



Tamil Times Australia

All in one Tamil magazine from the best minds

A Soulful Arangettram

Four Sisters
Sweta, Suruthi, Surabhi, and Swathi




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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.

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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Tamil Australian Woman Constable Vithushaa Begins Promising Career in Victoria Police

Constable Vithushaa, a young woman from the Tamil community, has proudly begun her career with Victoria Police after completing the Bachelor of Criminology and Policing at Monash University. Always passionate about becoming a police officer, Vithushaa also recognised the importance of pursuing tertiary education. She found the ideal pathway through Monash University's unique three-year degree, which explores how and why crime happens while also equipping students with the practical skills required for modern policing.



With support from both Monash University and Victoria Police, Vithushaa said she felt prepared from the very beginning. Her training at the Police Academy gave her the opportunity to put theory into practice and further reinforced the value of teamwork and mutual support.

Reflecting on her Academy experience, Vithushaa said she had an amazing time, describing how her squad always supported one another through exams and training, with everyone wanting to see each other succeed.

Now serving in general duties, Constable Vithushaa is building a meaningful career in public service and stands as an inspiring example for young people – especially from multicultural and Tamil backgrounds – who aspire to make a difference through education and community service.



Her achievement is a proud moment for the Tamil community and a reminder that dedication, education, and perseverance can open doors to important and respected professions.

Well done Vithushaa !

Photo Courtesy: Victoria Police



www.loomsarees.com.au

French Tamil Youth Leader Athithiya Anantharajah Appointed Deputy Mayor in France

At just 25 years of age, French Tamil **Athithiya Anantharajah** has been appointed Maire Adjoint (Deputy Mayor) of Pontault-Combault, a municipality on the outskirts of Paris, France, marking a proud milestone for the Tamil community.

Athithiya's political journey has been remarkable. Beginning her public service at the age of 19 as a city councillor, she has steadily built a strong reputation through hard work, conviction and a deep commitment to the community she calls home. The daughter of Tamil refugees who fled the war in Sri Lanka, her story reflects resilience, determination and the values of public service.



She was appointed Deputy Mayor of Pontault-Combault in March 2026 and is expected to play an important role in local governance and community development. Her achievement stands as an inspiring example of how young people from migrant backgrounds can make a meaningful impact in mainstream political life.

It is reported that Athithiya's family traces its roots to Kayts in the Jaffna district. Her family history and early life experiences are said to have played a significant role in shaping her strong interest in politics and civic engagement.

During her earlier term as Municipal Councillor for Youth from 2020 to 2026, Athithiya led several initiatives for young residents aged 11 to 17. These included the "Quartier Jeunes" program as well as awareness workshops focusing on environmental issues and disability inclusion.

Athithiya Anantharajah's rise in French local politics is a proud moment for Tamils across the diaspora. Her journey is expected to inspire more young people to step forward into politics, leadership and community service.

Australian Tamil Writer S. Shakthidharan Wins Prestigious Global Prize

Sri Lanka-born and Sydney-raised writer **S. Shakthidharan** has been awarded the renowned Windham-Campbell Prize for 2026, highlighting his growing global influence in contemporary theatre and storytelling.

He is currently in Kilinochchi working on his debut film, *The Laugh of Lakshmi*. The film explores the emotional journey of a mother and son separated during the civil war, reflecting themes that are central to much of his work.



Reacting to the award, Shakthidharan said he was shocked and honoured, describing the recognition as both affirming and potentially life-changing. The prize includes AU\$250,000, allowing recipients to focus on their creative work without financial concerns.

Administered by Yale University, the award recognises eight writers annually across fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Shakthidharan was chosen in the drama category for his ambitious storytelling, emotional depth, and strong character development.

His landmark theatre production, *Counting and Cracking* (2019), traces four generations of a Tamil family from Sri Lanka to Australia, blending history with personal narratives. The play received international acclaim, with performances in Australia, the UK, and the US, and won major honours including the Victorian Prize for Literature and multiple Helpmann Awards.

His second play, *The Jungle and the Sea* (2022), further explores the lasting impact of the Sri Lankan civil war on families. It was widely praised and won the 2024 Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Drama, cementing his position as a leading voice in global theatre.

KAVADI FESTIVAL AT PERTH BALA MURUGAN TEMPLE



On Saturday, 4 April 2026, the grounds of the Perth Bala Murugan Temple came alive with colour, rhythm and devotion as the devotees of Lord Murugan gathered to celebrate a vibrant Kavadi Festival. From early morning, the Temple echoed with heartfelt songs, melodic music, and the steady pulse of devotional drumming, each offering carrying the unmistakable sincerity of Muruga bhakti.



