

## **THE PUJA**

I was speaking to an advocate friend of mine who lives and practices in the US of A. His clientele is varied but mostly from the immigrant community. Of course he has the assortment of Patels in his list!

One of them, a motel owner (no surprise) recently bought a sleazy nightclub from an American (after much haggling). He then named it “the Crazy Horse, Strip Club”. Since Mr. Patel is a god fearing traditional Indian, he planned for an elaborate puja before the grand opening! He invited my friend for the opening puja. A purohit from the Chicago temple was brought down to Cincinnati to perform a “shanti homam” (a harmonizing fire sacrifice), a Lakshmi puja (prayers for wealth) and other rituals for purification and wealth!

My friend was not only amused but also more than a little surprised at the irony of it all. “Why this elaborate puja?” he asked and Mr. Patel was indignant “how can I start any business without a Shanti of the earlier energies and invoking Lakshmi?”