



Tamil Times

All in one Tamil magazine from the best minds

Thabojan -
SMSF Investment
Strategist of the
Year 2025

Haileybury Student Bhanu
Selected for U19 Victorian
Country Girls Cricket
Squad

ANBAR:
Emphasis on
selfless love

Susanthica: The Voice
from Melbourne
Crowned in Chennai

Humanist
leaders meet in
Melbourne

First Tamil origin MP in Sydney
Hon Ash Ambihaipahar

December 2025, Issue 02

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Tamil Times Australia stands as a voice for every Tamil heart across the nation, a celebration of identity, culture, and connection. Born from a vision to unite and inspire, the magazine brings together stories that matter, stories that reflect who we are, where we have come from, and where we are headed.

With each issue, we aim to honour the richness of Tamil heritage while embracing the dynamism of modern Australia. Our pages capture the triumphs, talents, and everyday experiences of Tamil Australians, from arts and culture to business, education, and community life.

Guided by experienced media professionals and supported by passionate contributors, Tamil Times Australia continues to serve as a platform where our voices are heard, our achievements celebrated, and our stories preserved for generations to come.

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We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and Traditional Custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work.

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CONGRATULATIONS FROM HON MINISTER JULIAN HILL MP

**THE HON JULIAN HILL MP**

ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR CITIZENSHIP, CUSTOMS AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

**MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR CITIZENSHIP,
CUSTOMS AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS**

Congratulations Tamil Times Australia

I extend my warm congratulations to Tamil Times Australia on the launch of the Tamil Times monthly magazine in English.

I am certain this new publication will echo the achievement of the Tamil Australian magazine (in the Tamil language), which provides an important platform to share stories, accomplishments and contributions by Tamil Australians, as well as celebrating identity, culture, creativity, and connection across generations.

The Tamil community plays a significant role in enriching Australia's social cultural life. Initiatives like Tamil Times Australia strengthen our cross-culture bonds and promote understanding within our diverse communities. Your continued contributions to our multicultural society are deeply valued.

I commend the edition team, contributors, and supporters for their dedication to showcasing the richness of Tamil heritage to the wider Australian communities, and I wish the Tamil Times Australia every success in its future editions.



The Hon Julian Hill MP

November 2025

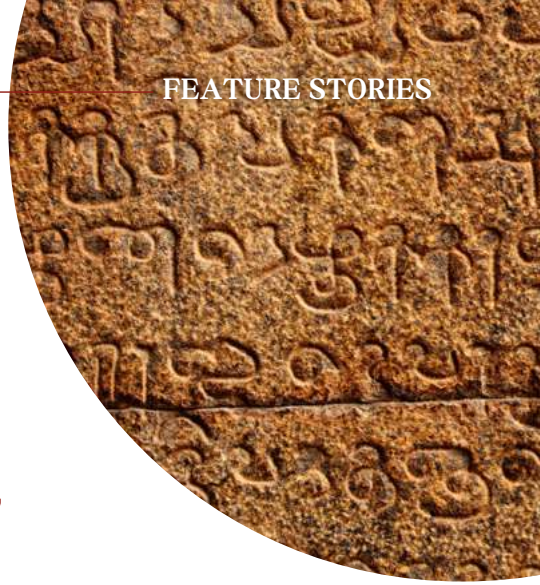


Casey Tamil Manram
கேசி தமிழ் மன்றம்

15 YEARS OF CTM: UPHOLDING TAMIL HERITAGE, FOSTERING DIVERSITY, AND COMMUNITY WELFARE

In 2025, Casey Tamil Manram Inc. (CTM) celebrates 15 years of remarkable service, cultural preservation, and community empowerment in Victoria. Since its establishment in 2010, CTM has grown into a respected and influential organisation, recognised for its steadfast commitment to Tamil heritage, strengthening Tamil identity, promoting multicultural harmony, and uplifting the wider Australian community.

Over the years, CTM has led a diverse range of cultural and community initiatives. These include programs to preserve and promote the Tamil language and literature, gatherings and activities for senior citizens, youth engagement programs, collaborations with other organizations and government agencies, and large-scale community celebrations. These initiatives not only uphold the rich traditions of Tamil culture but also create inclusive spaces where multiple generations can connect, learn, and participate meaningfully.





The Founding Committee of Casey Tamil Manram Inc. —the dedicated team whose vision and commitment laid the foundation for CTM's 15-year journey of cultural excellence, community service, and fostering diversity.

Seated (left to right): Mrs. J.Aarthi, Mr.B.Pathmasiri (Public Officer), Mr. K. Sivasuthan (President), Mr.G. Manivannan (Secretary), Mrs.I. Punitham

Standing (left to right): Dr.M. Mathiyalagan (Vice President), Mr.U.Jeyatheepan (Treasurer), Mr.S.Chandran, Mr.P.Venthan, Mr.B.Ramesh

Absentees: M. S.Thevabalan, Mrs.S.Felicita

CTM's commitment to community welfare has been a cornerstone of its work. Through blood donation drives, charity fundraising, disaster relief efforts, and support for families and individuals in need, the organisation consistently demonstrates the principle of giving back to the country that has welcomed the Tamil community. This dedication to social responsibility reflects CTM's core values of compassion, unity, and collective wellbeing.

A defining strength of CTM lies in its ability to unite and empower the Tamil community while fostering connections across multicultural Australia. By acting as a community integrator and collaborating with other Tamil organizations, CTM delivers impactful and inclusive programs that highlight the community's strengths and reinforce Tamil Australian identity.

Today, CTM stands as a symbol of unity, resilience, and cultural pride. Its 15-year journey is more than a record of events—it is a testament to the organisation's ongoing role in nurturing a confident Tamil Australian identity and contributing positively to the multicultural fabric of Australia. With gratitude for its achievements and a renewed vision for the future, CTM continues to lead through cultural and community leadership, as well as service and empowerment initiatives.



A GRAND MUSICAL OF THE RAMAYANA BY BHARATHI TAMIL SCHOOL IN AUSTRALIA

Bharathi Tamil School, operating in Australia under the leadership of writer Mr. Maavai Nithianandan, recently staged the first part of the Ramayana as a mesmerizing musical drama.

The production, much like the school's previous success in realistically bringing scenes from the epic Silapathikaram to the stage, left the audience deeply impressed and awestruck. The credit for this achievement goes to the principal of the school, Mr. Maavai Nithianandan.

