Foreigners get a feel of Pongal festivities

Staff Reporter

COIMBATORE: For the 30-odd foreign tourists who took part in the ‘Pongal Tourism Festival 2013’ held on Tuesday at Muttathu Vayal, located about 30 km from here, it was a unique opportunity to learn about one of the oldest traditions in the country.

Organised by the Department of Tourism in association with the Isha Yoga Center, the tourists from countries such as Germany, Austria, England, U.S. and Switzerland not only tasted pongal but also participated in the preparation of the dish.

After breakfast, the guests were visually treated to the folk dance forms of Tamil Nadu – 'karagam,' 'kavadi,' 'karrupanna swamy attam' and 'oyilattam'.

According to District Tourist Officer P. Vijayakumar, the village of Muttathu Vayal was chosen in keeping with the State Government's policy of promoting tourism in lesser-known places.

Last year, the celebrations were held at Nathagoundanpudur.

A decorated bull from the Isha Yoga Centre was also brought to the festival venue and pujas were performed to mark the occasion of 'Mattu Pongal.'

The reasons for celebrating the harvest festival was also explained to the tourists who evinced considerable interest in learning about the rural lifestyle of the populace, he added.