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TAGB's Deepavali Dhamaka in Boston





The Telugu Association of Greater Boston (TAGB) celebrated the 2007 Deepavali festival with plenty of fanfare and fun on the 10th November 2007. With over 1400 people in attendance and close to 250 performers, primarily children, participating in a variety of entertainment sketches, the function was a grand celebration of the festival of lights. The TAGB committee took pains to accommodate the overflow crowd, and the provision of TV monitors in the hallways and cafeteria helped a lot. The evening's celebrations started with a prayer dance. Sri Sreenivas Kaki, President of TAGB, welcomed audience members from the Boston area, from Connecticut, and from other Indian associations. He expressed his happiness over the recent recognition of Deepavali by the US Government. His report to audience members highlighted the increasing role of TAGB Youth wing, General body meetings to facilitate upcoming Association elections, and the efforts underway to introduce Telugu history and culture as part of World history curricula in some New Hampshire schools. Sri Kaki said that TAGB has made great strides in community participation and in properly responding to community feedback, but urged members to participate even more actively, including in financial sponsorship of the programs, especially because of the increased cost of staging an event such as the Deepavali program.

The evening's program was compered primarily by Smt. Anu Metra, with able help from Sri Vamsi Koduru, as well as Manasa Jayanthi and Prithvi Mavuri of the Youth wing.

The more than three dozen short programs presented by area youngsters were well planned and executed. The children, with help from their parents and teachers, staged a variety of classical, folk and contemporary dances, one-act plays and comedy skits. The skate dance presented by Ms. Lakshmi Manasa, a well-known local artiste, was unique and entertaining. The children's fashion show, choreographed and directed by Ms. Sowmya Chari was innovative and presented novelty to the evening. The dedication and enthusiasm all the young participants showed was heart-warming.

The few programs staged by adults were in no way lacking in effort and quality compared to the children's items. "Naadu Nedu Paatala Teeru", coordinated by Sri Madhu Chari, was a retrospective of four decades of Telugu movie lyrics, with dances by local couples, and was the evening's highlight. A comical play 'Sitapati Kalyanam', written and directed by Smt. Padmaja Bala provided a gentle satire on the shortcomings of Indian arranged marriage system.

It is worth mentioning that the TAGB Youth wing (TYAGB) actively participated in several aspects of the event, like auditorium decorations, manning snack stalls and other help tables, assisting the overflow audience, etc. Newly formed 9 Member Youth Committee was introduced to the community by Mounica Donepudi and Pranathi Kaki. TYAGB sold specially designed Indian Heritage T-Shirts in their efforts to raise funds. The stalls set-up by local businesses and voluntary organizations were a novelty in a program of this kind. The 140 registrations for bone marrow donors that crir.org was able to collect demonstrated the social responsibility and awareness of expatriate Andhras. Advisory Committee Member Sri Taranath Yarabothu announced the elections for the term 2008 - 2010. As the last item of the evening, vice president Dr. Surya Jayanthi offered vote of thanks to the evening's financial sponsors, including Cambridge Resource Group, iKa Systems, Sri Murthy and Vani Kanneganti, Dr. Babu Pediatrics, Dr. Nana Rao DMD, Sri Sreenivas and Padmanjali Kaki, Sri Sekhar Nalla, Roshi Tech, Inc. and Alankar Decorators. He also thanked all the participants, their parents and teachers, and the audience for their enthusiastic show of support through out the evening.

- Srinivasa Rao Devarakonda, Westford, MA, USA