

## in Cultural Centre Colombo

### Activities in the month of January 2011

**10<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

#### **World Hindi Day Celebrations**

Professor Upul Ranjith Hewawitanagamage, Professor, University of Kelaniya delivered a talk on Hindi Studies in Sri Lanka: A Brief History at the Centre. In his lecture he spoke about the teaching and learning of the Hindi Language in Sri Lanka and its history and the influence of Indian dramatic traditions on Sinhala theatre.



## **One-day Seminar – Emergence of the South Asian Economies with special reference to India and Sri Lanka**

The Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo organized One Day Seminar on *Emergence of the South Asian Economies with special reference to India and Sri Lanka* on Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2011. The seminar was organized in view of the increasing growth momentum in the Indian and Sri Lankan economies who are the close neighbors in South Asia. His Excellency Shri Ashok K. Kantha, High Commissioner of India in Sri Lanka inaugurated the seminar. In his inaugural address, he highlighted about the spurt of economic growth in the South Asian region particularly in India and Sri Lanka.



In his illuminating address among the well-attended and participated important seminar, Shri Kantha pointed out that the focus has shifted from developed nations to the emerging countries that would shift the balance of economic growth at the global level. The South Asian region is experiencing now the tectonic economic growth. In the current period, the South Asia has been growing at the fastest rate outsmarting others. This has opened new chapter of economic growth and development in the South Asian region. India has been now showing high economic growth rate providing confidence to other countries in the region particularly Sri Lanka. In India, there have been uneven regional growth realizations. However, through a proper and porous growth strategy, there have been better growth realizations in the countryside and rural

ar. These have been helpful in sustaining and enhancing the growth momentum in the Indian economy. Growing population has been made to help the economic expansion in India through better strategy for demographic dividends. Thus, the untapped potentialities in the Indian economy are being taken care prudently. Private sector is fast upcoming now leading to their expansion as well as contributing significantly for the overall economic growth in India. There have been infrastructural gaps in India. However, now these gaps are being bridged to provide larger base for rapidly growing Indian economy.

Shri Kantha while appreciating the high economic growth rate of 8 percent a year during 2004-08 shown by Sri Lanka argued that it has shown its potentialities. It has greater potentialities if its untapped requisite potentialities might be released further. In this regard, Sri Lanka may take advantage of its proximity with the billion plus economy of India. Already, there is increased cooperation and this may be seen more obviously in areas like airways, dockyards, etc. There is now need that the growth stories of South Asia is made more successful through mutually reinforcing ways. With regard to India's economic relations with Sri Lanka, it might be pointed out that India has been working on non-reciprocity and asymmetrical strategy for larger economic growth. Private sector can play a strong stimulus in the South Asian region for reinforcing growth momentum further as intra-regional trade in the region is quite limited although there is great scope in this regard. Besides, the South Asian region needs to address the issues like poverty alleviation and inclusive growth for a sustainable growth.



Prof S.S.M.K. Kshanika Hirimburegama, Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo presided over the inaugural session. She said that India is like our brother. There is growing cooperation between the two countries and it needs to be further strengthened through improved relationships at the University level education and research.

The theme paper of the seminar entitled ***Emergence of the South Asian Economies with special reference to India and Sri Lanka*** was presented by Dr Manoj Kumar Agarwal, Visiting Professor of Economics, University of Colombo (Sri Lanka). He said that scholars have

decades that the economic power is shifting towards Asia due to its fast emergence wherein South Asia has been showing the remarkable progress. This fact has been well recognized now even by the international agencies like the World Bank that says that in this culturally rich part of the world, economic growth has surpassed collectively 5 percent and these needs to be improved and sustained. He later dealt with the two emerging economies of the South Asia viz. India and Sri Lanka in detail.

In his theme paper Dr Agarwal argued that India has been looked upon by the western scholars even before its independence in 1947 that it has strong economic potentialities and that would be difficult to get manifested because of its pluralism. Still India has shown it through strong democratic practices that India can and would emerge economically as well. Its pluralism would not be a hindrance but through democratic mechanism and other institutional reforms since the beginning itself India would emerge as one of the most rapidly growing economies in the world. More importantly, it is being sustained and India is making accelerated economic performance and is now poised for double digit economic growth. Its macroeconomic parameters are consistently improving and giving a sense of confidence of sustaining high economic growth rate in future as well. There are still areas where more attention is needed in India like human development, regional and inter-personal equality and poverty alleviation and women empowerment. His argument was that through suitable economic and other reforms these areas of challenges might be converted into potential sources of economic growth.