As the kavadi bearer moved with grace and determination, a familiar spiritual energy flowed through the Temple premises – the same spirit that devotees remember from their home villages and ancestral temples. In this corner of Perth, Western Australia, a cherished tradition from back home was lovingly recreated, giving migrant communities the space to practise their culture, religion and spirituality in their current homeland.



For many, the festival rekindled memories of childhood processions, temple streets filled with music, and the comforting presence of community. The event was a reminder that devotion travels with the heart, and culture thrives wherever people choose to keep it alive.

Taking Tamil to the next generation

The journey of Tamil Picture Books 4 Kids

About the Organisation

In an increasingly digital world, preserving language and cultural identity among younger generations has become both a challenge and an opportunity. Founded in Melbourne in 2016, Tamil Graded Readers is a not-for-profit, community-driven incorporated organisation that is addressing this challenge by bringing Tamil reading to children through the very devices they love.

Tamil Graded Readers is run by a group of culturally rooted professionals with a shared vision: to strengthen Tamil literacy among Australian Tamil youth. Its digital product Tamil Picture Books 4 Kids is available on Android, iOS, and web browsers, offers nearly 100 illustrated storybooks across 10 structured levels, designed to progressively build reading skills.

With around 700 registered users and over 20,000 installs, the initiative continues to grow through partnerships with community language schools and participation in cultural events.



Turning Screen Time into Reading Time

Rather than competing with devices, Tamil Picture Books just embraces them. By delivering engaging, illustrated Tamil stories on tablets and smartphones, it transforms screen time into meaningful learning.

Encouraging even a few minutes of daily Tamil reading helps children:

- Build vocabulary and comprehension
- Gain confidence in reading
- Develop a lasting connection to the language

Why the Graded Reader Approach Works

The initiative is built on the graded reader methodology, a structured approach that introduces language in a gradual, level-based manner with pictures.

This ensures:

- Step-by-step learning without overwhelm
- Better comprehension through controlled vocabulary
- Sustained motivation and confidence

For children growing up in English-dominant environments, this method is especially effective in supporting long-term language retention.

Community-Powered and Volunteer-Led

Tamil Picture Books team operates entirely through volunteers—spanning technical development, content creation, review, and operations. Stories are developed and reviewed by like-minded contributors, while professional graphic artists from India and Sri Lanka create engaging, child-friendly illustrations.

Importantly, as a not-for-profit organisation, all activities are supported through:

- Community fundraising initiatives such as Bunnings BBQs
- Local council grants
- Generous donations from the community

This collective effort reflects a strong shared commitment to preserving Tamil language and culture.



Building Community Through Reading

Beyond the app, the organisation actively engages children through interactive initiatives. Number of reading sessions have been conducted for children aged 4-13, to create fun, immersive experiences. These sessions not only promote literacy but also strengthen community bonds and cultural identity.



A Growing Movement

The recent Annual General Meeting in March 2026 marked an exciting phase of growth, marking the organisation's 10th year anniversary. It was encouraging to see a rising number of young professionals, including second-generation Tamil women, stepping forward to contribute. Their involvement brings fresh energy and ensures the long-term sustainability of the initiative.



Expanding Beyond Digital

In addition to the digital platform, Tamil Graded Readers has recently introduced freshly designed, printed versions of its storybooks. This provides children with a complementary offline reading experience, catering to different learning preferences while reinforcing reading habits.

Contributed by:

Sudarsan Gopal

President, Tamil Graded Readers Inc.

VTA Women's group hosted "YOUNG MINDS MATTER"

On 8th March , to coincide with International Women's Day

After hosting successful women's and men's health workshop in 2025... the committee was inspired to host a workshop focused on the youth and their well-being.

It was an interactive, fun, informative workshop. The event was opened by Ms Eden Foster (Member of Parliament) , followed by a guest speaker from Sydney (who inspired us with her journey of living with Neurofibromatosis)

We played games , had another informative session with a Q & A panel (GP , psychologist, mental health worker etc) and finished off with dancing , yoga and meditation!





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Historic Event Brings Together Four Generations of the Vasundhara Bani Lineage of Bharatanatyam in Melbourne's West

Presented by Smt. Tanvi Oza Kumar, Guru Vandana – An Offering Through Dance unfolded in Melbourne at the Centenary Theatre in Williamstown as a deeply reflective evening honouring the living continuum of Bharatanatyam.

Smt. Tanvi Oza Kumar is the Founder and Artistic Director of Natya Samarpan Academy of Bharatanatyam in Melbourne's West and a senior disciple of Guru Dr. Vasundhara Doraswamy and Smt. Meghala Bhat.



