



**THE EMBASSY OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA
TO BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**

27, RUE JULES LEJEUNE, 1050 BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

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Sri Lanka Embassy in Brussels celebrates 'Thai Pongal' festival

The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brussels celebrated the Thai Pongal festival at the Embassy premises on 14 January 2012. 'Thai Pongal' is a harvesting festival celebrated by the Hindu community in Sri Lanka. The celebrations were held in keeping with the tradition of the Embassy of Sri Lanka of celebrating the important religious festivals of Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians.

In introductory remarks Ambassador Ravinatha Aryasinha highlighted the significance of this festival, which is celebrated to offer prayers of gratitude to the Sun God for a bountiful harvest and also to pay tribute to the farm animals who helped in the harvest. He said all communities in Sri Lanka were also using this occasion to further inter-communal bonds, in a spirit of reconciliation.

Pundit Harinath Sharma of the Hindu Ashram in Brussels conducted the religious observances, while a representative gathering of the Sri Lanka community in Belgium and the staff of the Embassy participated in this event.

Sri Lanka Embassy
Brussels

14 January 2012