The use of dynamic backdrops and vivid visual effects further enhanced the realistic portrayal of the Ramayana musical. A particularly captivating moment was the scene of a lovesick Sita, softly singing and pining under the full moon, which deeply resonated with everyone present. While the breaking of Shiva's bow ("Sivadhanusu") by Rama was depicted as a narrated story rather than a direct scene, the subsequent joyous celebrations of Rama's coronation engagement and his wedding to Sita were brilliantly conveyed through the students' energetic dance performances.



This skillful use of various dramatic techniques to navigate the scenes speaks volumes of the playwright's mastery.

Mr Maavai Nithianandan crafted the Ramayana script in an accessible Tamil style and expertly set the stage, working alongside teacher Mrs Bakeerathy Parthiban, who beautifully brought the vision to life. The powerful voice and songs of Mr Sreedharan, supported by the coordinating orchestra, truly enriched the entire drama. The judicious inclusion of select, poetically rich verses from the ancient poet Kambar was a highlight.

For the younger generation, growing up far from Tamil influences for the large part, to embrace Tamil's traditional literary narratives, participate passionately as characters, and perform on stage is a momentous occasion—one that should be etched in golden letters in the history of the Tamil diaspora. Furthermore, plays like the Ramayana and Silapathikaram are invaluable in reinforcing not only the Tamil language but also the rich traditional cultural values among the young community in Australia. This kind of theatrical art, merging Mr. Nithianandan's eloquent script, music, dance, emotion, make-up, and stage design, is truly a cultural feast for the Tamil literary audience in the Australian arts scene. The seventy-five-minute performance flew by, feeling like mere moments.



TAMIL PENGAL IN AUSTRALIA (TPA) DIWALI 2025: A GRAND CELEBRATION

The Tamil Pengal in Australia (TPA) Deepavali Event 2025 successfully concluded its grand festivities on Saturday, October 21, 2025, at the Australian Indian Community Centre in Rowville, VIC. The annual event brought together the vibrant Tamil diaspora in Melbourne for a joyous and meaningful celebration of light's victory over darkness.

The evening was a rich cultural extravaganza, featuring a stage showcasing traditional Tamil music and classical dance performances, highlighting the community's artistic talents. A unique segment included a powerful Kalaripayattu demonstration, emphasising the ancient martial art form's physical and spiritual discipline. Attendees enjoyed complimentary refreshments, with food stalls also available, and all guests received return gifts. Following the formal program, a DJ hour provided a vibrant space for mingling and dancing.

The meticulously planned celebration successfully upheld tradition, ensuring that Australian-born Tamil youth were actively exposed to the customs, language, arts, and values of Deepavali. TPA remains a key organization dedicated to preserving and passing down the rich Tamil culture to the next generation through large-scale cultural events like this.



TAMIL ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND (TAQ) DEEPAVALI 2025 GALA

The Tamil Association of Queensland (TAQ) hosted a successful and grand Deepavali (Diwali) 2025 Gala on Saturday, October 25, 2025, at the Australian International Islamic College in Durack, QLD. This flagship event celebrated the Festival of Lights, symbolizing the victory of good over evil, and united the Tamil diaspora while enriching Queensland's multicultural community.

The celebration featured a vibrant program of classical and folk dance performances, engaging singing acts, and dramatic sketches presented by community members and youth. The spiritual essence of the festival was honoured with the ceremonial Lighting of the Deepam, representing the triumph of knowledge and hope.

The night culminated in a lavish grand buffet dinner, offering traditional Tamil delicacies and a vital space for community networking and socialisation.

TAQ's event fulfilled a crucial dual role: it acted as a powerful platform for cultural preservation, ensuring that the language, music, and artistic traditions were celebrated by the younger, Australian-born generation. Furthermore, by inviting local politicians and community leaders, the gala actively promoted multicultural understanding and community cohesion across Brisbane and the wider region. The Tamil Association of Queensland concluded this celebration of light, culture, and unity with resounding success.



ANANYA 2025: A CELEBRATION OF RHYTHM, DEVOTION, AND ARTISTIC SPIRIT



Ananya 2025, the annual showcase by Margam Dance Festival, unfolded as a vibrant tapestry of tradition and innovation. Sixty young dancers lit up the stage with their Bharatanatyam performances, weaving together classical technique and thematic storytelling in a celebration of movement, emotion, and cultural heritage.

Among the many captivating pieces, one stood out and resonated deeply with audiences of all ages—Vahana Nrithya Vandana, a devotional dance offering to the sacred vehicles of the deities. This unique item not only mesmerized seasoned connoisseurs but also sparked curiosity and admiration among younger viewers, bridging generations through symbolic artistry.





At the heart of this festival is the Margam Centre for Arts, a dynamic learning and cultural hub enriching Australia's artistic landscape. Under the guidance of Guru Shruthi Ramamurthy, Margam nurtures the practice of Bharatanatyam and Yoga, fostering a space where tradition meets transformation.

Margam's core belief is simple yet profound: Dance and Yoga are lifelong companions—tools for mental clarity, physical vitality, and spiritual connection. This philosophy came alive on stage as dancers, both youthful and mature, proved that art knows no age, and expression has no expiry.



Author : Dr Chandrika



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HAILEYBURY STUDENT BHANU SELECTED FOR U19 VICTORIAN COUNTRY GIRLS CRICKET SQUAD

Haileybury College has proudly announced that Year 11 student Bhanu Mahendran has been selected for the U19 Victorian Country Girls Cricket Squad, marking an outstanding milestone in her sporting journey.

Bhanu currently serves as the Captain of the Haileybury Girls 1st XI Cricket Team and has also been named the 2026 Captain of Sport (Girls), a testament to her leadership, dedication, and all-around sporting excellence.

A versatile athlete, Bhanu was a key member of Haileybury's Girls Athletics Premiership Team and contributed strongly during the winter season as part of the school's 2nd Netball Team. Her commitment across multiple sports highlights her exceptional talent and work ethic.

Bhanu will represent Victoria at the National Cricket Championships in Newcastle this December, where the school community and the Tamil Australian community will be cheering for her success.

Sharing her thoughts on the achievement with Tamil Times, Bhanu said:

"I'm grateful to be part of the U19 Vic squad this year. It's a great opportunity to keep learning and developing my game while representing the state. I'm also excited to be in the same team as my sister – it's a special experience we both get to share. This year I'm also part of the athletics premiership team heading to nationals, which I'm looking forward to. I'm keen to keep working hard and enjoying each experience on the way."