In this presentation, she offered a full Margam in the Vasundhara Bani - a distinguished lineage of Bharatanatyam pioneered by Guru Dr. Vasundhara Doraswamy of Mysore for the first time in Melbourne. This historic event brought together four generations of the Vasundhara Bani under one roof.

Rooted in devotion and discipline, the evening was not only a presentation of classical repertoire, but also a meditation on lineage, transmission, and the Guru-Shishya Parampara, where tradition is not a static inheritance but a living, breathing practice.

The evening was anchored by the presence of Guru Dr. Vasundhara Doraswamy from Mysore, whose pioneering vision and lifelong dedication to Bharatanatyam continues to shape generations of dancers. Also present was Guru Smt. Meghala Bhat, senior disciple and distinguished exponent of the Vasundhara Bani, whose artistic journey reflects the depth and continuity of sustained training within this lineage in Australia.





The performance was further supported by an accomplished ensemble of musicians from Melbourne whose artistry formed the sonic architecture of the evening. Vocalists Shri Madhu Kashyap and Shri Krithi H. R. provided expressive depth and melodic grounding, while Shri Senthuran Jogarathnam on mridangam offered rhythmic structure and vitality. The violin accompaniment by Shri Sughosh Seetharam and flute by Subramanya Shastry added melodic nuance and emotional resonance. The nattuvangam, rendered by the Gurus themselves, created a rare and powerful dialogue between movement, rhythm, and lineage in real time.

Ultimately, Guru Vandana - An Offering Through Dance stood as an act of devotion and celebration of the sacred art of Bharatanatyam and the generations of artists who strive to maintain its purity in a changing world.

Tamil New year message from Minister for Multicultural Affairs Hon Dr Anne Aly MP.



PUTHANDU (TAMIL NEW YEAR)

As families and communities gather to celebrate Puthandu, I send my warmest wishes to Tamil Australians across the country.

Puthandu is a deeply meaningful time, a moment to reflect, reconnect with loved ones, and step into the year ahead with hope. Traditions passed through generations, including lighting the Kuthuvilakku, preparing meals, and sharing blessings with family remain an important part of this celebration.

This is also an opportunity to recognise the significant achievements of Tamil Australians, whose culture, language and strong sense of community continues to enrich and strengthen our multicultural nation..

As you mark Puthandu, I wish all those celebrating a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

May this year bring you good health, happiness, and renewed optimism, and continue to strengthen the spirit of unity and mutual respect across Australia. Puthandu Vazhthukkal!

The Hon Dr Anne Aly MP
April 2026

Mayil Veera

Music Video Released in Australia



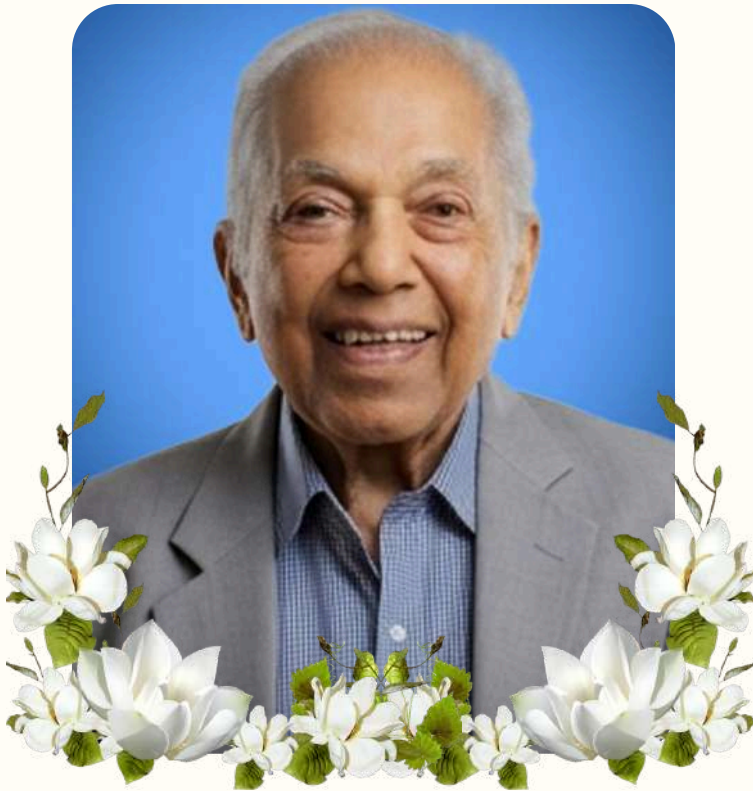
The independent music video “Mayil Veera” was officially released on 1 April 2026, marking an exciting creative collaboration between talented artists and production teams. The project was proudly presented by KM Cine Dreams and Charou Ram Studios, in collaboration with Illuminate Production Australia and Bolly Fit Dance Studio.

