

# Tamil Times Australia

All in one Tamil magazine from the best minds

Perth Tamil School  
- 30 years of  
Service

Meet Australia's  
first Tamil MP,  
Dr Michelle  
Ananda-Rajah



# KING OF THE RING 2026

Raj Rajaratnam  
- Tamil Titan of  
Wall Street

First Ever Tamil Boxing  
Competition in Melbourne

Paalam - Tamil  
Charity in  
Canberra

January 2026, Issue 03

\$3.30

(Inc GST)



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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## AUSTRALIA'S FIRST TAMIL MP, DR MICHELLE ANANDA-RAJAH

*Meet the bold, brilliant and eloquent Dr. Michelle Ananda-Rajah, Labor Senator for Victoria. In this exclusive interview, Senator Michelle talks about her Tamil roots, her journey as a first-generation migrant, balancing the demands of public life and family, and what she does for fun.*

*Tamil Times: How has your migrant experience shaped your beliefs and life decisions?*

**Senator Michelle:** I was born in the UK to Tamil Sri Lankan parents and lived in Zambia until I was 11 before immigrating to Australia. The most important thing I've learned is that a strong sense of belonging is essential to success. In our multicultural country, it is vital to uphold Australian values ensuring people are invested in "Team Australia," valuing their contributions, and making sure everyone has a fair go.

*Tamil Times: What is something you do just for fun?*

**Senator Michelle:** Reading is my guilty pleasure. I read almost exclusively non-fiction. My current reads are a book on trauma, one on the 132-year history of the Labor Party and another on climate efficiency. I also love cooking. We have "food safaris" at home, making dishes from around the world. Recently, I made a delicious Kashmiri chicken curry inspired by a recipe on Instagram.



*Tamil Times: What convinced you to leave your successful career as a physician and researcher to enter politics?*

**Senator Michelle:** The pandemic sparked my political flame. I began advocating for the health and safety of healthcare workers who were being mistreated due to poor decisions made in Canberra. Realising the direct link between Parliament and our frontline safety was existential. I co-founded the non-profit Healthcare Workers Australia to strengthen workplace safety. Ultimately, I was frustrated by the mediocrity of the previous government, which contrasted sharply with the high-performing medical teams I knew. I felt I could do a better job and decided to have a crack at it.

*Tamil Times: What are your primary areas of focus and the changes you wish to see?*

**Senator Michelle:** 1. Healthcare: This is my top priority. Chronic underinvestment in primary care has left our hospital system buckling. I am committed to strengthening Medicare and supporting general practice. 2. Housing: This is the intergenerational issue of our time. We must boost housing supply to address affordability. 3. Climate and Energy: These are interconnected. We need a stable, long-term approach to the energy shift rather than constant policy changes.



“

**I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN DRIVEN BY PEOPLE AND PURPOSE, NOT THE POMP AND CEREMONY OF THE JOB. I AM INTERESTED ONLY IN OUTCOMES.**

”

**Tamil Times:** *How do you balance being a Senator, a medical specialist and your family life?*

**Senator Michelle:** It's quite difficult. I rely on an amazing staff to run my work program. My children were finishing school when I entered Parliament in 2022, and because I wasn't always around, they had to grow up quickly. I'm proud of the resilient, good humans they've become. They understand that I am in this space to work for both current and future generations. Fixing long-term issues like housing and energy takes decades; we have to stay the course to deliver outcomes in the people's best interests.

**Tamil Times:** *What do you hope people remember most about your contribution?*

**Senator Michelle:** I hope they see me as a "good ancestor", not as a career politician, but as someone who entered public life to achieve positive outcomes for people and the country. I have always been driven by people and purpose, not the pomp and ceremony of the job. I am interested only in outcomes.



**Interviewed by Ramya Manoharan**



**Shriram Narendran**  
*Youth Editor, Perth*

Shriram is a fourth-year student pursuing a double degree in Automation & Robotics Engineering and Management Commerce at the University of Western Australia. Since childhood, he has been involved in a wide range of performances, education, and engagement with the Tamil language and culture. He has been a Year 11 ATAR teacher at the South Tamil School of Western Australia for the past four years,

where he teaches students of the divine culture and prepares them for their ATAR examinations. He aims to motivate younger Tamil individuals to maintain their culture as an integral aspect of their identity and history in all realms of society.

# Raj Rajaratnam

*Raj Rajaratnam, once the "Tamil Titan of Wall Street," embodies the dramatic intersection of monumental success and profound adversity. His journey—from founding the multi-billion-dollar Galleon Group to a high-profile legal battle—offers a powerful study in ambition, risk, and resilience.*

## *The Meteoric Ascent*

Born in Sri Lanka and educated at the University of Sussex and the Wharton School, Rajaratnam launched the Galleon Group in 1997. Under his leadership, Galleon became one of the world's largest hedge funds, managing an estimated \$7 billion in assets. Known for research-intensive strategies in technology and healthcare, Rajaratnam's acumen earned him a spot on the Forbes list of the world's richest people, cementing his status as a financial icon.



“Despite an 11-year sentence—the longest ever for insider trading—Rajaratnam maintains his innocence, citing 'shoe-leather research' and the 'mosaic theory' over illegal tips.”

## *The Fall and the Scrutiny of Justice*

In 2009, Rajaratnam's trajectory shifted abruptly following a federal insider trading investigation. Convicted in 2011 on 14 counts of conspiracy and securities fraud, he received an 11-year prison sentence—the longest ever for such charges at the time. Despite the verdict, Rajaratnam has consistently maintained his innocence, asserting his trades were based on legitimate "mosaic theory" and rigorous research rather than illegal tips. Released in 2019 after serving over seven years, he authored the memoir *Uneven Justice*, advocating for criminal justice reform and critiquing the methods used by the U.S. legal system.

# The Tamil Titan of Wall Street



For the next generation, his wisdom is simple: “Stand your ground when you believe in your position, and learn to reinvent yourself after failure.”