— Bhanu Mahendran

Tamil Times congratulates Bhanu on this remarkable achievement and wishes her the very best as she heads to the national stage. Her accomplishments continue to inspire young Tamil Australians and shine a spotlight on the growing sporting talent within our community.



THE TAMIL COMPETITION AUSTRALASIA 2025 IN MELBOURNE



The national finals of தமிழ் ஊக்குவிப்பு போட்டி ஆஸ்திரேலியா 2025 (The Tamil Competition Australasia 2025) were held in Melbourne on 4 October, bringing together more than 125 enthusiastic students from across multiple states. The atmosphere was vibrant, with participants showcasing their Tamil language skills through speech, storytelling, and literary activities.

On 5 October, the National and Victoria State Award Ceremony took place, celebrating every participant across all age divisions with medals, certificates, and special recognitions.



Photo Courtesy: Tamil Competition

TAMIL TIMES AUSTRALIA



Organised by the Australian Society of Graduate Tamils (ASoGT), this long-standing competition—now in its 30+ year journey—continues to play a vital role in encouraging young Tamil Australians to learn, use, and celebrate the Tamil language. It remains a proud platform that inspires the next generation to honour and preserve their linguistic and cultural heritage.

Presented here is a brief glimpse of the highlights from this year's memorable events.

HUMANIST LEADERS MEET IN MELBOURNE

Melbourne recently played host to the 4th International Humanist Conference 2025, uniting thought leaders and changemakers from around the world.

The conference's core mission was to bring together global voices, ideas and action for a more just, inclusive future.

The two-day event featured a diverse and influential lineup of speakers, including Dravidian leaders from Tamil Nadu, Australian Senators, academics from international universities, entrepreneurs, and leading doctors and lawyers from around the world.



Tamil leaders, social reformers, academics and other participants felicitate young musicians Amirthavarshini and Lydian Nadhaswaram at the 4th International Humanist Conference in Melbourne.

Global voices for a just future

Kicking off the conference was the inaugural address, delivered online by M.K. Stalin, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, India. Attendees also saw the unveiling of portraits of Dr Ambedkar and Periyar and celebrated the release of two books, including 'Dravidian Charter – Resolution to Legislation' by Advocate A Arulmozhi.

A major theme was the universality of human rights and social justice. Senator David Shoebridge from NSW connected these ideals to modern politics and said the humanist and social justice values shared by Periyar and Ambedkar closely resembled the core principles of the global Greens movement and that they were fundamentally essential in this world, which was driven by greed and intolerance.

Asiriyar Dr K Veeramani, President of Dravidar Kazhagam, spoke on the critical concept of social cohesion and inequality.

Former Senator Lee Rhiannon spoke on modern slavery, and Senator Michelle Ananda-Rajah said that the key to humanism was creating a more equal world, with culturally appropriate healthcare being crucial to that goal.

Overall, the conference provided practical insights, strategies and tools for advancing humanist values in local communities while celebrating diversity through vibrant cultural exchange. It highlighted the fact that the ideals of humanism and self-respect are truly universal.

Author: Ramya Manoharan



NALLIAH SURIYAKUMARAN HONOURED WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Photo: Award recipients with Darebin's Mayor, CEO and Councillors

Nalliah Suriyakumaran has been recognised with the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award at this year's Darebin Community Awards, an annual event celebrating individuals who make significant contributions to the City of Darebin.

Nalliah has shown remarkable leadership and courage through decades of union activism, community service, and political advocacy for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. As a long-standing leader of the Darebin Ethnic Communities Council, he has played a vital role in strengthening connections among diverse community groups—from long-established migrant families to newly arrived residents.

Photo by Nicole Cleary

Founded in 1983 during challenging times for many Sri Lankan Tamils, the Canberra Tamil Association (CTA), now over 42 years old, began as a small group of migrants united by a vision: to preserve Tamil identity, support one another, and build a strong foundation for future generations. Its other purpose was to give Tamils in Canberra a formal identity and a voice in our new home.

From those humble beginnings, CTA has grown into one of the most respected cultural organisations in the ACT. Today, CTA proudly welcomes people from all backgrounds who share our love for culture, community, and harmony.



On 2 November, CTA celebrated Deepavali with a warm and vibrant community gathering. The evening began with a Welcome to Ngunnawal Country, followed by the Australian National Anthem and Tamil Thai Vaalthu a respectful and meaningful start to the night.

The cultural program was a beautiful showcase of talent, featuring classical and semi-classical dance, light music, drama, and engaging moments from Thendral FM (The Voice of Canberra Tamils and the voice of Canberra Tamil Association). A special didgeridoo performance added a heartfelt acknowledgement of Australia's First Nations culture.

Deepavali is more than lights and sweets. It is a celebration of who we are as Tamils. It reminds us of the beauty of our language, traditions, and values, and why it's so important to pass them on to the next generation. In today's fast-paced world, staying connected to our roots gives us strength and identity. When our children learn Tamil, take part in cultural programs, and understand the meaning behind our festivals, they carry forward a heritage that is thousands of years old.

In my address, I shared a simple message about the future of our community and CTA: our community grows stronger when we stay connected, when more people get involved, and when we pass our culture on to the next generation. Our strength lies in showing up, supporting each other, and keeping our traditions alive here in Australia.



Our youth are not just the future of any organisation; they are the future of our Tamil heritage in Australia. The language, traditions, and values we cherish will live on only if we embrace them with pride and passion. We need their ideas, creativity, and leadership to keep our culture vibrant in this land we now call home. Every festival, every program, every effort to teach Tamil is a step toward ensuring that our identity doesn't fade but shines brighter with each generation. Let us inspire our youth to take ownership of this legacy because the future of Tamil culture in Australia rests in their hands.



Author: Karthika Ambalavanar

THENDRAL FM – FORTY YEARS OF VOICE AND COMMUNITY

This year is a proud moment for our community as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of Thendral FM, the voice of Canberra Tamils and the voice of Canberra Tamil Association. What started in 1985 as a simple 30-minute Tamil radio program on CMS FM 91.1 has grown into a three-hour weekly show. This growth shows the passion and commitment of our community over the years.