The music for Mayil Veera was composed and directed by Charou Ram, with lyrics penned by Kuve (Kuvendiran Ganesalingam). The song was brought to life by the vocals of playback singer Sinduri Vishal.

The release of Mayil Veera stands as a proud milestone for independent Tamil music content, showcasing the passion, creativity, and collaborative spirit of artists across borders.

Remembering
MR. A.V. MURUGIAH

Founding Director and Supporter of the
Victorian Tamil Community Centre



The Tamil Community in Australia mourns the passing of Mr. A.V. Murugiah, a respected elder, founding director, and generous supporter of the Victorian Tamil Community Centre.



PALMYRA HALL

கற்பகதரு மண்டபம்

Mr. Murugiah was born in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, on 6 December 1928, and passed away in Melbourne on 7 April 2026 at the age of 97. His life journey took him from Sri Lanka to England, Zambia, and later Australia, reflecting a life shaped by resilience, commitment, and a strong sense of community.

He will be remembered as a key founding director of the Tamil Community Centre, having made an important contribution to the establishment of the Victorian Tamil Community Centre Unit Trust. Mr. Murugiah believed deeply in the vision of creating a lasting community asset that would serve future generations of Tamils in Victoria and help strengthen cultural ties, unity, and community wellbeing.



His contribution went beyond leadership and guidance. He also extended his full support to the project through a significant financial commitment, demonstrating his firm belief in the importance of building strong institutions for the Tamil community in Australia. His generosity and foresight played an important part in helping turn that vision into reality.

Mr. Murugiah was also an active member of the Casey Tamil Mandram Senior Citizens group, where he remained engaged with community life and continued to be valued by those around him. His involvement reflected his enduring dedication to staying connected with the community and supporting its collective growth.

His passing is a significant loss to the Tamil community. Yet his legacy will continue through the institutions he helped build, the lives he touched, and the example he set through service, generosity, and commitment to community advancement.

Mr. A.V. Murugiah will be remembered with deep respect and gratitude. The community extends its heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing him. May his soul rest in peace.



Dr. K.S. Vijayalayan JP

Appointed as Justice of the Peace in Tasmania

Dr. K.S. Vijayalayan (Vijay) has been appointed as a Justice of the Peace (JP), bringing pride to the Tamil community in Tasmania. He is well known for his continuous involvement in community service. Vijay officially took his oath in front of Magistrate Evan Hughes.

This appointment is seen as an important achievement and a positive step for the Tamil community in Tasmania. His dedication and service have earned him this respected role.



We warmly congratulate Dr. Vijayalayan on this milestone and wish him continued success in serving the community.



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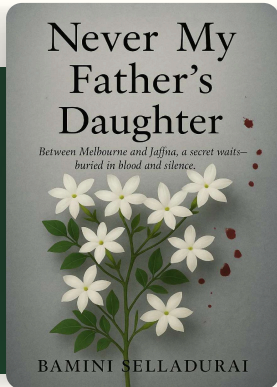
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Bamini Selladurai's NEVER MY FATHER'S DAUGHTER



Melbourne Tamil Author Tells Story of War, Identity and Hidden Truths

Melbourne author Bamini Selladurai has released a powerful new novel that explores the lasting emotional scars of war and the search for identity within Tamil families shaped by the Sri Lankan civil conflict.

Her novel, *Never My Father's Daughter*, tells the story of Aruvi Murugadas, a Melbourne doctor raised by her single mother, Seetha, a Tamil refugee who fled the violence of northern Sri Lanka. While Aruvi grows up surrounded by love and the protective support of extended family, she has also lived under the shadow of an unspoken truth.

From childhood, whispers follow her – that she is the child of rape, conceived during the brutal years of war.

As an adult, Aruvi begins searching for answers about her past. But just as she starts uncovering the painful truth surrounding her birth, tragedy strikes when her mother is found brutally murdered.

Left with unanswered questions, Aruvi must confront the secrets that shaped her life. Who was her father? What truth did her mother carry in silence? And how far will someone go to ensure the past remains buried?

Spanning war-torn Sri Lanka and modern-day Melbourne, *Never My Father's Daughter* is a moving story of love, loss, and the quiet resilience of women who carry the weight of history.

