி மொழி சொல்லிக் கொடுக்க இந்தி மொழி ஆசிரியர்களையும் பாட நூல்களையும் அனுப்பி வைக்கிறது.

அன்றைய கால கட்டத்தில் தொலைதொடர்பு கருவிகள் இருக்கவில்லை. வானொலி, தொலைக் காட்சி, திரைப்படம், கணினி, தொலைபேசி போன்றவை இருக்கவில்லை. இன்று அப்படியல்ல, தமிழ்மொழியை கணினி மூலம் படிக்கலாம். படித்துத் தேர்வு கூட எழுதிப் பட்டம் பெறலாம். பல்கலைக் கழகங்கள் இந்த வாய்ப்புகளை ஏற்படுத்திக் கொடுத்துள்ளன.

உண்மையைச் சொன்னால் தமிழர்களுக்கு தாய்மொழிப் பற்று மிகக் குறைவு. முதலில் அவர்களது வழிபாட்டில் தமிழ் இல்லை. திருமணச் சடங்கில் தமிழ் இல்லை. இசையில் தமிழ் இல்லை. தமிழ்நாடு நீதிமன்றங்களில் தமிழ் இல்லை. தமிழ்நாடு பள்ளிக்கூடங்களில் தமிழ்மொழி கட்டாய பாடம் இல்லை. ஒரு மாணவன் தமிழ்மொழியைப் படிக்காமல் பல்கலைக் கழகம் வரை சென்று பட்டம் பெற்று வெளியேறலாம் என்ற அவல நிலை தமிழ்நாட்டில் இருக்கிறது.

புலம்பெயர் தமிழர்களிடையே தமிழ்க் கலையில் உள்ள ஆர்வம் தமிழ் மொழியில் இருப்பதில்லை. கனடாவில் தமிழ்மொழியைச் சொல்லிக் கொடுக்க விரல் விட்டு எண்ணக் கூடிய பள்ளிக் கூடங்களே இருக்கின்றன. ஆனால் நடனப் பள்ளிகள் 60 க்கு மேல் இருக்கின்றன. நடன ஆசிரியர்கள், ஆசிரியைகள் நூற்றுக் கணக்கில் இருக்கிறார்கள். சோகம் என்னவென்றால் மாணவர்களுக்கு ஆங்கில மூலம் நடனக் கலை படிப்பித்துக் கொடுக்கப்படுகிறது. அரங்கேறும் ஆடலழகிகள் தமிழ் பேசுவராததால் நன்றியுரையை அழகான ஆங்கிலத்தில் வழங்குகிறார்கள்!

இன்று தமிழ்நாட்டுத் தெருக்களில் தமிழ் இல்லை. நூற்றுக்கு 90 விழுக்காடு பெயர்ப்பலகைகள் ஆங்கிலத்தில் காணப்படுகின்றன. எஞ்சிய 10 விழுக்காடு ஆங்கிலத்திலும் தமிழிலும் இருக்கின்றன. கேரளத்தில் நேர் எதிர்மாறு. தொண்ணூறு விழுக்காடு பெயர்ப்பலகைகள் மலையாளத்தில் மட்டும் எழுதி வைத்திருக்கிறார்கள்.

ஆள்வோருக்குத் தமிழ்ப் பற்று இருந்தால்தான் குடிமக்களுக்கும் தமிழில் பற்று வரும். ஆளுவோருக்கு அக்கறையில்லாவிட்டால் தமிழ்மொழி வளராது! பேணப்படாத பண்டம் குப்பைக்குப் போய்விடும்.

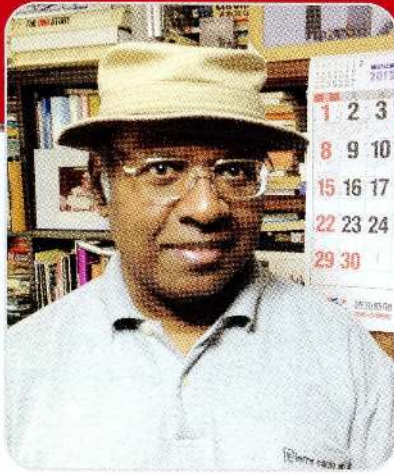
ஒரு மொழி வளர வேண்டும் என்றால் அதற்கு ஒரு நாடு இருக்க வேண்டும். ஒரு இறைமையுள்ள அரசு இருக்க வேண்டும். சேர, சோழ, பாண்டியர்களாலத்தான் தமிழ் வளர்ந்தது. பதின் மூன்றாம் நூற்றாண்டில் இந்த அரசுகள் மறைந்த பின்னர் தமிழ்மொழி நலியத் தொடங்கியது. தெலுங்கு, ஆங்கிலம் போன்ற பிறமொழிகள் வளர்ச்சி அடைந்தன. இன்று கனடா, வட அமெரிக்கா போன்ற நாடுகளில் மாணவர்களது முதல் மொழி மற்றும் கற்கை மொழி ஆங்கிலம் ஆகிவிட்டது. வீட்டு மொழி கூட ஆங்கிலமாக மாறி வருகிறது. அல்லது மாறிவிட்டது.