## *Resilience and Reflection*

Post-imprisonment, Rajaratnam’s focus has shifted from financial wealth to more enduring values. He credits his family’s unwavering support as his anchor during his most difficult years, emphasizing that trustworthy relationships are essential for surviving life’s setbacks.

In his memoir, *Uneven Justice*, Rajaratnam shifts from financial strategist to vocal advocate, critiquing the strategies and methods of the U.S. criminal justice system.

*For the next generation, he champions the power of reinvention. He encourages professionals to “stand their ground” when they believe in their position and to view failure as a catalyst for growth. Today, while managing a family office, his legacy remains complex—serving as both a cautionary tale of Wall Street’s high stakes and a testament to the human spirit’s ability to reflect and rebuild.*

## VOICE OF THE FUTURE: AN EXCLUSIVE WITH SA RE GA MA PA WINNER SUSANTHICA

**S**usanthica, a 20-year-old from Australia, was crowned the winner of Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Seniors Season 5 on November 23. She shared her journey in an exclusive interview with Tamil Times.



**How were you able to achieve this success at such a young age? What is the secret?**

There is no secret; I've loved music since age seven and have worked incredibly hard toward my dreams ever since.

**Did you receive the right training in Australia to realize your dreams?**

My parents provided immense support. My Guru, Subashini Muthukumar, taught me Carnatic and light music basics online. Music is now my career, and I plan to study it further.

**what did you do to make your dreams come true?**

I practiced countless hours, competing with myself to improve. Training with Lavanya Ma'am at Sa Re Ga Ma Pa helped fine-tune my technique. Music was my cure for homesickness and competition pressure.

**How do you keep your connection to Tamil music and culture strong in Australia?**

My parents maintained a Tamil-speaking household. I am fluent because they prioritized our culture; I even completed Tamil as a school subject. I am performing in Sydney at Vasantha Ghanam 2026.

I'D LOVE TO HEAR FANS SING ALONG IN MY HOMETLAND. MY DREAM IS TO PERFORM ON A MASSIVE STAGE RIGHT HERE IN AUSTRALIA.

**Will you pursue playback singing or independent music?**

I am recording for movies and independent albums while touring. Since the future is moving toward independent music, I am focusing on releasing my own work.

**Do you dream of performing on a massive stage in Australia?**

Yes, I'd love to hear fans sing along in my homeland. I am performing in Sydney at Vasantha Ghanam 2026.

**TAMIL AUSTRALIAN PROFESSOR SABE SABESAN  
ELECTED PRESIDENT OF CLINICAL ONCOLOGY  
SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA**

Professor Sabe Sabesan is a distinguished medical oncologist, academic, and advocate, renowned for his work in improving access to cancer care, particularly for regional, rural, and remote (RRR) communities in Australia. He holds the esteemed position of President of the Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA), the peak national body for cancer health professionals.

Professor Sabesan's professional footprint spans clinical practice, research, and academia across Northern Queensland:

- Senior Medical Oncologist and Director at the Townsville Cancer Centre.
- Clinical Dean of the Townsville Regional Medical Training network and a Professor at James Cook University (JCU).
- Clinical Director of the Australian Teletrial Program for Queensland Health's Office of Research and Innovation.

Professor Sabesan is a nationally and internationally recognised expert in teleoncology. His passion for equitable patient care, which developed after his internship in Alice Springs and his experiences with rural health issues stemming from his childhood in Northern Sri Lanka, drove him to pioneer the use of telemedicine. Developing and evaluating various teleoncology models of care to deliver cancer treatment closer to home for RRR patients.



*His clinical interests cover a broad spectrum of solid tumour malignancies, including breast cancer, colorectal cancer, genitourinary cancer, gynaecological cancer, and lung cancer.*



## YOUNG SRI LANKAN-AUSTRALIAN CRICKETER NITESH SAMUEL WINS PLAYER OF THE TOURNAMENT AT AUSTRALIAN U19 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



### Meet Nitesh Samuel!

**N**itesh Samuel, a talented opening batsman of Sri Lankan Tamil heritage, was recently named Player of the Tournament at the Australian Under-19 National Championships. Representing New South Wales, Samuel dominated the competition with a remarkable 364 runs at an average of 91, significantly outperforming the second-best tally of 330 runs.

His standout performances included a brilliant 129 in the opening match, a gritty 94 to secure a victory, and a solid 81 against Victoria Country. Following in the athletic footsteps of his father, Lal Samuel—a former badminton champion—Nitesh's achievement in Australia's highly competitive cricket system is exceptional. His stellar form has sparked strong speculation that a call-up to the Australian Under-19 national squad is imminent.



## HARMONISING TALENT: MELBOURNE'S PREMIER KARAOKE CLUB



### Club Profile

Founded by Rajan Ratnavel, the Karaoke Club in Melbourne, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to uncovering raw, local talent. What began as a passion for music has evolved into a cornerstone for Melbourne's creative community, providing a welcoming stage for enthusiasts to step out of the shadows.

**The Experience:** High-quality sound and professional staging create a "mini-concert" feel.

**The Community:** A supportive network where local and international artists inspire one another.

**The Mission:** Bridging the gap between hobbyist singing and professional performance.

## HOW TO JOIN

**Members:** Gain full access to events and resources for a modest fee.

**Casual Guests:** Welcome to perform and participate for a small contribution.

**Performers:** Open call for all unique talents to join our upcoming showcases.

Whether you are a seasoned artist or a first-timer, Rajan's club offers the perfect spotlight to share your gift with Melbourne and beyond.



Author Rajan Ratnavel



**BHARATHI ACADEMY'S DRAMA FESTIVAL SHOWCASES  
EMERGING TALENT**

The third Bharathi Academy Drama Festival for 2025 was staged recently at the Doncaster Secondary College Performance Centre, featuring nearly 100 student performers from the Academy's Clayton, East Burwood, and South Morang campuses. The program included 11 short plays and five action songs, drawing strong audience engagement.

Now in its 32nd year, Bharathi Academy's drama tradition ensures every student has an opportunity to take the stage. Months of rehearsal culminated in confident performances, with standout acting and clear Tamil pronunciation noted as highlights of the evening.