The novel is available on Amazon in Kindle, paperback, and hardcover editions.

A Dream Rekindled: Perth Woman Inspires Others with Classical Dance Debut at 65



“At 65, she proves it’s never too late to follow your passion – and inspire others to stay active, strong, and healthy.”

In March 2025, at the age of 65, Perth resident Shanthikha Xavier (also known as Bawani Yogendran within her Tamil community) has achieved a milestone that many dancers spend a lifetime chasing – she performed her **Bharatanatyam Arangetram**, (Graduation) the traditional debut solo recital in the classical Indian dance form. Her story is one of courage, passion, and perseverance – a vivid reminder that it is never too late to follow your heart, inspire others, and embrace the joy of movement.

For Shanthikha, the performance was far more than an artistic achievement. It was the fulfilment of a dream that had quietly lived in her heart for decades, patiently waiting for the right moment to bloom.

Life, however, had tested her resilience in countless ways. When her daughter Thanushka moved to Melbourne, followed by her son Naveeshan, and the world was engulfed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Shanthikha and her husband faced an empty nest – sudden, unexpected, and deeply emotional.

“It was one of the hardest times of my life,” she recalls. “But I realised I had a choice: to be swallowed by sadness or to rediscover something that could bring joy, meaning, and purpose back into my life.”

That decision led her back to Bharatanatyam – a love she first discovered at the tender age of twelve, under the gentle guidance of her early gurus in Sri Lanka and tenderly nurtured by the unwavering belief and sacrifices of her parents, the late Dr and Mrs Balakrishnan of Point Pedro, Jaffna, Sri Lanka. But life had its own rhythm education, migration to Australia, the demands of career, and the responsibilities of raising a family slowly drew her away from the stage.

Years later, that same flame began to glow again through her daughter, Thanushka, who carried the family’s artistic legacy forward with grace, completing her own Arangetram in 2002—a moment of pride, and perhaps, a quiet rekindling of a dream once set aside.

In 2019, Shanthikha returned to dance under the mentorship of longtime friend and Guru Shobana Gopu Iyar. “When I dance, I forget the world,” she says. “It fills me with peace, joy, and purpose.”

When the idea of pursuing her own Arangetram was gently placed before her by her beloved guru, she hesitated. The thought of stepping onto the stage for a full recital at her age felt overwhelming, almost impossible. But with the unwavering support of her teacher, the encouragement of her family and friends, and the strength she found within herself, she chose courage over doubt—and embraced the journey with all her heart.

On 22 March 2025, when she finally stepped onto the stage before an audience of nearly 750, it was more than a performance of over four hours—it was a moment decade in the making.

That night was more than an Arangetram—it was a stirring, unforgettable celebration of resilience, courage, determination, hard work, and a passion that refused to fade.

One audience member captured the moment perfectly:
 "It was an absolute privilege to witness Shanthikha’s breathtaking Bharatanatyam performance. Her grace, energy, and expressive storytelling were extraordinary –so much so that I forgot the age of the dancer and saw only the artist. The way she wove themes of women’s mental and physical wellbeing into her dance was deeply moving and truly inspiring.



"Shanthikha's artistry did not go unnoticed. For her **brilliant facial expressions and emotive storytelling**, she was honoured with the prestigious title of "**Abhinaya Nathaki**", recognising her exceptional skill in bringing every story and character to life on stage.

For Shanthikha, the journey has always been about more than personal achievement. She hopes to inspire others – young and not-so-young – to embrace physical activity and wellbeing. Having spent over 26 years as a family lawyer with **Legal Aid, Western Australia**, she has seen firsthand how life's pressures can affect mental and physical health.

"Dance has given me strength, balance, and happiness," she says. "I hope my journey encourages others to find an activity that nourishes them – dance, walking, yoga, anything that keeps both body and mind healthy."

Now, one year after her Arangetram, Shanthikha's story shines as a reminder that **age is no barrier to pursuing dreams**.

"Dreams don't have an expiry date," she reflects. "Sometimes they wait patiently until we are ready to embrace them."

Looking back on her remarkable journey, Shanthikha's heart overflows with gratitude – to her steadfast husband, Yogan, whose unwavering support carried her through every step; to her children and the extended family, whose love and encouragement gave her courage; and most of all, to her beloved guru Shobana, whose patience, guidance, and faith made the impossible possible.

"At my golden age, I never imagined I would stand on stage and fulfil a dream I had carried for decades," she reflects. "This journey has taught me that it is never too late to follow one's passion – and that dreams, no matter how long they wait, can still come true."