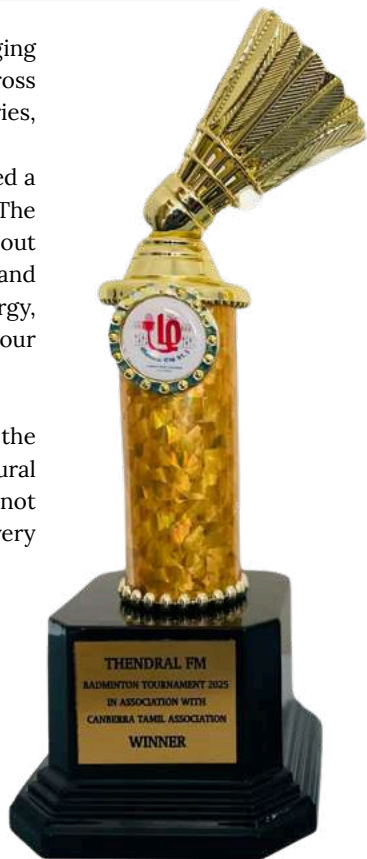
Thendral FM is more than just a radio program. It is bringing Tamil language, music, and traditions into homes across Canberra and beyond. It connects generations, shares stories, and helps keep our heritage alive in multicultural Australia.

To celebrate this spirit of connection, Thendral FM organised a Badminton Tournament on 16 November in Canberra. The event was not only about playing sports, but it was also about bringing people together, building friendships, and strengthening community ties. The day was full of energy, laughter, and fun, showing how events like this strengthen our sense of belonging and bring people together.

As Thendral FM enters its fifth decade, we thank all the presenters, past and present, who have kept this cultural breeze flowing. Their hard work reminds us that heritage is not only preserved through words and music, but through every effort to unite, celebrate, and inspire.



Author: Karthika Ambalavanar



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF CULTURE, GRACE, AND COMMUNITY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Founded in 2005 by Srimati Shobana Puvaneswara Gurukkal, the Narthanalaya School of Indian Classical Dance has blossomed from a small group of passionate learners into a large, vibrant family deeply connected through the timeless art of Bharatanatyam. What began as a humble endeavour is now one of Western Australia's most cherished cultural institutions, nurturing generations of dancers who carry Indian heritage with pride and devotion.

A Visionary Teacher Rooted in Tradition

Srimati Shobana Puvaneswara Gurukkal was raised in a Tamil household steeped in art, culture and literature thrived. Her father, Bharamasri Jeyarama Sarma, a renowned Tamil scholar and writer, played a profound role in shaping her artistic foundation.

Her teaching philosophy—grounded in discipline, warmth, cultural depth, and spiritual connection—has been the heart of Narthanalaya's growth. Students often describe her classes as a space where dance becomes a journey of self-discovery, community, and cultural pride. This unique bond between teacher and student has lifted the school to great heights over the past two decades.



Pic Credit : Shobana Puvaneswaran

A Remarkable Milestone: 20th Anniversary

This year marks Narthanalaya's 20th anniversary, a celebration that reflects not only artistic excellence but also the deep emotional and cultural impact the school has had on the community.

In March, the school witnessed an extraordinary milestone: a 62-year-old leading lawyer successfully completed her Arangetram. Her dedication and achievement were deeply inspirational—especially for women—proving that passion, discipline, and dreams have no age limit.

A Season of Arangetrams and Cultural Brilliance

October was a historic month for Narthanalaya, with three beautifully coordinated Arangetrams held back-to-back. Each performance was a masterpiece of grace, devotion, and stamina. The Perth audience experienced a heartfelt and emotional weekend, celebrating the dancers' achievements and the school's enduring legacy.

An Evening of Legacy – Aranantha Narthanam

As part of the 20th-year celebrations, Narthanalaya hosted a grand concert in May titled "Aranantha Narthanam", where past Arangetram students reunited on stage for a spectacular evening of dance. It was a powerful moment—seeing dancers from different generations come together to honour the school that shaped their artistic journey.

One of the highlights of the evening was the thematic presentation "Ashtalakshmi", featuring eight forms of Goddess Lakshmi. The sight of eight Lakshmis on stage—radiant, synchronised, and spiritually uplifting—captivated the entire audience and remains one of the most memorable performances in the school's history. The event was beautifully captured by the photographer, preserving the magic of the night for years to come.

By Shobana Puganeswaran



SMSF INVESTMENT STRATEGIST OF THE YEAR 2025



Congratulations to Thabojan Rasiah, Founder and Principal Adviser of Rasiah Private Wealth Management, for his outstanding achievement at the 2025 SMSF Awards.

In a gala black-tie ceremony, Rasiah was named the SMSF Investment Strategist of the Year, an honour that celebrates the best professionals in Australia's self-managed super fund sector.

The SMSF Investment Strategist Award recognised Thabojan as a top adviser who actively pursues portfolio growth for his SMSF clients while simultaneously ensuring their retirement assets are not compromised. The award looks at how returns are pursued in this challenging environment, balanced with the often conservative or safe tendencies of SMSF investors. Thabojan was also nominated for the SMSF Adviser of the Year.

Thabojan, who has been a financial adviser for 18 years, is committed to upholding the highest standards of financial professionalism. He is not only a Certified Financial Planner (CFP®) and a Fellow of FINSIA but has consistently ranked among the nation's elite advisors, including being named by Financial Standard as one of the 50 Most Influential Financial Advisers in Australia in 2017.

Thabojan also shares his financial expertise through columns in The Age and Sydney Morning Herald, Fifty-Plus News and The Herald Sun, and has appeared as a finance expert on 3AW and ABC talk-back radio.

Thabojan's success in the industry is an inspiring example of dedication, expertise, and the pursuit of excellence in Australia.



Author: Ramya Manoharan

HEALING THE ROOTS OF LEADERSHIP

Is leadership a skill that can be developed or a trait humans are born with? There is no definitive answer to this question. However, what we can say with confidence is that leadership qualities are often shaped by our environment, parental conditioning, and even the inherited weight of transgenerational trauma. In this article, I wish to explore what truly hinders a child from becoming a leader, particularly within our Tamil community.

It is not uncommon for a Tamil parent to raise their child in an overprotective environment. Our history is filled with pain, displacement, and survival. This protectiveness, though rooted in love, has multiple layers. We often believe that by shielding our children from the traumas we or our ancestors endured, we are preserving their innocence. In truth, the opposite happens. When we suppress our stories and avoid difficult conversations, we unconsciously pass on the same pain – not through words, but through silence.