*The Academy's commitment to theatre training continues to nurture performers who progress into acclaimed productions including Silapathikaram and Ramayanam, both warmly received by audiences.*



Photo: Rajen suppiah

Author: Varsha Jeyaharan

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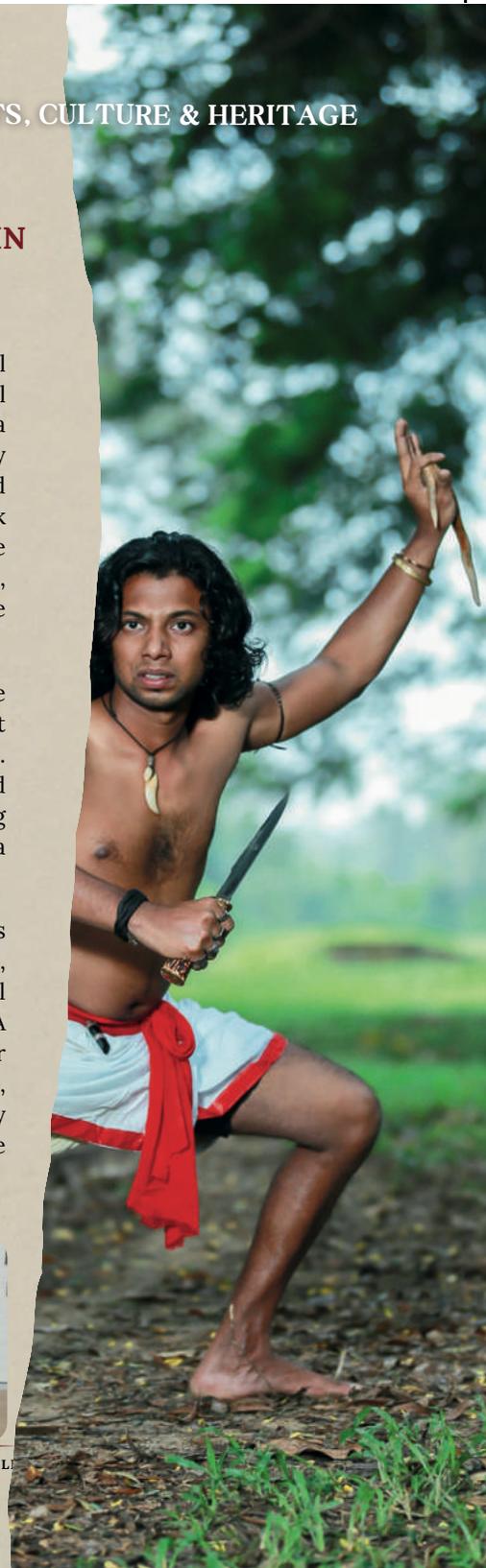
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## REVIVING THE WARRIOR SPIRIT: ANCIENT MARTIAL ART KALARI IN AUSTRALIA

Preserving ancient traditions is essential to maintaining the Tamil cultural identity. The Academy of Kalari Australia (AKA) is leading this charge by introducing Kalari, Adi Murai (unarmed techniques), and Silambam (stick fighting) to younger generations. These disciplines, rooted in the Chera, Chola, and Pandya dynasties, embody the discipline and wisdom of Tamil history.

Recently, AKA conducted an intensive three-week training program at Cherrybrook Balamalar Tamizh School. On November 22nd, students showcased their mastery of Adi Murai's grappling and Silambam's rhythmic precision in a cultural performance.

Beyond physical combat, these arts foster physical resilience, mental focus, and cultural pride. By bridging ancestral roots with modern Australian life, AKA empowers the youth to honor their heritage with strength and grace, ensuring the Tamil martial legacy remains a vibrant part of the multicultural landscape.

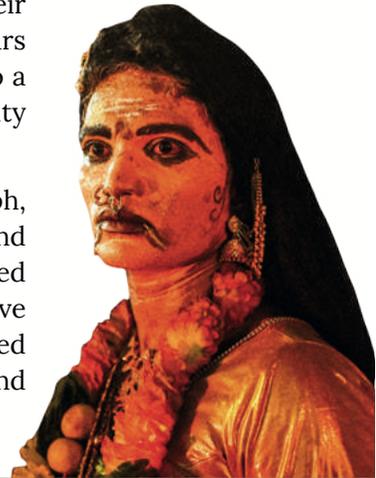


TAMIL TRADITIONAL NAATTUKKOOOTHTHU  
PASSING THE TORCH

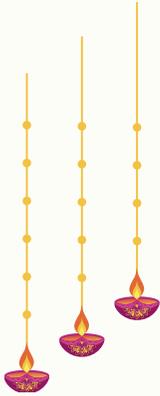
The success of the Ilangai Venthan Ravanan Naattukkooththu was recently celebrated in Wentworthville, highlighting the revival of traditional arts among young Tamil Australians. Performer Ketharan Partheepan shared his journey of discovering Kooththu—a unique form of musical storytelling—under the mentorship of veteran directors "Naren Uncle" and "Kiriwul Uncle."

Initially unfamiliar with the art, Partheepan was inspired by the directors' infectious passion and their ability to recall complex choreography from 25 years ago. This enthusiasm transformed a small group into a dedicated ten-person team that balanced university demands with rigorous practice.

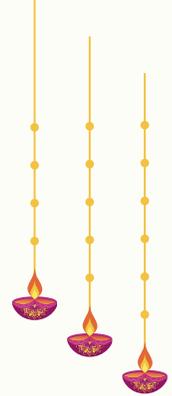
The production was a true community triumph, involving performers, costume-making "aunties," and organizers. By uniting generations, the project ensured that this vibrant cultural heritage continues to thrive in Australia. The evening concluded with a shared hope that the audience felt the same joy and connection experienced by the performers.