April 2026



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Grand Opening



Vazhi வழி(லி)

—A Journey of Art, Compassion and Purpose in Canberra



The multicultural landscape of Canberra was enriched by the evocative Bharatanatyam production “வழி(லி) (Vazhi)”, a deeply moving dance performance that seamlessly blended classical artistry with humanitarian purpose. The title “வழி(லி) (Vazhi)”, meaning “path”, was thoughtfully interpreted in this context as a path towards a pain-free journey—a poignant reflection of the event’s underlying mission in palliative care.

Held in March 2026, this special evening brought together community, culture, and compassion in support of two vital causes—raising funds for the construction of an end-of-life palliative care ward at the Tellipalai Cancer Hospital in Jaffna, Sri Lanka and a home based palliative care programme in Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu, India.

At its core, “வழி(லி) (Vazhi)” was more than a dance recital. It symbolised a collective journey towards dignity, comfort, and relief from suffering for patients with life-limiting illnesses.



The Artist: Bhavajan Kumar

The evening was headlined by Bhavajan Kumar, a distinguished Bharatanatyam exponent from Chennai and a disciple of the renowned guru Leela Samson. Known for his expressive depth and technical precision, Bhavajan’s performance captivated the audience through a compelling interplay of rhythm, storytelling, and emotion.

His artistry, marked by intensity and grace, carried the audience through profound narratives—from devotion to love and karuna (compassion). Each piece in “வழி(லை)” echoed the emotional landscapes of human experience, subtly aligning with the themes of suffering, healing, and transcendence central to palliative care.



Art in Service of Humanity

The event was organised by Paalam – The Bridge to Humanity (PBH), a Canberra-based charity dedicated to improving access to palliative care among culturally diverse communities in Australia and underserved regions in South Asia.

Through initiatives such as “Vazhi”, PBH continues to demonstrate how cultural platforms can be transformed into powerful vehicles for advocacy and change. The organisation’s ongoing project—the establishment of an end-of-life care ward in Jaffna—represents a significant step toward equitable and compassionate healthcare.

A Lasting Impact

“வழி(லை) (Vazhi)” stands as a testament to the power of art in mobilising communities for a greater good. By transforming a classical dance performance into a meaningful humanitarian effort, the event not only celebrated rich cultural heritage but also advanced an essential healthcare mission.

The message of “Vazhi” endures—a reminder that every journey towards a pain-free and dignified end of life begins with a single step, and that together, through compassion and collective action, we can help pave that path.

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A Soulful Arangetram



On Saturday evening (21 March 2026), the Tony Sheumack Performing Arts Centre was filled to capacity as four sisters, students of Mrs. Meena Elankumaran, took to the stage for their Bharatanatyam Arangetram.

Sweta, Suruthi, Surabhi, and Swathi, daughters of Mr. Tharmaseelan and Dr. Nithya Tharmaseelan, have grown up before the eyes of the Tamil community in Victoria. Born in New Zealand and having moved to Australia in 2012, their journey reflects a deep connection to culture, identity, and heritage. With Sweta as the eldest, and the other three, born in a single birth, fondly known as triplets, the sisters brought to life years of dedication shaped by their parents' love for Tamil and the arts.

From the very beginning, the stage transformed into something extraordinary.

The sacred courtyard of the Nallur Murugan Temple was brought vividly to life through the artistic work of Mr. Raja Elankumaran. In that moment, it no longer felt like Melbourne, It felt like being transported to a space of devotion, memory, and belonging.



A defining feature of the evening was that every item performed was a Tamil composition. The recital began with Pushpanjali and continued with “Alangara Nallura,” composed by Dr. Nithya Tharmaseelan, an evocative piece that not only praised Lord Nallur Murugan but also expressed the quiet pain of longing for a homeland once called home. The composition was musically set and soulfully rendered by Sri Akilan Sivanandan.

This was followed by the varnam “Velanai Kaanbom Vaareer,” and other items including “Chellakkani Vaayaal,” “Kanda Naal Mudhalaai Kaadhil Peruguthadi,” the vibrant thillana “Balamuruganaik Kaana,” and “Vallik Kanavan Perai Vazhippokan Sonnalum”, all woven together as offerings of devotion to Lord Murugan. The mangalam concluded with the final verses of the Skanda Shashti Kavasam, leaving the audience both moved and amazed.



The performance was further elevated by the accompanying artists:

- Mridangam: Sri Satheepan Elankumaran
- Violin: Sri Suresh Babu
- Flute: Sri Subramania Sastri
- Nattuvangam: Sri Bhavan Elankumaran

Programme coordination and choreography were by Kumari Rukshika Elankumaran.