Research suggests that trauma can be transmitted genetically and through social conditioning across several generations. This phenomenon, known as transgenerational trauma, can quietly limit our children's sense of identity, confidence, and courage to lead. A powerful book that explores this in depth is “It Didn't Start with You” by Mark Wolynn.

Our Tamil history over the last 500 years reflects incredible endurance and resilience. From the period of colonisation and imperial exploitation – when Tamils were displaced from Tamil Nadu and Eelam to distant lands such as Malaysia, Mauritius, the Caribbean, Singapore, and South Africa – to the more recent atrocities faced in Sri Lanka, our people have constantly rebuilt from loss. Yet, while many Tamils have achieved remarkable success in education and business, especially in the diaspora, the unhealed wounds of collective trauma continue to hold us back from realising our full leadership potential.

As parents, educators, and community leaders, we must begin addressing this hidden inheritance. We need to create spaces where our children can learn about our history – not to carry its pain, but to understand its lessons. We must guide them to convert inherited resilience into empowered leadership.

Let's take this moment to revisit our current approach in raising our kids. Let us introduce structured dialogues, workshops, and storytelling sessions that help young Tamils connect with their roots, process inherited trauma, and develop authentic confidence. By doing so, we will nurture a generation ready to lead – with empathy, strength, and self-awareness.

By S.A.N Rajkumar



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KNOW THE UPCOMING CHANGES IN AUSTRALIAN IMMIGRATION LAW

Overhaul of Skilled Temporary Visas: The Skills in Demand (SID) Visa. The biggest change is the ongoing transition away from the Temporary Skill Shortage (TSS) visa (subclass 482) to the new Skills in Demand (SID) visa framework.

Three Streams: The SID visa is structured into three clear pathways to better match migrant skills with the Australian economy:

- **Specialist Skills Stream:** For high-income, highly skilled migrants earning above a new high threshold (e.g., currently indexed around AUD \$141,210). This stream offers the fastest processing (7 days) and is exempt from restrictive occupation lists.
- **Core Skills Stream:** This covers the majority of trade and professional roles, aligning with a new Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL). The salary threshold for this stream has been set at AUD \$76,515 (indexed annually from July 2025).
- **Labour Agreement Stream:** For specific industries with custom agreements.
- **Reduced Work Experience:** The minimum required work experience for skilled workers has been reduced from two years to one year in the last five years, aiming to attract younger talent more quickly.

Clear PR Pathway: The SID visa provides a clear and faster path to permanent residency for all streams, encouraging long-term commitment from skilled migrants.

Stricter Rules for International Students

To enhance the integrity of the education sector and combat "visa hopping," the government has implemented stricter requirements for students.

Genuine Student (GS) Test: The previous Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) requirement has been replaced with the more stringent Genuine Student (GS) test. This requires applicants to demonstrate a genuine intention to study in Australia and provide evidence that the course aligns with their educational or career progression.

Increased English Requirements: Minimum English language scores for both Student visas (subclass 500) and Temporary Graduate visas (subclass 485) have been raised.





Reports by Registered Member of Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (AIQS)

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We prepare QS reports accepted by all major Australian lenders, including NAB, Westpac, CBA, ANZ, and RAMS. These reports are essential when applying for finance, offering clarity around construction costs, builder credentials, contract terms, and feasibility benchmarks. Our reports are clean, bank-compliant, and tailored to each lender's format—removing the guesswork and helping you get funded faster.

- Faster turnaround 3-5 business days
- Independent Report, acceptable to major banks and lenders

PROGRESS CLAIM REPORT (PAYMENT RELEASE)

Our team works closely with builders, owners, and lenders to validate progress payments against work completed on site. Each report includes valuation of works, approved variations, and anticipated costs to complete.

This ensures that payment claims are not only fair and accurate but also aligned with actual site progress.

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We have experience in working with all major banks and lenders



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About Cost Logic

Cost Logic is a registered quantity surveying firm with offices in Melbourne, Sydney, and Perth. We work with builders, developers, and lenders to provide cost planning, construction cost estimation, and quantity surveying services that are both timely and trusted.

With over 25 years of combined team experience and more than 1,000 projects delivered across Australia, we've built a reputation for responsiveness, accuracy, and collaborative delivery.

Our team is comprised of fully qualified chartered quantity surveyors and is a proud member of the Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (AIQS).

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**Reduced Temporary Graduate Visas (TGV):**

- The age limit for most TGV streams has been reduced to 35 years (down from 50).
- The duration of post-study work rights has been reduced for many graduates (e.g., Bachelor's/Master's by coursework graduates now receive up to two years).
-  Permanent Migration Program Focus
- The permanent Migration Program has seen a strategic shift to favour employer-sponsored and state-nominated pathways over independent migration.

Program Size: The planning level for the permanent Migration Program for 2025–26 remains substantial at 185,000 places, but the distribution has changed.

Emphasis on Employer Sponsorship: Allocations for Skilled Independent visas (subclass 189) have been curtailed, while places for Employer Sponsored and State/Territory Nominated visas have increased. This strongly signals that employer sponsorship is the preferred route for highly skilled migrants.

Visa Fee Increases: Visa Application Charges (VACs) across many key subclasses (including Partner and Skilled Visas) have seen increases as of July 1, 2025.

National Innovation Visa: The former Global Talent visa (subclass 858) has been replaced with the National Innovation Visa, specifically targeting high-value entrepreneurs and innovators who can contribute substantially to Australia's economic growth.

These updates represent a significant push toward a more targeted, responsive, and selective immigration system focused on closing critical skill gaps in the Australian labour market.

FROM WISH TO WILL

Why You Need a Will and the Requirements for Making It Properly

A Will is one of the most important legal documents a person can prepare during their lifetime. Yet, many of us still delay making one — often because we think it is unnecessary, complicated, or something to worry about later. If you are the ones, you could be wrong.

This article is for your basic understanding of what a Will is, why it matters, and how a lawyer can help you ensure your wishes are properly protected. Why should the Post Office Will, online Will package, or Do It Yourself Will kits not be straightforward?

1. WHAT IS A WILL?

A Will is a legal document that sets out how you want your wishes to be carried out after your death. For example, it outlines who can access and manage your assets, such as property, savings, investments, and personal belongings, and how your debts should be handled. It also specifies who should care for your children, if they are under 18 or a disabled child needs adult care; how your specific gifts should be given to individuals or charities; who will take care of your pets; how your funeral should be conducted; and who will act as your **executor** (the person responsible for carrying out your wishes) whether you choose to have one or more executors, and more.