For the Sri Lankan economy, Professor Agarwal has shown much optimism through inter-temporal analysis as well as through the contemporary developments since the last few years in the backdrop of elimination of conflict after three decades. The Sri Lankan economy is credited for many firsts in South Asia like improving human development; drastic improvement in sex ratio; initiating economic reforms in 1977 when others could not imagine that way. This island economy is showing now sign of improvement and it shows the potentialities to grow faster through proper policy strategies. This would require focusing on the real sectors, changing human development into human resource development and adopting the policy of inclusive growth through the economic convergence approach.







The Valedictory speech was delivered by Shri Manish (Counselor, E&C, Indian High Commission, Colombo) who said Indian and Sri Lankan trade and commerce relationship is growing at very high pace and with further understanding it is expected to grow at still higher pace. The seminar was highly interactive as many important research deliberations were made by noted experts in their field from India and Sri Lanka. Many prominent researchers participated in the seminar like Prof W.D. Lakshman (former Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo), Prof K. Jothi Sivagnanam (University of Madras, India), Prof M.D.A.L. Ranasinghe (Head, Department of Economics, University of Colombo), Prof SMP Senanayake, Prof H.D. Karunaratne, Rev. Dr W. Wimalaratna, Prof S.T. Hettige, Dr S.P. Premaratne, Dr M. Ganeshamoorthy and many others.

## **17<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

### **World Hindi Day Celebrations - Performances**

As continuation of the World Hindi Day Celebrations the Hindi students of the Centre celebrated World Hindi Day on 17<sup>th</sup> January at the Centre. The evening included a variety of items which was performed by the Hindi students of various ages. The students showed their hidden talents on that day. The evening was very well enjoyed by the students and the parents who attended the event. Around 100 guests attended the recital



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**25<sup>th</sup> January – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2011**

**Celebrating the 62<sup>nd</sup> Republic Day of India**

**Kathakali performance by P.S.V.Natyasangam, Kottakal, Kerala.**

The Kathakali troupe led by Kottakkal Chandrasekharan of PSV Natyasangham of Kerala visited Sri Lanka for their performances associated with the 62<sup>nd</sup> Republic Celebrations of India. The troupe came to Sri Lanka under the aegis of Cultural Exchange Programme signed between India and Sri Lanka. The Ministry of Culture and Arts of the Government of Sri Lanka gave local hospitality to the troupe.

The Ministry of Culture of Sri Lanka arranged the local transportation and programmes at Noope Culture Centre, Matara, and at the University of Jaffna. The performance in Colombo was taken care of by the Indian Culture Centre and at Galle, the organizers of Galle Literary Festival. The Ministry of Sri Lanka has paid the per diem allowance of the troupe. They were accommodated fairly well-maintained hotels at all the places the troupe performed.

Prior to the arrival of Kathakali troupe, ICC issued press release detailing the performances of the Kathakali troupe and most of the newspapers carried it as their news item.

In addition to that, on the day of the troupe's arrival on 23rd of January, ICC held a Press Conference. Though the Conference was limited to a few press persons, 2 television channels (Rupavahini and Prime TV) attended the Conference and they telecast the Press Conference in their News and Cultural Calendars.

ates programme inviting the Kottakkal Chandrasekharan, the leader of the group, and the Director, ICC to their studio. Many newspapers covered the Kathakali performances and carried the information about the programmes.

We invited Hon. Minister T.B Ekanayake, Ministry of Culture and Arts, Government of Sri Lanka as Chief Guest for the Kathakali performance held on the eve of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Republic Celebration of India at Kularathne Hall of Ananda College, Colombo. The Minister was received by High Commissioner of India, His Excellency Shri. Ashok K. Kantha.

Due to our publicity in the form of press releases, invitation cards (2200 Nos) and advertisements, the attendance of the audience were overwhelming. The hall was full for the performance.

The story of performance was a scene from the Malayalam Kathakali Classic "Nalacharitham" of Unnai Varriar. The troupe performed Kathakali in their typical classical style: with very slow movements and highly expressive gestures. Though, the audience was totally new to such a classical way of Kathakali performance, the connoisseurs of acting and dancing who attended





the performance. The length of the performance was one hour and twenty minutes.

The artistes were honored by bouquets and souvenirs by Mr. Wimal Roopasinghe, Secretary of Cultural Affairs, Government of Sri Lanka in the presence of the High Commissioner.