Yet beyond the structure of the performance, what unfolded was something far deeper, a truly soulful Arangetram.

As audience member Malathi Nadarajah expressed:

*It felt like poetry was raining down...
Tamil resonated and rose in splendour...*



*The rhythmic chime of salangai blossomed in the ears,
while, in the gentle hands of these young women,
the very pulse of rhythm came alive.*

*It was as though Nallur Kandan himself descended
and revealed his presence at the Sheumack Centre.
In the expressive abhinaya of the Tharmaseelan daughters,
I found myself completely immersed, lost in their emotion.*

*Not only in that sacred space,
but in this land,
and even beyond, in the heavens,
I felt, in that moment,
that Nallur Kandan stands with us always.*

*The songs were a feast to the ears,
the expressions melted the heart,
and within my very soul,
I lost all sense of self.*

*In the love of the elder sister,
in her tireless dedication,
in the affection shared among the three younger blossoms,
and in the poem they offered to their parents,
joy flowed as tears from the eyes.*

*The parents' love and sacrifice,
the guiding light of the teacher,
all came together to transform this Arangetram
into an unforgettable, almost timeless memory.*

*With a heart overflowing with love,
eyes filled with tears of joy,
and a meal packet in hand,
I made my way home.*

This was more than an Arangetram, it was an experience that lingered in the hearts of all who witnessed it.

My heartfelt congratulations to the Tharmaseelan family and their four daughters.



Neeliraa Review

A Long Night, A Deep Wound, A Courageous Film



By bringing the pain, dignity and survival of Eelam Tamils to the screen with honesty and restraint, director Someetharan delivers a film that feels personal, political and profoundly human.

Neeliraa Review: A Powerful Film Shaped by Memory, Pain and Persistence

Neeliraa is not just another war-based Tamil film. It is a deeply personal and emotionally charged work that brings to the screen the fear, uncertainty and quiet resilience of Tamil families who lived through the dark years of conflict in Sri Lanka. Set in 1980s Jaffna, the film unfolds over a single tense night inside a family home on the eve of a wedding. What begins as a moment of celebration soon turns into a terrifying struggle for dignity and survival.

What makes Neeliraa stand apart is its restraint. Rather than using war as a backdrop for spectacle, the film focuses on the human cost of conflict. It captures how ordinary lives can be shattered in an instant, and how even the most sacred family moments can be overshadowed by fear. The setting of a wedding house is especially effective, because it reflects both joy and vulnerability. In that contrast lies the emotional power of the film.

The film's greatest strength is its authenticity. The atmosphere, the emotions and the cultural details all feel grounded and sincere. Neeliraa appears to be less interested in dramatic excess and more committed to truth. It gives space to silence, tension and emotional realism, allowing the audience to feel the anxiety of a family trapped within circumstances beyond their control.



Much of the credit for this must go to director Someetharan, whose hard work and dedication deserve special recognition. Neeliraa is not the work of a filmmaker telling a distant story. It comes from someone shaped by the realities of war and determined to bring that experience to the screen with honesty. As a debut feature director, Someetharan has taken on a difficult subject with courage and care. Bringing an Eelam Tamil story into mainstream cinema is no easy task, and that alone reflects years of persistence, commitment and belief in the importance of representation.

Someetharan's effort is visible in every layer of the film. There is a strong sense that he wanted not only to portray violence and fear, but also to preserve memory, culture and identity. The family setting, the emotional rhythm and the sense of lived experience suggest a filmmaker who understands the world he is depicting from the inside. That gives Neeliraa a rare kind of sincerity.

The performances and tone of the film have also been praised for their seriousness and emotional weight. Rather than relying on formula, Neeliraa chooses a more intimate and thoughtful path. That decision gives the film dignity and makes its message more lasting. It is a film that asks viewers not just to watch, but to reflect.

In the end, Neeliraa is an important contribution to Tamil cinema. It is a film about war, but also about memory, family and endurance. More importantly, it is a reminder that Eelam Tamil stories matter and deserve space on the big screen. Through this film, Someetharan has shown remarkable hard work and artistic courage. Neeliraa is not only a strong debut, but also a meaningful cinematic achievement.



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Makizhakam Project

Diaspora Giving Back with Purpose



The Makizhakam Project by JHC OBA Victoria is a meaningful example of how alumni associations can turn affection for their school into practical service for the next generation. Described by JHC OBA Victoria as a career guidance and counselling initiative launched in 2019, Makizhakam focuses on building healthy young minds through counselling support, enjoyable learning, leadership development, mentoring, confidence and resilience.