2. WHO SHOULD I APPOINT AS MY EXECUTOR?

An executor will be responsible for managing your estate after you pass away. Their role includes collecting your assets, paying any outstanding debts or taxes, and distributing your estate to your beneficiaries according to your wishes.

It's best to appoint someone reliable, organised, and trustworthy. You may also consider appointing more than one executor for support or balance.

3. WHY IS HAVING A WILL IMPORTANT?

A Will gives you control over what happens to your estate. Without your Will, your assets will be distributed according to state legislation, for example, the Administration and Probate Act 1958 (VIC), which may not reflect your personal wishes.

If you have a Will, it will

1. reduce confusion and conflict among your family members;
2. protect vulnerable loved ones;

ensure that your estate is managed efficiently in your way.



4. WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE DIES WITHOUT A WILL?

Without a Will, your estate will be distributed according to the laws of intestacy, **Administration and Probate Act 1958 (VIC)**, which may not align with your preferences.

5. WHO CAN MAKE A WILL?

Anyone aged **18 years or over** and of **sound mind** can make a Will.



6. WHEN SHOULD YOU PREPARE A WILL?

A Will is not just for elderly people. Anyone over 18 years old can create a Will. You should prepare your Will as soon as you have assets or dependents. Significant life events, such as marriage, the birth of a child, purchasing property, receiving an inheritance, or separation are key moments to consider creating or updating your Will. If you want your wishes to be respected, then yes, prepare your Will to distribute your assets in accordance with your wishes.

To be continued next month



Author: Ms Thirumalai Selvi Shanmugam

A YOUTH VIEW ON THE SOCIAL MEDIA BAN



Social media provides a platform for teenagers to socialise and build a powerful network of friends and associates, which would lead to a better life for many. Obviously, there is some downsides to social media, with the type of content it could promote and make visible to young individuals, with some being inappropriate. And so, I would suggest most young people do agree that something needs to change to ensure the safety of teenagers online, but a complete ban does not feel like the solution; it just seems to be the easy way out of the problem without actually tackling the problem at all. A ban doesn't teach safe online behaviour, it simply pushes teens to find workarounds, often using unregulated or hidden platforms. Real digital safety comes from education, not restriction. Hence, I believe the blanket ban on social media for teenagers is not the right way to go about it and instead could be replaced with tighter boundaries and more education on the matter.

Across Australia, the recent Social Media ban has taken the nation by storm, leading social media companies to take "reasonable steps" to ensure that under-16s in Australia cannot set up accounts on their platforms and that existing accounts are deactivated or removed. Politicians, parents, and experts have all voiced strong opinions, but one group, to the most part, has been left out of the conversation almost entirely, and yet they're the most affected. Young people themselves. As a member of the generation that has grown up online, I believe it is important to discuss the reality of a social media ban for the young generation.



Author : Ketharan Partheepan

KURALISAI KAAVIYAM – THIRUKKURAL 1330 A NIGHT WHERE WISDOM SANG

The Kuralisai Kaaviyam – Thirukkural 1330 (Volume 3) global launch, held at Drum Theatre in Dandenong, was a breathtaking fusion of culture, scholarship, and artistry. The evening guided the audience through music and meaning, demonstrating that the Thirukkural is not merely an ancient text but a living truth, one that continues to hold profound relevance in our lives.

At its heart were Amirthavarshini and Lydian Nadhaswaram. Amirthavarshini, the young female composer behind this monumental 1,330-song global project, has redefined what it means to lead creatively within a traditionally male-dominated field. Lydian's extraordinary musicianship gave Thiruvalluvar's timeless verses new breath and universal resonance. Together, their artistry embodied both discipline and divinity.

Their parents, Sathish Varshan and Jhansi, were honoured for the devotion, vision, and perseverance that shaped this legacy of purpose and excellence.

The evening was elevated by six remarkable Guests of Honour, whose reflections added depth and wisdom to the celebration:

- Cr. Jim Mameti, Lord Mayor of Dandenong, who stayed for the entire program, spoke movingly about unity through culture, reminding everyone that communities grow stronger when they celebrate one another's stories.





• Professor Prabhu Sivabalan, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Learning) at UTS, offered an inspiring reflection on the true meaning of education. He emphasised that real learning is not about sacrifice but about joy, and that Amirthavarshini and Lydian are “truly educated” because they create from love. He also posed a thought-provoking question: Is a formal academic qualification alone sufficient to deem someone ‘educated’? He argued that embodying the virtues of the Thirukkural, as these young artists do, is what makes an individual truly wise.

• Sivanjana Kadiravel, Deputy CEO of The Hunger Project Australia, highlighted Amirthavarshini’s role as a young woman composer who has broken patriarchal barriers and paved the way for future generations of female creators.

They were joined by Sri Ravi Chandra, Akshayan Manivannan, and Senthamizh Chelvar Paadum Meen S. Srikantharajah, each of whom added rich cultural and literary context to this momentous occasion.

All the Australian singers who contributed to the album were also felicitated on stage. The seventeen singers representing Australia were: George Bharani Thillainathan, Sathyan Ilanko, Vaishnavi Ramkumar, Sahana Arunagiri, Niharika Shyju, Karthik Sritharan, V. M. Karthik Kumar, Sumathy Sathiyamoorthy, Sivaganga, Kasthuri Sahathevan, Karthiga, Keshav Ram, Gomahal Sindhu, Baalakrishna Velusamy, Sandhya Sundararajan, Harshini Vaanan, and Tirukumar Thiagarajah.





Behind the scenes, the event came to life through the dedication of Ganga Yogalingam and George Bharani Thillainathan, whose organisation, coordination, and vision shaped every detail of this exceptional evening.

This milestone event was made possible through the invaluable support of the Victorian Tamil Association, the Narre Warren Tamil School Parents Association, and the generous contributions of Shan Shanmugananthakumar and Dr Ramini Shankumar, Ambi Bala of Casey Developments, as well as the principal sponsors Yathavan Sivarajah and Abi Yathavan of Centex Homes. Their generosity and commitment enabled this landmark night to come to fruition.

It was more than a historic launch — it was the Thirukkural reborn in harmony.

