

TANGASSERI AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF MELBOURNE CELEBRATES 20th
ANNIVERSARY

Over 200 enthusiastic members of the Tangasseri Australian Association of Melbourne Inc celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the Association on 14th June 2014 at 90 Reception Centre, Oakleigh with a thanksgiving Mass, followed by a public function and dinner-dance.

The Thanksgiving mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Joseph Amla at 5.50 PM with active participation by the members in the readings, prayers of the faithful and singing of the hymns. Fr. Amla thanked God for the many Blessings showered on the Association over the two decades and for the work done by the Association in reaching out to the community through its various activities.

After the Mass members were served with light refreshments, while a video presentation of photographs taken at various functions over the two decades were presented.

The Public function commenced at 7.00 PM. The Secretary of the Association, Mr Grenville D'Crus introduced the guests of honour – Ms Manika Jain, Honourable Consul General of India in Melbourne and Mr Abeselom Nega, Commissioner of the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

Welcoming the members and guests, the President of the Association Mr Herwin Allen said “Anniversaries are a point in time when we remember, review, give thanks and plan for the future. It is good to look back at our modest and humble beginnings. Twenty years ago, 11 Tangasseri residents living in Melbourne decided to form an association to celebrate their culture and reunite their community, many of whom had migrated to Australia. Today the association has more than 200 members spread out across Melbourne, including long-time residents, new migrants and second-generation Australians. Our inherent qualities, as a result of confluence and influence of diverse cultures in India over hundreds of years especially in Tangasasaeri where the Portuguese, Dutch, French and English were the dominant rulers, is characterised by our ability to assimilate, integrate, participate, tolerate and importantly respect other cultures, which is the embodiment of Victoria’s cultural diversity.”

While referring to the activities of the Association he thanked the Greater Dandenong Council for the opportunity to be the managing agents for the Edinburgh Hall for 6 years. Other activities included the Annual Ball, the Family Day BBQ with sports and games for Children, the annual Christmas Tree & pageant for Children, Seniors Night, Kerala Hoppers Night, Long weekend trips for members, trivia nights, bollywood evening, social get-togethers, the Bon-Beach Tangy-Lightening Cricket Club supported by the Association, fund raising towards breast cancer research and relief to those affected by natural disasters in India and Victoria. He also referred to the benevolent fund set up with the Tangasseri Branch of the All-India Anglo Indian Association for providing assistance to the elderly and disadvantaged children in Tangasseri.

Mr Allen further stated that the Association is thankful to the Victorian Multicultural Commission for their assistance and support since 1999 with grants towards organisational support. He also thanked the founder members stating “your unity of purpose withstood the test of time” The President concluded his address by thanking all the members, sponsors of events and donors of prizes for their help, support and participation in all activities.

Hon. Consul General Ms Jain, felicitated the Association on reaching the landmark and lauded the members for not only engaging in cultural get-togethers but also for raising funds for social causes viz cancer research and natural disasters both in Victoria and elsewhere that helped the wider community. She urged the Association to further interact and extend its activities to other multicultural communities in Victoria.

Felicitating the Association on behalf of the Victorian Multicultural Commission, Commissioner Mr Abeselom Nega said he was delighted to be present at the celebrations. He referred to the 500 year history of Tangasseri that was governed by the Portuguese, Dutch, French and English prior to India's independence and the rich heritage the community had with both Indian & Western culture and tradition. He also referred to the many activities held by the Association.

A message of felicitations from Cr Jim Memeti, Mayor of Dandenong, who was unable to be present, was read by Mrs Linda Allen.

Mrs Kay McKertich spoke on behalf of the members of the Association and congratulated the founder members for their foresight and commitment.

Consul General Ms Jain and VMC Commissioner Mr Nega then presented the Founder Members and Members who had completed 20 years of membership with mementos. The public function concluded with a vote of thanks by the Secretary.

This was followed by a cultural program – with a song by Kimberley Christopher, a musical performance on the violin and a dance by Jaden Harding and bolly-wood dancing by the Sapphire Troupe. The finale was a pageant depicting 'A glimpse into the history of Tangasseri' with the young adult members portraying prominent personalities involved viz Vasco de Gama (Peter DeCouto), Ranis of Quilon (Gabrielle Cooper & Shania Allen), Bala Pillai Kurup (Don Gresseux). British & French soldiers (Mark & Mervyn D'Rozario), Rani of Jhansi (Laura Allen), Lord Curzon (Craig D'Rozario, Lord & Lady Mountbatten (Michael Gonsalvez & Rebecca McNerney), Bishop Benziger (Derrick Hickman), Mahatma Gandhi (Karl Cooper), Jawaharlal Nehru (Clyde Harding) and Frank Anthony (David Fernandez). The narrator for the pageant was Mrs Judy DeCouto.

The celebrations continued with ball-room dancing with music provided by the popular band CODAMIX. A buffet dinner and drinks (BWS) was also provided by the Association. The celebrations concluded at midnight.