

# UGADI AND YOUTH FESTIVAL

By. Rajaram Cavale

On the week end 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> April 2010, the youth wing of Kannada Balaga U.K celebrated very successfully and elegantly the Indian New Year's day Ugadi and the Youth Festival. The special

point about this was that the whole event was totally managed and conducted by the second generation of Kannadigas living in the United Kingdom.

The whole festival had a flavour of Karnataka, the chief guest was a Kannadiga, the food was of Udupi style catered by a Udupi restaurant 'Shivalli' from Leicester, there was fragrance of Mysore agarabaththi everywhere and most of all we could hear the dialect of Kannada everywhere.

The programme started with Ganapathi puja conducted in a very traditional way. Then the chief guest Mr. C. Gururaja Rao was welcomed on to the stage. Among the chief guest were seated the President Dr. Bhanumathi, the secretary Dr. Anand Nadiger, the treasurer Mrs. Surenu Jayaram and Vice President Miss. Mri-nalini Puranik.

President Bhanumathi cordially welcomed the chief guest Mr. C. Gururaja Rao and introduced him to the audience. She said our chief guest is a total Kannadiga and this is the first time in the U.K that a Kannadiga has been appointed as a Consulate General of India and it is our fortune and pleasure to have him among us in this country. Mr. Gururaja Rao has been appointed as the consular general at the High Commission of India in Birmingham. He served in Indian Missions in Mauritius, Kenya, Portugal and Nepal in different capacities. Dr. Bhanumathi explained to the chief guest about Kannada Balaga U.K and said it has already celebrated its Silver Jubilee in the year 2008.

Dr. Bhanumathi asked the chief guest to explain briefly about the recent changes in the rulings by India Government about applying for the 'Overseas Citizen of India' as there was confusion about the new rules. In reply Mr. C. Gururaja Rao started his speech in Kannada with a quote from the poem 'Yugadi' by Da. Ra. Bendre the famous Kannada poet. This cause cheers and loud applause from the audience. He explained that Govt of India has modified the rules regarding Overseas Citizenship of India. He said Government of India does allow Indian citizens to have an Overseas Citizenship of India if the countries of their acquired citizenship allow dual citizenship. Therefore the citizens who have acquired foreign nationalities should surrender their old Indian passports to Indian authorities before they apply for PIO (Person of Indian Origin) or OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India) and they

must produce a certificate of surrendering their passport when they apply for PIO or OCI. There is a fee of £90 to pay for this certificate. He suggested that full and detailed information is available at the website of Consulate General of India at

<http://www.cgibirmingham.org/mainindx.html>.

After facilitating the chief guest, cultural and entertainment programmes started coming one after the other. Some of the artists from Karnataka were not able to attend because of changes in the Visa rules of U.K and Icelandic volcano ash that affected the flights. Albeit there were plenty of local Kannada artists from the U.K. The winner of the eTV competition 'Ede Tumbi haadidenu' Smt. Shruthi Sudhir rendered melodious 'Sugama Sangeeta', the 'Panchatantra' Yakshagaana by young artists of 'Chitralkha' melted everyone's heart. The Violin concert by Smt.

Jotsna Sreekanth featuring Fusion music of east and west made the audience jump out of their seats and dance. The winner of Suvarna TV's 'Confident Star Singer' competition Smt. Sangeetha Raajeeva sang Kannada film songs which were so melodious the audience floated in a dreamland

The morning of Sunday the session started quietly. The guests were treated with very tasty traditional Karnataka breakfast Uppittu and Kesari Bhat. The fragrance and the genuine tastes of the breakfast woke the guests from their tiredness of the events of the previous day. Then Smt Sangeetha Rajiva rendered more melodious music and entertained the audience. Then came the robust AGM which really brought the adrenaline into the members of KBUK. General election of the office bearers was nominally conducted as there were just sufficient candidates gave their nomination for each post and all the office bearers were elected unopposed. The President of Kannada Balaga U.K Smt Surenu Jayaram, Secretary Dr. Mohan Arkanath and Treasurer Dr. Mutu Puranik were among the candidates voted unanimously. The full list of all the office bearers will be published here shortly.

Just before the lunch a child artist 6 years young (daughter of Smt. Devika) rendered Bharata Natya with such a precision and accuracy she stole the hearts of everyone. After the lunch Yakshagana was performed by Smt. Devika which was enjoyed immensely by the audience. The function concluded at about 4pm with the showing of the film 'Gaalipata' featuring Actor Ganesh.