1948 இல் இஸ்ரேல் நாடு உருவாகும் வரை யூத மொழி ஐரோப்பாவில் வழக்கொழிந்து போயிருந்தது. நாடு சுதந்திரம் பெற்ற பின்னர்தான் அந்த மொழிக்கு மீண்டும் உயிரூட்டப்பட்டது. கனடா நாட்டில் வாழும் யூத இனத்தவர் தங்கள் பிள்ளைகள் கீப்பூர் மொழி படிக்க, யூத பண்பாட்டை அறிந்து க கோடை காலத்தில் இஸ்ரேல் நாட்டுக்கு அனுப்பி வைக்கிறார்கள்.

நூறு ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்னர் சொல்லில் உயர்வு தமிழ்ச் சொல்லே என்று பாடிய பாரதியாரிடம் தமிழ் மெல்லச் சாகும் என்ற கவலையும் அச்சமும் இருந்தது.

# GREETINGS FROM SACHI

Sangam website's 'honorary columnist' Sachi Sri Kantha



Currently, the digital face of Ilankai Tamil Sangam is the Sangam website. My association with the Sangam website began in 2001. For this honor bestowed on me by the founder website editor, Dr. Rajan Sriskandarajah, his successor (the current website editor) as well as to the past and present office bearers of the Ilankai Tamil Sangam, I'm most thankful. From Japan, I convey my heartfelt 40th birthday greetings to Sangam and have big hopes that it will prosper with a long life in the years to come as well.

During the past 16 years, I have contributed items of varied topic range on issues of interest to Eelam Tamils, Tamil Nadu Tamils and Tamils living in the diaspora. For the first two years, I routinely took print copies of all the posted items of my columns and filed them. Subsequently, for various reasons, I have given up this exercise. As such, currently I don't have a complete record of the items which appeared with my byline. Numbers provided in the current version include 136 items. Older articles, before the current version came into existence, include 268 items. There are no numbers for the original version. This exercise of writing something of interest to Sangam readers kept me in touch with my relatives and friends, whom I couldn't see face to face. It also brought to me new friends, whom I couldn't meet face to face.

I can do no better than offer a wonderful poem by King poet Kannadasan (1927-1981) with the title, 'Thamizhan' for the Sangam's ruby jubilee. He penned this poem for Sirkazhi Govindarajan (1933-1988), renowned musician and movie playback singer bestowed with a temple bell-like voice, to perform in invited concerts held among diaspora Tamils. This poem is composed in six quatrains. In the final quatrain, Kannadasan included Govindarajan's name and his own signature as well. I provide a scanned version of the original and my English translation.

**Our Tamils did cross the sea – and there  
[We] see the God in camphor light  
Searching wealth for the body and God for the mind  
To live with self respect and service the Tamil**

**On that side, a temple for Murugan  
Near to that, a temple for Krishnan  
On any side, a temple for Sivan  
Wherever one sees a temple for Tamil**

**To spread the philosophy of tranquility  
In the lands of America,  
To promote their religion as dear as an  
eyelid in the London city**



**I did see Raman in the great old island  
I saw Seetha in the beautiful Thailand  
Later saw Brahman in Cambodia – and  
also saw the fault-forgiving Hindu God**

**Madurai Meenachi crossed the sea – Thiru  
Malai Nayagan did cross the sea  
Gracious Ganapathi did cross the sea – Our  
Chanting Velan also crossed the sea.**

**In the voice of Govindarajan – that  
Kannan of Gokulam could be heard  
In the song of poet Kannadasan – the Tamil  
of learning Goddess does bloom.**

Though Kannadasan had not specifically identified Eelam by name (like that of Thailand and Cambodia) in this verse, his reference to it appears in the first line of that quatrain, as 'great old island'. I propose to let this verse be the motto of encouragement for expatriate Tamils living in the USA and elsewhere.