Author: Ketharan Partheepan



## Karthigai Vilakkeedu: A Glowing Celebration in Grose Vale



On November 22nd, Sydney Tamil Manram hosted its annual Karthigai Vilakkeedu, transforming Grose Vale into a spectacular sea of light. The community gathered for a program steeped in tradition, beginning with the ceremonial Seer Kondu Selluthal offerings.

The evening reached its peak with the mass lighting of Agal Vilakkeetral (earthen lamps), followed by the dramatic burning of the Sökkappaayanai and the rhythmic Maavali Kootrutha torch-circling.

Blending spirituality with festivity, families enjoyed soul-stirring Tamil Isai (music), a communal dinner, and dedicated children's games. The event successfully strengthened cultural bonds, proving to be a cherished highlight for the Sydney Tamil community.



**Author: Perinbamurthy**

## PREPARING FOR PONGAL FESTIVAL: A HOME GUIDE FOR AUSTRALIAN TAMILS

Celebrating Thai Pongal in Australia offers a unique blend of ancient tradition and the vibrant Australian summer. To get your home ready for the "Festival of Harvest," follow these practical tips to ensure a meaningful and joyous celebration.

### The "Bhogi" Purification

Begin with a thorough spring clean to declutter your home. While the traditional bonfire represents burning the old, Australian families often adapt this by refreshing their décor or hosting a safe, small backyard gathering to symbolize a fresh start.

### Crafting the Entrance

Decorate your doorstep with a Kolam (Rangoli). Use wet rice paste to ensure the design withstands the January breeze. Frame your doorway with a Toranam of fresh mango leaves and marigolds to welcome guests and prosperity.

### The Outdoor Hearth

To honor the Sun God, Surya, set up a cooking station in your backyard or balcony. Use a traditional brass or clay pot adorned with fresh turmeric and ginger. When the milk boils over, join the family in the joyful chant of "Pongalo Pongal!"

### Sourcing Essentials

Visit local Indian hubs like Harris Park or Dandenong for authentic ingredients like sugarcane and yellow pumpkins. By sourcing these locally, you ensure the harvest festival remains a vibrant, thriving tradition for the next generation in Australia.

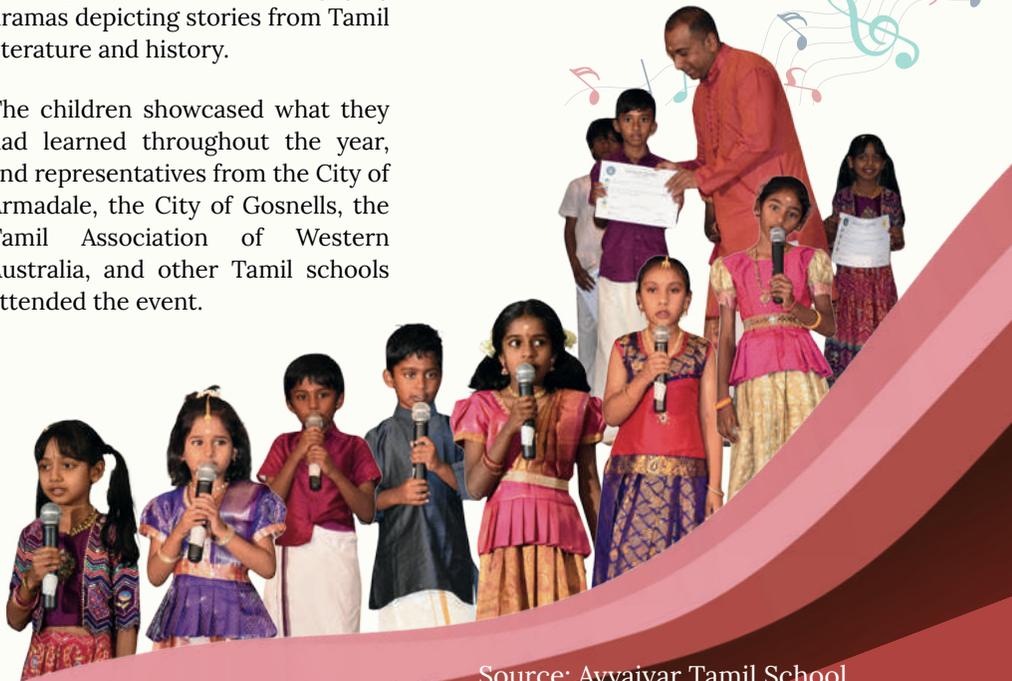


## AVVAIYAR TAMIL SCHOOL CELEBRATES TAMIL CULTURAL DAY

The Avvaiyar Tamil School recently hosted its annual Tamil Cultural Day, a vibrant celebration of Tamil heritage and tradition. Students, parents, and teachers came together for a spectacular showcase of the community's rich cultural tapestry.

The event featured a diverse program designed to immerse attendees in Tamil culture. Highlights included captivating classical dances like Bharatanatyam, performed with grace and precision by the students. The audience was also treated to melodic Carnatic music performances and engaging dramas depicting stories from Tamil literature and history.

The children showcased what they had learned throughout the year, and representatives from the City of Armadale, the City of Gosnells, the Tamil Association of Western Australia, and other Tamil schools attended the event.



Source: Avvaiyar Tamil School



On December 6, 2025, Bunbury Tamil School celebrated its 6th Annual Day, marking six years of cultural and linguistic excellence in Western Australia. The event featured a significant turnout of community leaders, including Mr. Sethuraman Muthaiah and Mr. Balaji Parthasarathy of the WA Tamil Association, alongside representatives from the Tamil Literary Forum.

Solidarity was on full display as educators from Valluvan, Mugamai, Avvaiyar, and North Tamil Schools attended, joined by Mr. John McNamara of Rio Tinto. The school administration expressed profound gratitude to these guests, noting that their unwavering support—even from great distances—deeply inspires the students and staff. The celebration concluded with a heartfelt thank you to the community for their vital role in the school's ongoing journey.