To me, the night stood as a testament to the truth that when love, learning, and leadership unite, art becomes immortal.

Author : Dr Tirukumar Thiagarajah



Photo Courtesy: Native Productions

MULTICULTURAL DIWALI CELEBRATED BY SENIORS

SydeWest Multicultural Services celebrated its seniors' Diwali, engaging multicultural communities in Blacktown. Over two hundred elderly men and women participated, enjoying themselves by dancing, singing and sharing their stories.



ANBAR : EMPHASISING SELFLESS LOVE

Namaha Arts presented ANBAR, a devotional dance production dedicated to fostering creative collaboration and cultural expression in Indian classical arts. Under the artistic direction of Poorvaja, the thematic presentation celebrated anbu—selfless love—in support of the Sivan Arul Foundation .

A lawyer by profession, Poorvaja joined hands with Aruthy Kumanan, Durga Sivaji, Anandi Velauthapillai, and Ramya Kuganathan to craft a moving performance that honoured the compassion and sacrifice of revered Saiva saints. The repertoire included tributes to Poosalar, Appoothi Adigal, Kannappan, and a detailed varnam on Nandanar, complemented by a musical medley composed by Durga Sivaji.

The program opened with a vibrant Mallari and concluded gracefully with a Thillana, showcasing the elegance of Bharatanatyam tradition. The dancers were accompanied by an accomplished orchestra: Chidambaram R. Suresh on nattuvangam, Lakshmi Kumaraguruparan on vocals, Pallavarajan on mridangam, and Kranthi Kiran Mudigonda on violin. Together, the ensemble illuminated the enduring power of love—shared, celebrated, and offered for the welfare of others—through devotion, dance, and passion.



GRAND RECEPTION FOR HON. ASH AMBIHAIPAHAR SYDNEY'S FIRST TAMIL-ORIGIN MP

The NSW Tamil Community came together in grand style at The Epping Club Grand Ballroom to celebrate the remarkable election of Hon. Ash Ambihaipahar MP, the first Tamil-origin Federal Member of Parliament for Barton. The event, hosted with the strong support of the Australian Tamil Congress (ATC) and numerous Tamil community organisations across New South Wales, marked a milestone in the political and cultural journey of Australian Tamils.

The evening was graced by the presence of several Federal and State MPs, including Hon. Dr Andrew Charlton MP - Cabinet Secretary, Mayors, and Councillors, who joined the Tamil community in celebrating this proud moment of representation and recognition.

With traditional Tamil welcomes, cultural performances, and heartfelt messages, the reception reflected the unity, resilience, and growing influence of the Tamil community in Australian public life.

The organisers expressed gratitude to all volunteers, dignitaries, and attendees for making the evening not only a historic celebration but also a symbol of hope and inspiration for the next generation of Tamil Australians.

A proud and memorable night for the Tamil community, where culture, community, and leadership shone together.

During the event, a number of high-achieving young Tamils excelling in global politics, research, humanitarian service, charity, and language education were also recognised for their outstanding contributions.

GRAND RECEPTION FOR HON. ASH AMBIHAIPAHAR SYDNEY'S FIRST TAMIL ORIGIN MP



GRAND RECEPTION FOR HON. ASH AMBIHAIPAHAR SYDNEY'S FIRST TAMIL ORIGIN MP

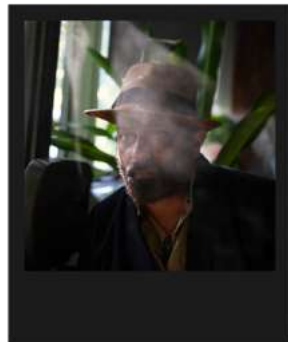


Photo Courtesy: Tamil Australian Multicultural Media

INTERVIEW WITH DESH BALASUBRAMANIAM

A STORY OF HOME, HEALING, AND HUMAN CONNECTION

Desh Balasubramaniam is the founder and CEO of Ondru, a Melbourne-based, non-profit, humanitarian organisation striving for a more connected, compassionate and equitable society, and founder of Nul, an initiative with a mission to build connected and sustainable communities by creating educational, economic and social opportunities. He speaks about the reasons for starting the two organisations and what he hopes to achieve through them.



“I have always walked the edges of stories, the spaces where silence turns to voice and vulnerability becomes strength. That is where my work begins.

I was born in Sri Lanka, a land both beautiful and broken, where memory carries the scent of jasmine and the echo of war. My childhood unfolded between curfews and monsoons, between the laughter of cousins and the fear of soldiers’ boots. When I was twelve, my family sought refuge in New Zealand. We left behind our home, our language, and the graves of those we loved. I arrived carrying the Tamil of my grandmother’s stories and learned English as a kind of survival. That crossing, from one tongue to another and from one world to another, shaped everything that came after.

At first, I studied business and then law, believing change was written in policies and statutes. But I soon discovered that the deepest transformations are born not from systems but from connection, from listening, from creativity, from the courage to imagine differently.

I walked away from the corporate world and into the uncertain terrain of humanity, where stories live and where communities rebuild themselves through care and compassion.

My work has always been about connection, between art and activism, between the personal and the political, between people who have forgotten how much they need one another. Through Ondru, the humanitarian arts organisation I founded in Melbourne, we began creating spaces for stories that do not often get told, stories of migration, exile, resilience, and love. We worked in places as distant as Melbourne, New Zealand, Africa, Europe and Sri Lanka, but always with the same purpose: to give voice to the silenced and dignity to the unseen.

*Nul Peace Ride*

My passion for dialogue and community began long before I had the words for it. Every December, during the rains, we would travel to my grandmother's village, Kaytes in the north. Nights would gather beneath the neem tree, soft with the smell of wet earth, and my Ammama would tell stories of love, loss, and the stubborn endurance of our people. She used to say, "You can only know yourself if you know where you come from and those who held your hand when you were still learning to walk."

Those stories taught me that identity is not an individual pursuit; it is communal, inherited, and continually renewed. Later, when war swallowed the laughter beneath that neem tree, those words became a kind of compass. They guided me through exile and through the years of feeling too Tamil for the West and too Western for home. I came to realise that belonging is not found; it is created, sometimes painfully but always intentionally.