More than just a school-based project, Makizhakam reflects the enduring bond between Jaffna Hindu College and its global old boys. It shows how OBAs are contributing to the development of their alma mater in Jaffna not only through sentiment, but through structured, future-focused support that invests in students' wellbeing, direction and personal growth. In that sense, Makizhakam is also a powerful expression of Tamil linkage – connecting the diaspora to the homeland in a way that is thoughtful, responsible and deeply rooted in community values.



யாழ் இந்துக் கல்லூரி பழைய மாணவர் சங்கம்

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JAFFNA HINDU COLLEGE OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION
AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA



மகிழகத்தின் வளர்ச்சி- ஒரு பார்வை

JHC OBA Victoria deserves praise for demonstrating that alumni networks can be agents of educational uplift. Their work sends a strong message: when former students remain connected to the institutions that shaped them, they help preserve not only school pride, but also a wider Tamil tradition of service, gratitude and collective progress. Makizhakam stands as a commendable model for diaspora-led engagement with schools in the North and a reminder that giving back to one's alma mater is one of the most meaningful ways to strengthen community ties across borders.



To Donate: jhcobavictoria.org.au/makizhakam-for-everyone/

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When Worry Takes Over: Understanding Anxiety in Our Children

Many parents notice their child suddenly refusing to go to school, gets angry a lot more, complaining of stomach aches before exams, or becoming unusually quiet and withdrawn. Often, we assume they are being difficult or need more discipline. But these could be signs of anxiety.

Anxiety is not just nervousness before a big event. It is when worry becomes constant and overwhelming, affecting daily life. For Tamil children growing up between two cultures, anxiety can stem from pressure to excel academically, fear of disappointing parents, navigating different expectations at home and school, or struggling with identity and belonging.

What to look for:

- Frequent complaints of headaches, stomach aches, or feeling unwell with no medical cause
- Avoiding school, social events, or activities they once enjoyed
- Perfectionism or excessive fear of making mistakes
- Difficulty sleeping or constant restlessness
- Irritability, crying easily, or seeking constant reassurance

Children often do not have the words to say "I feel anxious." Instead, their body speaks for them. Rather than dismissing these signs as attention-seeking or weakness, recognise them as your child's way of asking for help.

The good news? Anxiety is manageable. Mental health support is not about failure. It is about giving our children the tools to thrive.

Check out, www.thadam.com.au or follow on @thadamofficial

By Thadam

This is not an extensive list of anxiety symptoms. For more information, visit Thadam on www.thadam.com.au or @thadamofficial and speak with your GP or psychologist for professional guidance.




Tamil Times CONTRIBUTOR PACK

Thank you for your interest in contributing to Tamil Times.

We welcome high-quality articles that inform, inspire, and connect the Tamil Australian community—covering community stories, diaspora connections, business/professional insights, culture, interviews, events, and opinion pieces.

Submission Deadline: Due date: 10th of each month

What to Submit (Required)

- Please send a complete submission pack including:
- Final article text (Word / Google Doc link / plain text)
- Suggested short heading (5-10 words preferred)
- Pull-out quotes/highlights (2-3 short lines we can feature in the layout)
- Author name (as it should appear in print)
- Author photo (clear headshot)
- Accompanying images related to the article (high-resolution where possible)

Optional (recommended):

- 1-2 line author bio
- Image captions and photo credit (where applicable)

Images – Quick Guidelines

- Send high-resolution originals (avoid low-quality screenshots).
- If your images include identifiable people, please ensure you have permission to publish.
- Include captions (who/what/where) and credits if needed.

Article Size (A5 Print Format)

Please choose one option:

1 x A5 page: ~160 words

2 x A5 pages: ~320 words

Email your submission to: info@tamiltimes.com.au

Subject line suggestion:

Tamil Times Article Submission – [Your Name] – [Short Topic]

We look forward to publishing your story in Tamil Times.

Tamil Times

Melbourne :

18th Apr (Saturday) - Chiththirai thiruvizha

13th Jun (Saturday) - Signing Fish Annual Dinner

20th Jun (Saturday) - Musical Dinner by Global Tamil Welfare Vision

29th Aug (Saturday) - Ishta Tatpalliwar's Bharathanatiyam Arangetram,

Sydney :

19th Apr (Sunday) - Tamil New Year Celebrations, Girraween Park, NSW

3rd May (Sunday) - Sydney Chiththirai Thiruvizha

06th & 07th June (Saturday, Sunday) - Swara Laya Fine Arts Music Programme, Sydney

Brisbane :

18th Apr(Saturday) - Tamil New Year Celebrations, Sri Lankan Association of Central Queensland

Please 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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