**Source: Bunbury Tamil School**

# Tamil Scholar Vimalaraghavan Vijayan

**TOP HONORS FOR TAMIL SCHOLAR: VIMALARAGHAVAN VIJAYAN  
RANKS FIRST IN NSW**



The Australia Kamban Kazhagam is celebrating a landmark achievement as Youth Wing member Pon. Vimalaraghavan Vijayan secured the First Rank in New South Wales for Tamil in the HSC examinations.

Raghavan was recently honored by The Hon. Courtney Houssos, NSW Minister for Finance, recognizing his academic excellence and dedication to his heritage. A student of Seven Hills Balar Malar Tamil School, his success followed years of study and advanced Kamban Literature classes. This milestone is a shared victory for his teachers, the school committee, and his parents. The Kazhagam congratulates Raghavan and all students whose commitment ensures the Tamil language continues to thrive for generations to come.

“

When youth embrace heritage, languages don't just survive — they shine.

”



## VTA TAMIL SCHOOL CELEBRATES HISTORIC 2025 VCE SUCCESS

The VTA Tamil School is celebrating a landmark year following the release of the 2025 VCE Tamil Language examination results. The cohort's performance underscores the school's academic excellence, with nearly 38% of students achieving an expected study score above 40. Most notably, one exceptional student secured a perfect raw score of 50/50.



Beyond academic metrics, the school highlighted the cultural significance of this success. Mr. Paramanathan noted that mastering the Tamil language ensures that heritage and identity remain vibrant within the Australian diaspora. By successfully balancing mainstream VCE demands with language studies, these 40 graduates have solidified their roles as leaders and champions of cultural preservation for future generations.

Overall, 30% of the 40-student cohort earned raw scores of 40 or higher. Principal Paramanathan lauded the achievement, describing every participant as a "proud ambassador" for both the school and the Melbourne Tamil community. He emphasized that these results are a testament to the rigorous dedication of students, their families, and the teaching staff.

**FROM FIRST LETTERS TO VCE SUCCESS:  
CELEBRATING BHARATHI ACADEMY'S  
GRADUATES**



Bharathi Academy Australia proudly celebrates its latest cohort of graduates, marking a monumental milestone in their educational and cultural journey. This graduation represents the culmination of twelve years of dedication, beginning with the first strokes of the Tamil alphabet and ending with hard-earned VCE success.

Over the past decade, these students have successfully balanced mainstream schooling with a deep commitment to preserving their mother tongue. Beyond academic achievement, their time at the Academy has been defined by lifelong friendships and a burgeoning pride in their Tamil identity.

As the Class of 2025 moves forward, the Academy extends its heartfelt congratulations. We are immensely proud of your resilience; your success is a testament to the power of language and the enduring strength of our culture within the Australian landscape.





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## THE NEW GUARD OF TAMIL EXCELLENCE: MEET THE VCE TAMIL TOPPERS OF 2025

Community Language Schools in Victoria prepare students for the VCE Tamil subject, focusing on linguistic proficiency and cultural heritage. Meet two of the top students of 2025 in Victoria.

### KAVYA SELVARUBAN INTERVIEW

Formally studying Tamil allows me to contribute to its continuation more purposefully, potentially through future teaching.



#### How did your teacher's methods assist you?

My teachers at Bharathi Academy provided structured support and detailed feedback. Content-building classes were vital for navigating new syllabus material regarding modern society and contemporary issues.

#### How is the Tamil syllabus structured in Australia?

The new study design emphasizes relevance, covering social issues, technology, Tamil history, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This connects the language to both real-world and Australian contexts while balancing reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

#### What motivated you to select Tamil as a VCE subject?

Growing up in a Tamil-speaking household, the language is central to my life. I feel a responsibility to preserve our native tongue while living abroad. Formally studying Tamil allows me to contribute to its continuation, potentially through future teaching.

#### What challenges did you face, and how did you overcome them?

As an Australian-born student, I had a strong spoken foundation. To master grammar and script, I conversed regularly with relatives and read Tamil books to expand my vocabulary and creative ideas.

## VINUJAN PIRAPAKARAN INTERVIEW



“  
Learning Tamil is not just about exams; it’s about preserving a part of who you are.  
”

**Can you describe the moment you opened your results and saw you had achieved the top rank? Who was the first person you told?**

Seeing the top rank felt surreal; I checked twice to be sure. I felt immense pride and relief that my effort paid off. My parents were the first I told, as they supported and encouraged me through every challenge of the journey.

**What did a typical study session look like for you? How many hours a week did you dedicate specifically to Tamil compared to your other VCE subjects?**

Sessions involved vocabulary revision, writing practice, and past papers. I also listened to speeches and read articles to improve comprehension. I dedicated 4–6 hours weekly to Tamil alongside my Year 10 subjects, increasing this time during exam periods for intensive revision.

**Out of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, which one was your favorite to practice, and why?**

Writing was my favorite. It allowed me to express ideas creatively while strengthening my grammar and vocabulary. Successfully communicating complex ideas gave me a sense of achievement and greatly improved my overall performance in the subject.

**What would you say to a friend who is thinking about dropping Tamil because they think it's too hard? How would you encourage them to keep going?**

I'd tell them that consistency makes the difficulty manageable. Learning Tamil is about preserving your identity, not just passing exams. I'd encourage them to set small goals and remember that these skills are a lifelong asset.



## Perth North Tamil School Celebrates 30th Annual Day Excellence

The Perth North Tamil School celebrated a monumental milestone on November 29, 2025, marking its 30th Annual Day at Ballajura. The event served as a vibrant showcase of Tamil language, heritage, and the school's three-decade journey in nurturing the cultural identity of the northern suburbs' youth.

The celebration was graced by Dr. Anne Aly, Federal Member for Cowan and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, who commended the school's dedication to community language education. She highlighted the school's role as a cultural anchor, supported by federal multicultural grants.



The afternoon featured a series of vibrant student performances, including traditional dance, drama, and music, which captivated the large gathering of families and volunteers. The formal proceedings concluded with a community dinner, fostering a spirit of togetherness. As the school looks toward the future, the 30th anniversary stands as a testament to the power of voluntary leadership and the enduring legacy of the Tamil diaspora in Western Australia.