### **Performance in Galle Literary Festival**

Kathakali troupe did another performance at Galle as part of Galle Literary Festival on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2010. The story of performance was "Nalacharitham - second day". A majority of the audience was writers, especially those who came from western countries.

### **Performance at Matara**

Another performance by Kathakali troupe was at Noope Cultural Centre Matara on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2011. We have invited former Minister of Cultural Affairs Mr. Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena and Mr. Wimal Roopasinghe, Secretary, Cultural Affairs, Sri Lanka and the Consular General Mr. Mohana Kumaran.

The story of performance was "Keechaka Vadham - Third day". Due to a very good publicity the audience was huge in number. There were about 650 people to watch the programme. A majority of the crowd was local people and they appreciated the programme.

### **Performance at Jaffna.**

The final performance of Kathakali troupe was held at Jaffna University Auditorium on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2011. The Programme was inaugurated by Additional Secretary of Cultural Affairs Mr. Piyathilake, Dean of Faculty of Arts Prof. Ghanakumaran, Registrar of the University Mr. Kaandiban and Consular General Mr. Mahalingam.

The story of Performance was "Nalacharitham" and the programme was well appreciated by the crowd. There were more than 350 people to watch the performance. (Some of the press clippings and the advertisements appeared in the local dailies is herewith attached)





## World Hindi Day Celebrations – Essay Competition

In continuation of the World Hindi Day Celebrations the Centre has also conducted an essay competition for the students of the Centre. According to the levels choices of topics were given and the students were asked to choose a topic. Totally 32 students took part in the competition. The winners will be awarded a prize and a certificate and all others will get a participation certificate. We will be organizing the presentation Ceremony combined with another future event.





## **To Commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore a series of talks by dr. Reba Som**

ICC Colombo, in association with the University of Colombo the University of Jayewardenepura and the University of Kelaniya organized a Lecture Series of Dr. Reba Som from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2011.

Prior to her arrival in Colombo, ICC has released a press release about the lecture series. A few newspapers carried the press release and there were many enquires by email and over telephone to the Office by the Tagore loving community in Colombo.



### **Lecture at University of Colombo**

The Lecture of Dr. Reba Som was held at FGS hall of the University of Colombo on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2011. The subject of the lecture was "Musical Journey of Rabindranath Tagore". The lecture was well received by the audience, who were mostly comprised of the University teachers, scholars and there were a few guests from the public.

As Dr. Reba Som lectured as well as sang Rabindra Sangeet, the ICC provided harmonium for her lecturers.

Prof. Kshanika Hirimburegama delivered the welcome address and the Director of ICC introduced Dr. Reba Som. After the lecture, a short film titled the *Story of Tagore's Gitanjali* was projected. Most of the members of the audience personally went to Dr. Reba Som and conveyed their appreciation about the lecture.

Since the lecture was in the University the audience was limited to the University circle. On the other hand, Dr. Reba Som was also expecting an audience of scholarly nature and the University of Colombo had an audience of that nature.

### **Lecture at University of Kelaniya.**

On 1<sup>st</sup> of February Dr. Reba Som has delivered a lecture at University of Kelaniya. The Welcome Address was made by the Dean of Art Faculty in the presence of the Vice Chancellor of the University of Kelaniya.

The Dean of the Faculty spoke at length about Tagore in Sinhalese. There was also a dance performance by the students based on a song composed by Rabindranath Tagore. The Director, ICC introduced Dr. Reba Som.

The subject of Dr. Reba Som's lecture was "Rabindranath Tagore: the Nation and the World". She had also sung a few Tagore songs so that the audience could feel more comfortable.

### **Lecture at University of Jayewardenepura**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2011 the lecture was held at the University of Jayewardenepura.

The welcome address was delivered by Dr. Saman Chandra Ranasighe and Ms. Preethika of the Department of English, conducted the Programme. The Director, ICC introduced Dr. Reba Som and the lecture of Dr. Som, was an extempore one. She has also sung a few songs of Rabindranath Tagore.

The crowd was limited to 60 people. A majority of them were teachers of the University. The short film of *Story of Tagore's Gitanjali* was also projected.

As such we may have to create much more awareness about Tagore through various lectures and enactments of his plays for getting more mileage in the activities related to Tagore Anniversary to reach out to the literary and art enthusiastic crowd of Sri Lankans.

We also arranged a few interviews of Dr. Reba Som in the newspapers and broadcast her interview through SLBC.