

First Birthday Celebration

Visalakshi and Swaminathan Ramanathan celebrated their son, Sriram's first Birthday on August 27th in Bensalem. Family and friends took part in the celebration and blessed the little one.



Sriram with his parents and big sister Parvathi

Birthday and Housewarming

Usha and Bhaskar Sundaram celebrated their daughter, Shanthi's second Birthday on August 12th in their new home in Downingtown. They also had a house warming the same day. Best wishes to the Bhaskar family in their new home.

Philadelphia Nagarathars Champion for Mentally Impaired Children in Tamilnadu

Mentally impaired children continue to be an outcast in the Indian society. Parents do not want them because of societal pressure and very few social organizations are dedicated to this cause. Recognizing the need for this humanitarian cause, the Indian American community in Philadelphia rallied up under the umbrella of Tamil Nadu Foundation's Philadelphia Chapter, Tamil Association of Greater Delaware Valley and Philadelphia-based Gertrude Lane Foundation for a fund raising event on August 6th in West Chester, PA. The event raised more than \$17,000 to buy land and build a center for abandoned mentally impaired children in Sirkali, a small town near Tanjore.

Several nagarathar families lead by Indra Visvanathan, Chellappan Ramaswamy and Somalay Somasundaram took active part in organizing and contributing to this worthy cause. Somalay Somasundaram, President of TNF-Philadelphia Chapter and TAGDV highlighted the plight of these abandoned children who were taking shelter in a dilapidated hallway. Anu and Vidya Chellappan, Philadelphia-based nagarathar youth, shared their experience in visiting the children during their recent summer vacation and requested the audience to generously donate, as mentally impaired children's cause was not on the radar screen of many organizations. The audience was entertained with a comedy drama by a well-known Tamil actor Y. Gee. Mahendran.



Anu and Vidya Chellappan with mentally impaired children in Sirkali



PRESIDENT ABDUL KALAM VISITS KARAUKUDI

By **ALAGU VAIRAVAN**

The President of India, His Excellency Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam visited Karaikudi on 24th September 2006 for the inauguration of the "Centre for Rural Development" in Alagappa University. On arrival he went directly to pay floral homage and respects to Dr. RM. Alagappa Chettiar at the Vallal Alagappan Memorial Temple (Samadhi). The Governor of Tamilnadu His Excellency Surjit Singh Barnala and Dr. Mrs. Umayal Ramanathan, daughter of Dr. RM. Alagappa Chettiar accompanied the President with other dignitaries.



After a brief stopover at the memorial, Dr. Mrs. Umayal Ramanathan received the President at the Bhavnagar stadium, where Dr. Alagappa Chettiar played host to several national leaders including Prime Minister Pandit Jawarharlal Nehru, Presidents Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Dr. Radhakrishnan and several other dignitaries. The President humbly acknowledged that he was one among the gathered crowd as a teenager when Pandit Nehru laid the foundation stone for the Central Electrochemical Institute and at that time greatly admired the foresight and vision of Dr. Alagappa Chettiar. He spent time looking at Dr. Chettiar's personal belongings, books and photographs with the illustrious leaders that lined the walls and went on to the Alagappa Chettiar College of Engineering campus, where the inaugural function was arranged. The President delivered his keynote address, interacted with students and inaugurated the Rural Development Centre of Alagappa University and left thereafter.