# Sydney Tamil Mandram Revives Tradition with "Moi Virundhu"

The Sydney Tamil Mandram recently hosted a vibrant Moi Virundhu, bringing a cherished rural tradition from Tamil Nadu to the heart of Australia. Traditionally celebrated in the Tanjore and Pudukkottai regions, Moi Virundhu is a community-driven feast designed to provide financial support to a host while fostering deep social bonds.

The Sydney event successfully replicated this spirit of solidarity, drawing members of the Tamil diaspora for a grand traditional meal. Guests contributed "Moi" (gifts of money), which were meticulously recorded, honoring the age-old practice of collective economic empowerment. Beyond the fundraising aspect, the gathering served as a vital cultural touchstone, allowing younger generations to experience the importance of communal support and hospitality.

By organizing such unique events, the Sydney Tamil Mandram continues to strengthen the cultural fabric of the diaspora, ensuring that meaningful ancestral customs thrive within the modern Australian multicultural landscape.



# Canberra Tamils Unite for Sri Lanka Relief



The Canberra Tamil community has demonstrated extraordinary solidarity by raising nearly \$16,000 through two dedicated initiatives to support those in Sri Lanka.

Following the devastation of Cyclone Ditwah, the Canberra Tamil Association mobilized rapidly, collecting \$6,000 from members and well-wishers. These funds provide critical emergency aid, including food and essential supplies, to families who lost homes and livelihoods in the storm.

Additionally, a local fundraising concert featuring traditional music and dance was held on November 30, 2025. This event raised a net total of \$9,943 for Tears of Vanni (TOV). These contributions will bolster TOV's mission to provide basic needs and long-term support to disadvantaged communities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, proving that distance cannot weaken the community's commitment to humanitarian hope.



**Author : kartika ambalavanar**

## Community Empowerment Through Heart Health A Reflection on Prof. Dr. V. Chockalingam's Seminar



The Tamil Arts and Culture Association Inc (TACA) successfully hosted an insightful "Meet, Greet & Listen" session featuring the distinguished visiting dignitary, Prof. Dr. V. Chockalingam. Held at the Banksia Room in Wentworthville Community Centre, the event drew a significant audience eager to learn from the renowned cardiologist.

*Prof. Dr. Chockalingam, a Professor Emeritus in Cardiology from TN. Dr. MGR Medical University, Chennai, delivered a compelling speech titled "Mind your Heart". His presentation focused on the theme "Healthy Heart for Hearty Health," specifically addressing how a positive lifestyle can serve as both prevention and a cure for heart attacks. to learn from the renowned cardiologist.*



The session concluded with an interactive Q&A, allowing community members to engage directly with the expert. This successful event underscored TACA's commitment to community welfare, blending cultural connection with vital health education.

## ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO DONATING BLOOD IN AUSTRALIA

With three donations needed every minute in Australia, Australian Red Cross Lifeblood makes saving lives a simple, hour-long process.

### Eligibility & Preparation :

Donors should be aged 18–75, weigh over 50 kg, and be in good health. While whole blood can be donated every 12 weeks, plasma can be given every two weeks. Before your appointment, hydrate well, eat a substantial meal, and bring a valid ID.

### THE PROCESS

The visit includes a confidential questionnaire and a quick health check of your blood pressure and iron levels. The actual collection takes only 8–10 minutes.



### After care:

Post-donation, rest for 20 minutes while enjoying complimentary snacks. Avoid strenuous activity for 12 hours. You will later receive a notification revealing which hospital your donation helped.



IT MATTERS

#### How to Book

Online: Visit the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood website.

App: Download Lifeblood App.

Phone: Call the national hotline: 13 14 95.

## AUSTRALIA TAMIL SANGAM DELIVERS VITAL AID TO SRI LANKA FLOOD VICTIMS

The Australia Tamil Sangam has successfully completed two major relief operations for communities devastated by floods following Cyclone Ditwah. Through a powerful community surge on GoFundMe and direct transfers, the organization raised \$6,182, which was immediately deployed to the hardest-hit regions.

### Strategic Distribution

The mission provided a lifeline to nearly 300 households across two key districts:

**Batticaloa:** \$2,470 delivered essential food and necessities to 150 families.

**Mannar:** \$2,470 supported 140 families struggling to recover from the storm's destruction.

A spokesperson thanked donors for providing both "food and hope," noting that while these milestones are significant, the road to recovery is long. The fundraising campaign remains open to support ongoing rehabilitation efforts.





## Rebuilding Sri Lanka: Rotary and the Diaspora Unite

Cyclone Ditwah, impacting all 25 districts of Sri Lanka, stands as one of the nation's most devastating disasters. In response, Rotary International and the global diaspora launched a transparent, coordinated relief operation. Partnerships between Rotary District 3220 (Sri Lanka) and Australian Districts 9685 and 9423 have funneled urgent aid to displaced families.



## Immediate Humanitarian Impact

- The Sri Lanka Cyclone Relief Appeal has raised AUD 21,545, with over AUD 19,000 already transferred for deployment. Local clubs are providing:
- Essential nutrition and clean drinking water.
- Hygiene products and bedding.
- Targeted support for 50 overlooked families in Mullaitivu.

## How to Help

All Australian donations are tax-deductible and managed through RAWCS, ensuring 100% of funds reach approved projects.

- Donate: Via the RAWCS Sustainable Lanka Project.
- Contact: DGN Haran Ramachandran OAM at [rotary.haran@gmail.com](mailto:rotary.haran@gmail.com).

Through this global network, Rotary is not just rebuilding structures but restoring the dignity of the Sri Lankan people.



## COOKING TIPS - KASI HALWA RECIPE

Kasi Halwa is a popular Brahmin household sweet made from White Pumpkin (Ash Gourd).