After years of working in other countries, I avoided Sri Lanka. The pain felt too close. People often asked why I was not doing something there, and I never had an answer. Perhaps it was easier to work where the wounds were not my own. But everything changed the day I visited a refugee camp in the north. A young boy, no older than twelve, looked at me and asked, "Will you come back?" He told me many people had come before, listened to their stories, and left, never to return. His question pierced me. It was not just curiosity; it was a call. If not me, then who? If not now, then when?

That was the seed of Nūl, a movement to rebuild trust, connection, and dignity through education, economic and equity based community-led initiatives. And from Nūl emerged the Nūl Peace Ride, a thousand-kilometre journey across Sri Lanka, not just on bicycles but through memory, geography, and history. It travels across divisions, bringing together people from all walks of life to listen, to share, and to imagine a country whole again.

When we ride, we move through landscapes of pain and possibility, through Tamil villages still healing from loss, through Sinhala towns eager for connection, through Muslim, Vedda and Malayaga Tamil communities often left unseen. Along the way, we meet people who teach us what resilience truly means. One of the riders and a close friend, Evan Marginson, told me after meeting communities in Batticaloa, “I walked the roads that carried the weight of memory, met people whose resilience reshaped my idea of strength. I listened. I shared, and in that space between pain and hope, I saw what it means to truly stand with a community.”

For the diaspora, the Nūl Peace Ride is not a tour; it is a homecoming of the heart. It is a way to feel the land beneath their wheels, to meet its people with open hands rather than distant longing. It is a return made not as tourists but as companions in rebuilding, as learners willing to walk and ride beside others. It is a journey where reflection becomes action and memory becomes movement, a quiet vow to reconnect, to listen, and to help stitch together what was once torn.

For me, it is a continuation of my grandmother’s lesson, that we know ourselves only by walking beside those who once held our hand. The Ride has become my way of walking back into Sri Lanka’s story, not to fix it but to listen to it, to honour it, to heal with it.

For me, the Ride is a continuation of my grandmother’s lesson, that we come to know ourselves only by walking beside those who once held our hand. It has become my way of stepping back into Sri Lanka’s story, not to fix it but to listen to it, to honour it, and to heal with it.

Growing up in Aotearoa, New Zealand, I learned that mana is the strength that rises from knowing who you are and where you come from, and that identity is deepened through relationships shaped by respect and reciprocity. In Australia, Indigenous elders taught me the sacred practice of Walking on Country, an act of humility that invites us to move slowly enough for the land and its stories to speak.

These teachings guide how I return to Sri Lanka. I do not come as a visitor, but as someone seeking to understand, to rebuild connection, and to stand with communities as we imagine a future woven from dignity, courage and shared belonging.

Through Nūl and the Peace Ride, I hope we can weave a stronger thread of solidarity that connects Sri Lankans, at home and across the world, and all others who believe in the simple power of humanity. In the spirit of the Zapatistas, it is about creating another world, a world that changes lives not through power but through compassion, care, and collective action. If there is one truth I have learned, it is that healing does not come from distance. It comes from sitting beside each other, in the dust, in the rain, in the stories we share, and realising that we have always been threads of the same cloth, waiting to be woven back together.”



Interview by Ashwini Satheeshkumar

SUSANTHICA: THE VOICE FROM MELBOURNE CROWNED 'SA RE GA MA PA SENIORS SEASON 5' WINNER

The highly competitive musical journey of Zee Tamil's Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Seniors Season 5 culminated in a spectacular grand finale on November 23, 2025, with the soulful singer Susanthica Jayachandran—often referred to as the 'Melbourne Girl'—clinching the coveted title.

A Dream Come True for Susanthica:

Susanthica's victory was the result of months of consistently brilliant and emotive performances that resonated deeply with both the judging panel and the global audience. Her ability to deliver flawless renditions across diverse genres, from classical to melody, showcased her exceptional vocal prowess and stage presence.

Throughout the season, the Melbourne-based contestant stood out, earning widespread appreciation and proving that talent knows no geographical bounds. Upon her triumph, Susanthica expressed her profound gratitude, calling the win "truly a dream come true" and crediting the judges and mentors for their guidance in helping her grow "not just as a singer, but as a performer."

Grand Finale and Prizes:

The grand finale featured a fierce contest among six highly talented finalists. The winner, Susanthica, was decided based on a balanced combination of judges' scores and audience votes. While Susanthica took the top honour, the other finalists were also recognised for their talent: Sapesan was named the first runner-up, Chinnu Senthamilan secured the second runner-up position, and Pavithra received the 'People's Favourite' award, highlighting her massive popularity among viewers.

Susanthica's win not only marks a personal milestone but also serves as a gateway to potential future music opportunities in the industry, promising a bright career for the gifted singer from Melbourne.





EVENTS CALENDAR

SYDNEY :

6th Dec 2025 (Saturday) - Karthigai Vilakkidu by Sydney Tamil Mandram

6th Dec 2025 (Saturday) - CHOBAA Night of Stars by Colombo Hindu OBA

14th Dec 2025 (Sunday) - Balana Leaf Moi Virunthu by Sydney Tamil Mandram

14th Dec 2025 (Sunday) - Tamil Christmas Festival Wenworthville Anglican Tamil Church

MELBOURNE :

17th Jan 2026 (Saturday) - Tamil Thai Pongal Festival by Australian Tamil Sangam

18th Jan 2026 (Sunday) - Thai Pongal 2026 by Victorian Tamil Cultural Association

18th Jan 2026 (Sunday) - Pongal Thiruvizha 2026 by Tamilar Inc

25th Jan 2026 (Sunday) - The Tamil Festival Australia 2026

14th Feb 2026 (Saturday) - Thayagam Nooki by Thayagam Charity

ADELAIDE :

07th Dec 2025 (Sunday) - Annual Tamil Ball in University of Adelaide Tamil Students Society

24th Jan 2026 (Saturday) - Tamilar Marabu Tiruvizha 2026 South Australia

24th Jan 2026 (Saturday) - Adelaide Pongal 2026 in Light Square, Adelaide

QUEENSLAND :

07th Feb 2026 (Saturday) - Pongal Festival by Queensland Tamil Mandram and Thaa Tamil School

PERTH :

29th Nov 2025 (Saturday) - 30th year Annual Celebration by Perth North Tamil School

29th Nov 2025 (Saturday) - Tamil Arts Festival 2025 by Valluvan Tamil School

Send your event flyers to vanakkam@tamiltimes.com.au to be included in Tamil Times Event Calendar. For full event details visit our website www.TamilTimes.com.au



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