

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF  
TAMIL NADU AT THE GRADUATION DAY OF Dr.M.G.R. JANAKI COLLEGE OF  
ARTS AND SCIENCE FOR WOMEN, CHENNAI- 600028  
ON 07.03.2018 AT 4.30 pm**

AnaivarukkumMalai Vanakkam

Dr. LathaRajendran  
President and Secretary,  
Dr. MGR Janaki College for Women

Thiru Kumar Rajendran  
Chairman of the Managing Committee,

Dr. R. Manimekalai,  
Principal

Dr. Lakshmi Balaji,  
Vice Principal

Faculty,

Staff and Students,

Distinguished invitees

Friends from the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am happy to be here at your invitation to award the degrees at the 18<sup>th</sup> Graduation Day function of the Dr. M.G.R. Janaki College of Arts and Science for Women. It is satisfying to see in our midst the bright young faces of girlstudents who are aspiring to make a mark in society on the strength of their education.

Swami Vivekananda defined education to be the manifestation of the perfection already in man. He elaborated on how all the wealth of the world cannot help one little Indian village if the people are not taught to help themselves. He therefore exhorted that our work should be mainly educational both morally and intellectually. Going by the record of the Dr. M.G.R. Janaki College in promoting the cause of education, I should say that they have

performed the crucial role that Swami Vivekananda wanted society to devote itself to.

I have been the Governor of Tamil Nadu for nearly four months now and I am extremely happy to see the status that education enjoys in the State. The achievements of the State in the field of education are exemplary. The dropout rate is extremely low. The teacher-student ratio is about one teacher for 30 to 40 students. Nearly 45% of the children who finish school education take to higher education. The number of Medical Colleges and the number of Engineering Colleges available in the State speak for the tremendous interest that students have for pursuing these professional courses.

The Government of Tamil Nadu has been actively promoting the cause of education since Independence. The State was a pioneer in promoting the concept of aided schools. This enabled the rapid spread of education, particularly in the rural areas. This also triggered the growth of training institutions for teachers enabling the growth of employment opportunities. When it was realized that many families could not afford to send their children to schools midday meals were provided by Bharat Ratna Dr. M.G.R. along with the provision of uniforms, footwear, textbooks, bus passes, etc. Free of cost.

Dr. M.G. Ramachandran widely known as “Puratchi Thalaivar” and “Makkal Thilagam” was a charismatic personality and a man of the masses. One of the great Presidents of the USA, Theodore Roosevelt said.

“Great thoughts speak only to the thoughtful mind, but great actions speak to all mankind”.

M.G.R. was one such personality whose actions spoke for his thoughts and intentions. We all know that it was because of his noble actions that he has found a permanent place in the hearts of the poor and the downtrodden.

It was because of the Midday Meals Scheme of Dr. MGR that the dropout rate in schools came down substantially and even today Tamil Nadu is ranked as one of the best performing states in the field of school education. The Mid Day Meal Scheme also brought in other benefits. Caste discrimination among students was eliminated since children of all castes were

served food together. The scheme also provided employment to lakhs of unemployed and uneducated women in the form of Ayahs, Cooks and helpers. The scheme was such a roaring success that M.G.R. is remembered even today as “PonMana Chemmal” i.e. the Man with a heart of gold.

Dr. M.G. Ramachandran was loved by the people of Tamil Nadu so much that till today nobody else has been able to match his record of never having been defeated during the tenure of his Chief Ministership which continued in an uninterrupted manner. His concern for the suffering and downtrodden was genuine. His attachment to the cause of uplifting women was unparalleled. He started the first University for Women in the country at Kodaikanal and also launched a separate Corporation for the Development of Women. He gave important positions in the administration to women. Therefore, this College has been appropriately named as the Dr. M.G.R. Janaki College for women.

Dr. M.G.R. had also written in his will that except the house in his Ramavaram gardens, the rest of the land should be used for a school for poor children who could not hear or speak. It was here that the Dr. M.G.R. Home and Higher Secondary School for the Speech and Hearing impaired was established in 1989 by Dr. Latha Rajendran, the President of this College. On has only admiration for the generosity and compassion of Dr. MGR who even in his last days when he was sick and weak, worked for the weak and the suffering.

This College has the motto, ‘Excellence through Diligence’. There is a Tamil maxim of Avvaiyar, the great Tamil poetess who is a symbol of learning and wisdom.

It says, Ila-mai-yilKal. It means, ‘Learn when you are young’.

Of course, learning should continue all through one’s life, as life itself is nothing but learning newer and newer things and coming out successfully in every test that life poses us.

But the period of youth is to be specially reserved for the pursuit of learning. I am glad that all of you have adhered to the teachings of Avvaiyar.

I was recently in Rameswaram where I visited the house of Dr. Abdul Kalam. I am sure that all of you know about Dr. Kalam, who though born in an ordinary family in Rameswaram went on to become the President of India. His life was one of achieving excellence through diligence. He excelled as a scientist, as a patriot and as a leader among men. His love for children and students was unmatched. Every time he found an opportunity he would go and lecture the students in schools and colleges. Once when he was asked about the secret of his perennial enthusiasm and energy, he said every moment I keep thinking about what I can give to others. It is people like Dr. MGR and Dr. Kalam, who through their work for the nation, stand as examples and role-models for the youth of Tamil Nadu.

At this juncture, I would like to specially stress the importance of character building in educational institutions. Education in colleges should lay stress on inculcating moral values and national spirit in the students. The teachers here have extensive knowledge about their subjects and enormous experience in various facets of life. Their skill, learning and experience provide them with the necessary capability to mould the student in a manner that is helpful to him, his family and to the society. A society properly educated is always progressive, peaceful and prosperous.

In all our activities, we must remember that the interest of our Nation should be paramount and that we should be given the dignity and status of being torchbearers who lead other peoples of the world from darkness to light. "Thamasoma Jyothirgamaya" is the saying in our spiritual texts. I am only echoing those words of wisdom.

Let me conclude by reiterating that the path to progress is illuminated by the lamp of education. Prosperity knocks at your door when people in society acquire the asset of education. Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to say "As long as I live, so long do I learn".

I therefore request all the well-meaning philanthropists in Tamil Nadu who are in the field of education, to put their shoulder to the wheel and lay stress on expanding the availability of education and in improving the quality of

education so that Tamil Nadu becomes the unsurpassed leader in education not only in India, but also in Asia.

Nandri                      Vanakkam  
Jai Hind      Jai Tamil Nadu