### Ingredients :

- Grated White Pumpkin: 2 cups (water squeezed out)
- Sugar: 2 cups
- Ghee: 1/2 cup
- Cardamom Powder: 1/2 tsp
- Nuts: 10-15 cashews/almonds (chopped)
- Food Color: A pinch (optional)

### Instructions :

- Sauté: Cook the squeezed pumpkin in a heavy pan over medium heat until soft.
- Sweeten: Add sugar and stir until it melts and combines into a Halwa consistency.
- Color & Ghee: Add dissolved food color. Gradually stir in ghee, allowing the mixture to absorb it until it thickens.
- Finish: Once the Halwa stops sticking to the pan and ghee separates, add cardamom powder and roasted nuts.
- Serve this delicious, translucent treat hot or cold!





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## Paalam – The Bridge to Humanity: A Tamil-Led Humanitarian Initiative

Paalam – The Bridge to Humanity (PBH) is a Canberra-based charity dedicated to bridging healthcare gaps, specifically in palliative care and cancer screening. Led by Tamil medical professionals, PBH serves culturally diverse communities in Australia and extends its mission to Sri Lanka and India.



*Palliative Care Ward at the Jaffna Cancer Hospital in Tellipalai, Sri Lanka*

**In Australia, PBH focuses on:**

**Palliative Care & Cancer Screening:** Raising awareness and promoting early detection.

**Stem Cell Registration:** Improving South Asian representation in national registries.

**Mental Health:** Reducing stigma through community workshops.

In Sri Lanka, PBH is constructing an End-of-Life Care Ward at the Jaffna Cancer Hospital and provides essential training for healthcare workers. By connecting communities across borders, PBH exemplifies the Tamil spirit of compassion and global humanitarian progress.

For further information, please contact: [paalam2humanity@gmail.com](mailto:paalam2humanity@gmail.com) via its website at [www.paalam2humanity.com](http://www.paalam2humanity.com)



**Author : Kartika Ambalavanar**

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## Tamil Excellence in Canberra: Vijay Selvarathinam Launches Zara LM

On November 14, 2025, Vijay Selvarathinam, the Tamil CEO of Phoenix ICT Solutions, launched Zara LM—Australia’s first sovereign AI capability—at Parliament House. With over 165 global professionals under his leadership, the Indian-born visionary is a staunch advocate for data sovereignty and national security.



The landmark event, attended by sporting icons Ricky Ponting and Shane Watson, marks a pivotal shift in Australia’s digital landscape. Purpose-built for defense, healthcare, and government, Zara LM ensures local data ownership and governance. For the Tamil community, Selvarathinam’s success is a source of immense pride, showcasing how Tamil excellence is driving Australia’s global standing in the high-stakes world of artificial intelligence.



# KING OF THE RINGS

On February 6, 2026, Melbourne makes history with its first-ever Tamil boxing competition, KING OF THE RING, at the iconic Melbourne Pavilion. This landmark event blends high-stakes combat sports with a vibrant cultural celebration.



Experience five electrifying fights alongside jaw-dropping stage performances and a surprise international guest. Beyond the ring, enjoy a high-energy atmosphere with local food stalls, drinks, and a silent auction. Don't miss this historic milestone for the Tamil community—an unforgettable night where you can truly expect the unexpected.

Date: Friday, Feb 6 (5:00 PM) – Saturday, Feb 7 (3:00 AM)

Location: Melbourne Pavilion, Kensington VIC 3031

A historic milestone:  
Melbourne hosts its first-ever  
Tamil boxing competition,  
blending high-stakes combat  
with cultural pride.





"As SMEs modernize, the line between a traditional business and a tech company is blurring, making cybersecurity a non-negotiable service."

**HIGH-DEMAND BUSINESS IDEAS FOR AUSTRALIA THE TOP OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH**

**The Care & Wellness Economy**

As Australia’s largest employer, the Healthcare and Social Assistance industry is under immense pressure to innovate.

The Opportunity: Beyond clinical care, there is a massive gap in Aged Care support, including home modifications and companionship services.

Tech Play: MedTech and virtual wellness platforms are scaling rapidly to meet the mental health needs of remote and urban populations alike.

**The Net-Zero Transition**

The Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services industry is being redefined by Australia’s commitment to sustainability.

Renewable Energy: Capitalize on the solar boom through installation, maintenance, or energy-efficiency consulting.

Circular Economy: Opportunities are surging in Retail Trade for eco-friendly products, sustainable fashion, and biodegradable alternatives as consumer ethics evolve.

**Digital Transformation & Security**

The Professional, Scientific and Technical Services sector continues to thrive as SMEs scramble to digitize.

Cybersecurity: With the rise in data breaches, businesses are desperate for "Risk & Compliance" consultants and staff training.

Managed Services: High demand remains for digital agencies specializing in SEO and virtual administration to help traditional businesses stay competitive.

**Premium Lifestyle & Niche Services**

The Other Services category is seeing a "convenience premium" as busy Australians outsource daily tasks.

The Pet Boom: Australia has one of the highest pet ownership rates in the world. High-margin services like mobile grooming and boutique pet-sitting are thriving.

Mobile Solutions: On-demand models –ranging from eco-friendly car detailing to specialized Food & Beverage meal prep for niche diets– are winning the battle for consumer time.

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## FROM WISH TO WILL

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

PART 2



### How should a Will be Executed?

In Victoria, a Will must meet certain formal requirements under the Wills Act 1997 (VIC) to be valid.

- (a) It is in writing and signed by the will-maker (you!) (the person making the Will), or by another person in the presence of the will-maker and at their direction; and
- (b) The will-maker signs with the intention that the document operate as their will (the signature need not appear at the end of the document); and
- (c) The will-maker's signature is made or acknowledged in the presence of at least two witnesses, who are present at the same time, and each witness signs the will in the presence of the will-maker.

## BE AWARE!

- Witnesses should be independent adults (not beneficiaries, not a beneficiary's spouse or partner) to minimise the risk of later challenge.
- The will-maker and both witnesses should sign and date the will on the same occasion, and initial each page.
- Include an attestation clause recording that the will was signed by the will-maker in the presence of both witnesses, who then signed in the will-maker's presence.

