

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF  
TAMIL NADU AT THE TEACHERS DAY CELEBRATION ORGANISED BY  
BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN & BHAVAN'S RAJAJI VIDYASHRAM AT BHAVAN'S  
TAG AUDITORIUM, KILPAUK, CHENNAI ON 05.09.2018 AT 10.30 A.M.**

**Anaivarukkum Kaalai Vanakkam**

**Thiru. N. Ravi,**

**Dr. Mayilvahanan Natarajan,**

**Dr. L. S. Ganesh,**

**Thiru. P. G. Subramanian,**

**Thiru. K. N. Ramaswamy,**

**Ms. N. Malathi,**

**Distinguished Invitees**

**Teachers and Students**

**Ladies & Gentlemen**

It is a matter of great happiness to be taking part in the Teacher's Day Celebrations today. My joy is all the more compounded by the fact that the function is being organized by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, which espouses cultural and moral values and imparts those values through the various schools and institutions that function under its management.

While most of the countries of the world observe Teacher's Day on October fifth, India celebrates it on September fifth, the birth anniversary of our great teacher, academic philosopher and erudite President, Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. The fact that he hails from Tamil Nadu is an added reason for us to be celebrating Teacher's Day with greater flourish.

India's quest for education and wisdom began long, long ago and our civilization is anchored in cultural, ethical, artistic and spiritual values fostered by our ancient gurukula schools and universities like Takshashila and Naalanda.

Learning and understanding are the essence of life and of all experience. The guru or teacher who deepens our understanding of life is given a uniquely important place in Indian culture.

From Vedic times, India has had profound principles of learning and teaching which give importance to both the teacher and the student. The following Vedic invocation to the Supreme Atman emphasizes this aspect. I quote, "Om. May the Atman protect us both. May the Atman bestow upon us both, the fruits of knowledge. May we both obtain energy to acquire knowledge. May what we both study reveal the truth. May we cherish no evil feeling towards each other. Om Shanthi Shanthi Shanthi" Unquote.

This prayer shows that the teaching-learning process must nurture the intellect of both the teacher and the student, so that they succeed in their joint endeavour of exploring the wider horizons of their mental and spiritual faculties. It is the acquisition of education with a spiritual foundation that marks out India from the rest of the World. And it is this special quality that has enabled civilization to continue in India in an uninterrupted manner, all these centuries.

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan which was set up in 1938 has as its mission the preservation and propagation of the rich cultural heritage of India so as to ensure its continuance from generation to generation.

The Bhavan places great emphasis on modern education, science and technology but remains rooted in India's cultural and spiritual values.

To strengthen and hasten the process of bringing about cultural unity the various centres of the Bhavan adopt the path of promoting nationalism with a spiritual orientation and a spirit of service. Hence the celebration of Teacher's Day in the Bhavan's premises is most appropriate and laden with utmost relevance.

On this teachers day I wish to draw your attention to two great examples of teachers from our epics. The first is from the Ramayana.

When Rama is a lad of less than sixteen years, Sri Vishwamitra comes to Dasaratha's court saying that he needs Rama to protect the yajnaas that he is conducting.

While Dasaratha is extremely doubtful about the capacity of Rama to be able to serve Vishwamitra's purpose, the latter is completely sure about it. He says,

**अह वेद्मि महात्मानम् रामम् सत्य पराक्रमम्** (Aham Vedmi

Mahaatmaanam Raamam Satya Paraakramam)... 'I know Rama who is of greatness of soul and is truly a mighty warrior'. Like Vishwamitra in Valmiki's Ramayana, the ideal teacher is one who is able to notice the talent inherent in his students.

The other example is from the Mahabharata. Here Bhagawan Sri Krishna is playing the role of Parthasarathi i.e. a charioteer to Arjuna.

But when Arjuna suddenly develops cold feet on the battlefield of Kurukshetra where the forces of righteousness and the forces of wickedness are arraigned against each other Sri Krishna teaches him the wisdom of the Vedas and the Upanishads in a simple and comprehensive manner through the gospel of the Bhagavad Gita.

Arjuna expresses his doubts, asks his questions and keeps pressing Sri Krishna for more information. And ultimately Sri Krishna too gives Arjuna the option of choosing his path.

The chapters of the Bhagavad Gita show that the teacher-student relationship, even if the teacher happens to be the Jagadguru himself, is a gradual process with the student being given his fair share of doubts and queries!

In India, learning has never been a monologue, it has been a dialogue and a mutual process! This is an important lesson we need to carry forward to future generations as well.

Good education is linked to good teachers as this anecdote about the 11<sup>th</sup> President of India Dr. Abdul Kalam will tell you.

Dr. Kalam used to recall with gratitude the contribution of his school teacher Sivasubramania Iyer who kindled his passion for flying and aeronautics. The teacher first taught the students about 'How birds fly' by sketches and explanations in the classroom. The students told the teacher that they did not understand the concept. The teacher then took the students to the Rameswaram seashore where dozens of seabirds were flying and said, 'See how the birds flap their wings and change direction using their wings and tail. The locomotive force of the bird's flight is its life energy'. The teacher thus taught his students that the fundamentals of aircraft design are based on the flight of birds.

It was the understanding of science and satisfaction of the intellectual curiosity that the teacher successfully imparted, that enabled the blossoming of the genius that was latent in the young Abdul Kalam.

As can be seen in the case of Dr. Kalam there are lakhs of people who owe their success to their primary school teachers. These teachers may not have been persons of great learning. They were not paid a huge remuneration. What marked them out as outstanding teachers was their passion for teaching, their desire to contribute to society and their ability to bond with the students. Such outstanding teachers, to this day, are being rewarded with special honours by the Government. I wish to suggest at this function today that the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan should institute awards for honouring the top school teachers of Tamil Nadu every year on Teachers Day.

Let us celebrate Teachers Day with fervour and remember to stand by them as they grapple with the onerous task of shaping the next generation. Let us recognize the painstaking efforts of teachers and back them up with facilities so as to help them to devote themselves to their profession with greater vigour. That will indeed be a lasting contribution signaling the gratitude we have for our teachers.

I congratulate the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan for organizing a special function on Teacher's Day and appreciate the teachers of the schools of the Bhavan for the excellent work that they are doing.

I am extremely happy to note that the Chennai Kendra takes care to ensure that the best education is provided to children. The teachers are highly committed and leave no stone unturned to mould the students into worthy citizens of our Motherland.

My best wishes to the Bhavan and its teachers on Teachers Day.

Nandri Vanakkam...

Jai Hind....