‘மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு’  
“*Ruby Jubilee Year*”

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*On your Ruby Jubilee Anniversary*

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WITH BEST WISHES AND COMPLIMENTS TO ILANKAI TAMIL SANGAM



‘மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு’  
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‘மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு’  
“*Ruby Jubilee Year*”

WITH BEST WISHES TO ILANKAI TAMIL SANGAM

*On its Ruby Jubilee Anniversary*

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR REMARKABLE AND NOBLE SERVICE  
TO OUR COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED STATES AND TO OUR PEOPLE IN ILANKAI.



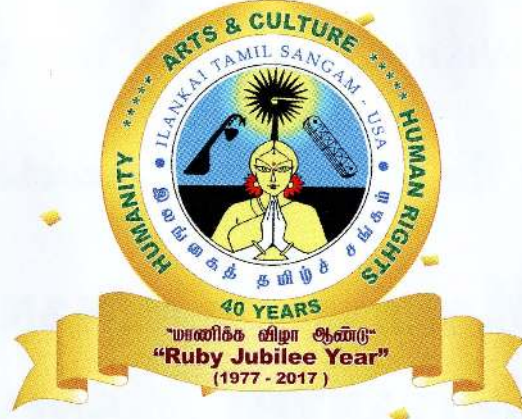
‘மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு’  
“*Ruby Jubilee Year*”

*Best Wishes On your Ruby Jubilee Anniversary*

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*“மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு”*  
*“Ruby Jubilee Year”*

**With Best Wishes To Ilankai Tamil sangam**

*On its Ruby Jubilee Anniversary*

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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**“EVERY WORTHWHILE ACCOMPLISHMENT, BIG OR LITTLE,  
HAS ITS STAGES OF DRUDGERY AND TRIUMPH;  
A BEGINNING, A STRUGGLE AND A VICTORY’ – MAHATMA GANDHI**

**CONGRATULATIONS ILANKAI TAMIL SANGAM**



**“மாணிக்க விழா ஆண்டு”**  
**“Ruby Jubilee Year”**

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Best Wishes on ITS' 40th Anniversary



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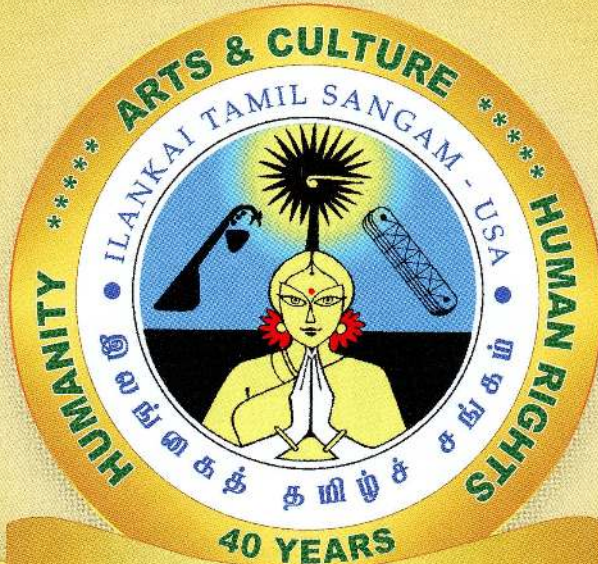
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# ILANKAI TAMIL SANGAM USA RUBY JUBILEE EVENT



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Ramada Plaza Conference Center  
340, Forsgate Dr, Monroe Township, NJ 08831  
*Saturday Nov 4th 2017*

*(Day Event From 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.)*

*(Evening Event From 5:00 P.M. to 11:55 P.M)*

Panel Discussions, USTPAC AGM, PEARL Meeting,  
TGTE Meeting, Sangam AGM  
*(Breakfast, Lunch, Cocktail Hour, Dinner)*

*Key Note Address by*

**Congressman Bill Johnson**

*(Co-Chair Caucus on Ethnic and Religious freedom in Sri Lanka)*



*Eelam Tamil Super Singers  
Jessica and Nirujan with Shakthi Group*

[www.sangamevents.org](http://www.sangamevents.org)



**FUTURE**



*Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA*

## **Future Direction and Road Map to Golden Jubilee**

**W**e have written this future direction and road map document for future leadership and members of Sangam to guide them in continuing the initiatives of Sangam over the last forty years. This document is written based on the valuable feedback we received for a decade from our members and previous leaders. Our founding members have laid down the sound principal objectives for our organization. Continuing with activities that align with those principal objectives is critical to the long-term survival and existence of our organization. We hope this document explains why Sangam is engaged in specific activities and how the Sangam operates as an organization.