**How often should I update my Will?**

You should review your Will whenever major life events occur, such as:

- (a) Marriage, separation, or divorce
- (b) Birth or adoption of a child
- (c) Buying or selling a property
- (d) Starting or selling a business
- (e) Death of a beneficiary or executor

Even if none of these apply, it's wise to review your Will every few years to ensure it still matches your current circumstances.



**Where should I keep my Will?**

Keep the original Will in a safe and accessible location, such as:

- (a) With your lawyer or law firm;
- (b) In a bank or private safe deposit box;
- (c) In your safe place, where you keep your other important documents.

Let your executor or a trusted family member know where it is stored. A copy is not enough for probate purposes – the original document will be required.

**Can I prepare my own Will?**

Yes, you can write your own Will, but you should proceed with caution. Do-it-yourself will kits or Post Office Will or online templates often lead to serious problems, including:

- (a) Appointing incorrect Executors
- (b) Mistakes in signing and witnessing
- (c) Unclear or incomplete wording
- (d) Missing assets or forgotten property
- (e) Unintended consequences from poorly drafted clauses

These errors can cause disputes or delay the distribution of your estate.

**To be continued next month**



**Author: Ms Thirumalai Selvi Shanmugam**

## Milestone for Tamil Media: The Tamil Times Officially Released at Sydney Global Business Meet

Book Launch



Recently the 12th Annual Global Business Meet was held in Sydney by World Tamil Chamber of Commerce. Many associations, Business chambers and government authorities such as Investment NSW participated. Senior Editor Dr Chandrika Subramanian introduced the magazine and its purpose to the audience.

The Tamil Times was officially released at the event by Thol Thirumavalavan MP and the first copy was received by the Consulate General of Indian in Sydney Dr Janakiraman. The president of the World Tamil Chamber of Commerce Mr Selvakumar, and many other signatories were present.



**Author : Chandrika Subramanian**



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PONGAL 2026 CLASH

VIJAY'S JANA NAYAGAN VS. SIVAKARTHIKEYAN'S PARASAKTHI



Vijay stars in "Jana Nayagan," a ₹300 crore action thriller directed by H. Vinoth. Rumored to be his final film before entering politics, it features high-octane stunts and a star-studded cast including Bobby Deol. In contrast, Sivakarthikeyan leads "Parasakthi," a grounded period drama by Sudha Kongara. Set during the 1965 Anti-Hindi agitations, the film highlights his dramatic range as a student leader.

This battle of "mass" entertainment versus historical storytelling marks a defining moment for Kollywood, as audiences decide which narrative style dominates the festive season.

E-KALVI CHARITY



ANNOUNCEMENT

We're announcing donations made to Ekalvi Charity Fund and celebrating the kindness behind every contribution. 🌲🌟

Please join us in making change happen for the underprivileged students who were unfortunately also affected by natural disasters in Sri Lanka.

## AMMA'S PRIDE, QUALIFIED FOR THE 98TH ACADEMY AWARDS

The award-winning Indian documentary short, *Amma's Pride*, has qualified for the 98th Academy Awards in the Documentary Short category, making it the only Indian trans-centered story to enter this year's Oscar race.

Directed by Shiva Krish, the film chronicles the real-life story of Valli, a mother in Tamil Nadu, and her daughter, Srija, a trans woman. Crucially, the documentary reframes the typical narrative of tragedy often associated with transgender people in Indian cinema, instead focusing on unwavering familial solidarity and affirmation as Srija pursues love, marriage, and legal recognition with her mother's steadfast support.



The film has resonated deeply with global audiences, sparking conversations about acceptance, rights, and belonging. It first gained significant recognition by winning Best Short Documentary at the International Documentary & Shorts Film Festival of Kerala (IDSFFK). Since then, it has been screened over 60 times across continents, traveled internationally as part of the Indian Panorama at IFFI, and been included in cultural exchange programs by the Government of India.

Beyond film festivals, the team has built an extensive impact campaign, moving the documentary into corporate offices, universities, and community spaces worldwide. The film's core message, as voiced by Valli, is the crucial need for parental support for trans children, while Srija simply asks for trans people to be treated "like any other people." Director Krish describes the mother's choice to stand by her daughter as a "quiet revolution," highlighting how true allyship begins at home.

**Sydney :**

15th Jan (Thursday) - Sydney Pongal Festival 2026

24th Jan (Saturday) - Vasantha Ganam 2026 (Super Singers Concert)

14th Feb (Saturday) - Haricharan & Saindhavi Live Music concert

**Melbourne :**

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

17th Jan (Saturday) - Thai Pongal Festival by Northern Tigers Social Club

18th Jan (Sunday) - Thai Pongal 2026, Victoria Tamil Cultural Association

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

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

31st Jan (Saturday) - Civaka Cinthamani Music event, Victoria

07th Feb (Saturday) - Isai Priyanin Isai Sangamam by TCECA

07th Feb (Saturday) - Haricharan & Saindhavi Live Music concert

14th Feb (Saturday) - Anbar Thematic Bharathanarya Dance

14th Feb (Saturday) - Fundrasing event for our Children, Victoria

21th Feb (Saturday) - Grand Innisai Iravu 2026, Victoria

13th Jun (Saturday) - Signing Fish Annual Dinner

**Queensland :**

07th Feb (Saturday) - Pongal Festival by Queensland Tamil Mandram

**Perth :**

01st Feb (Sunday) - Thai Poosam Festival at Perth Bala Murugan Temple

13 & 14th Feb (Friday & Saturday)- Mahashivratri with music, Perth

**Canberra :**

17th Jan (Saturday) - Thai Pongal, Canberra Tamil Association

06 to 08th Feb (Friday to Sunday) - National Multicultural Festival, Canberra

**Adelaide :**

24th Jan (Saturday) - Tamil Fest Adelaide Pongal 2026

**Please send your event flyers to [vanakkam@tamiltimes.com.au](mailto:vanakkam@tamiltimes.com.au) to be included in Tamil Times Event Calendar. For full event details visit our website [www.TamilTimes.com.au](http://www.TamilTimes.com.au)**

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