

[Murugan Conference](#)

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Murugan Conference

International scholars gather to discuss the Lord

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Millions of hindus around the world regularly worship Lord Murugan, also called Skanda or Karttikeya. He is the Lord of yoga and dispeller of darkness. On April 25, 2001, this popular Lord was the focus of worldwide scholars at the Second International Conference Seminar on Skanda-Murugan. The conference was held in Mauritius the paradise island of the Indian Ocean known for its lovely beaches and warm hospitality at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute in Moka. Delegates who never visited this island were surprised to see how devoutly Lord Murugan was worshiped in hundreds of temples.

The conference included dramatic bharata natyam performances as well as other artistic demonstrations. Conference participants were invited to join as guests in a post-conference bus tour of major shrines on the island, including a visit to the Saiva Siddhanta Church of Mauritius Spiritual Park in Riviere du Rempart.

"It was quite an experience to listen to the learned contributions of so many visiting scholars, from the four corners of the world," said Dr. Canagasaby M. Pillay, an active

community leader and politician in Mauritius, "and be reminded that Muruga is not just our own but belongs to all mankind."

Though covered by the local television, mostly through the cultural shows at the conference, very little information reached the press and the general public. The non-Tamil Hindus as well as non-Hindus of the island seem to have not been really conscious of the event.

Research papers were presented on various topics, including Murugan in the Indus Valley script, Skanda-Kumara in ancient North India, Thai Pusam festival around the world, the iconography of Skanda-Murugan, Aru Padai Vidu, the famous six-temple pilgrimage of Murugan in South India, pilgrimage and sacred geography, Murugan and Saiva Siddhanta philosophy and the historical development of Skanda-Murugan as a Tamil Deity.

"As most local Mauritians are devotees rather than scholars," said Dr. Pillay, "the various facets of the scholarship displayed by the learned delegates filled our minds. Our hearts were already full. My only regret was that many more of my sisters and brothers from Mauritius did not participate in this unique, once-in-a-lifetime experience, which was taking place right on our doorstep."

web: www.murugan.org/events/conf2001.htm