### **Arts and Culture**

On the arts and culture front as the oldest Ilankai Tamil organization, Sangam has the parental responsibility to bring the local Tamil communities in the United States together under the umbrella of Sangam. While this objective is not intended to interfere with the workings of the local community organizations, their active participation in Sangam-initiated national programs will create a strong Tamil community and an active social network for our current and future generations. In the past eight years Sangam has initiated efforts such as the Kalai Vila, Pongal Vila and Essay Writing competitions. While these initiatives are hugely successful in the New York tri-state area and to some extent on the East Coast, future leadership teams should continue to expand these initiatives with the goal of having national activities in each of these initiatives by our Golden Jubilee. Sangam should continue its efforts to start Ilankai Tamil Sangam Tamil schools in local communities and eventually this can create a Tamil Education network and a common curriculum.



## Humanitarian Efforts

In the past Sangam has initiated and executed several initiatives to create opportunities for the Tamil people who live in Ilankai. With a lack of many vital tools necessary for the growth of the people, Sangam should develop and implement a ten-year plan on critical initiatives such as Energy projects including Solar panel, Windmill, Livelihood projects such as cattle farm, Fishing and Rainwater-harvesting projects and water conservation projects. These projects will help female-headed households and resettling families in north and eastern provinces. Sangam has focused on building an athletics program, a low-cost and high impact tool, in schools in Vanni and Batticaloa. Our goal is to help these children strive for a brighter future regardless of their financial situation. Athletics Programs teach children about leadership qualities, life skills, healthy habits and cultural diversity. Sangam should continue to expand this initiative with the help of local community sports organizations.

## Human Rights Work

Prior to May 2009, Sangam as an Ilankai Tamil organization in the United States had the major responsibility of protecting the human rights of Tamil Community in Ilankai. Post May 2009, though other organizations have taken some responsibilities, Sangam should continue its work as defined in our constitution. Sangam can use its strong ties to the local communities to support human rights work such as engaging local government officials. Sangam should also continue expanding its initiatives to observe the 'Mullivaikkal Memorial' event nationwide in local communities. We should also continue our initiative of having memorial trees for the Tamil Victims planted in each Tamil American community.

## Leadership

Our organization has thrived over forty years with the dedication and relentless efforts of our leadership teams and committees. In selecting our leadership, Sangam has always followed a procedural path, especially with the critical roles such as President and Secretary. Those who take such leadership roles are individuals who have been associated with Sangam for a number of years and often volunteered as committee members for few years and then also took the responsibility in the second-tier leadership roles such as assistant secretary or vice president. This enables them to be effective leaders when they take the responsibility of President or Secretary. We also followed our constitutional limitation of two-year term limit for each President and also the unwritten rule of not rotating the roles of President and Secretary with the previous leaders. While there is exception to these rules and norms, following these procedures will allow us to continue the path we followed for forty years.

## Younger Generation

Sangam is keen in engaging the younger generation to get involved in Sangam activities. While their involvement is essential to continue our operation, it does not require us to alter our values and core principles to accommodate them. The Younger generation need to learn and understand the principles of Sangam and join Sangam to build and enhance those activities. It should also be noted that an influx of younger generation to Sangam also arrives from New immigrants coming to this country in addition to the second-generation Tamil Americans.

## Sangam Center

We should take meaningful and implementable actions to have a center built for Sangam in ten years. For an organization, such as Sangam with forty years of rich history, a community center is an added value to the existence of our organization and such a center will also help us to march towards the hundredth anniversary.

## Communication Methods

Tamil language will be our primary method of communication in our cultural programs. We use both English and Tamil languages in our AGM since the focus of the AGM is on our humanitarian and human rights efforts. AGM is attended by officials who are not Tamils and we use English language to effectively communicate with them about the needs and aspirations of our people in Eelam.

Although many of these directions and the roadmap outlined above might be overwhelming to the incoming leadership teams, we hope they will understand that these goals need not be done in a year, but over ten years with continuous efforts.



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