

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE THIRUKURAL KALANJAM – BOOK RELEASE
FUNCTION AT RAJ BHAVAN, CHENNAI ON 07/04/2018**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Thiru. Sankarasubramanian,

Thiru. P.T.T.Rajan

Distinguished Invitees

Friends from the Media

Ladies & Gentlemen

The Tirukkural or Thirukkural (Tamil: திருக்குறள், literally Sacred Verses), is a classic Tamil text consisting of 1,330 couplets dealing with the path for leading a virtuous life to be followed. Considered one of the greatest works ever written on ethics and morality, chiefly secular ethics, it is known for its universality and non-denominational nature. It was authored by Thiruvalluvar.

The Kural emphasizes on the vital principles of non-violence, vegetarianism, casteless human brotherhood, absence of desires, path of righteousness, truth, and so forth, besides covering a wide range of subjects such as moral codes for rulers, friendship, agriculture, knowledge and wisdom, love, and domestic life etc.

The Kural has influenced several scholars thinkers and leaders regardless of their sphere of work or place of origin. Authors influenced by the Kural include Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Schweitzer, Ramalinga Swamikal, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. Translated into at least 40 languages, the Kural is one of the most widely translated works in the world.

The term Tirukkural is a compound word made up of two individual terms, tiru and kural. Tiru is an honorific Tamil term that corresponds to the Sanskrit term sri meaning "holy or sacred" Kural means something that is "short, concise, and abridged."

Legend has it that the author initially used only the term Muppai, meaning "three divisions," when presenting his work to the King since the Kural covered the first three of the four ancient Indian aims in life, known as purusharthas, viz., virtue, wealth and love.

Each kural or couplet contains exactly seven words, known as cirs, with four cirs on the first line and three on the second. A cir is a single or a combination of more than one Tamil word.

The overall organisation of the Kural text is based on seven ideals prescribed for a commoner besides observations of love. It includes 40 couplets on God, rain, ascetics, and virtue; 200 on domestic virtue; 140 on higher virtues based on grace such as benevolence and compassion; 250 on royalty; 100 on ministers of state; 220 on essential requirements of administration; 130 on morality, both positive and negative; and 250 on human love and passion.

The Kural is praised for its universality. The ancient Tamil poet Avvaiyar observed, "Valluvar pierced an atom and injected seven seas into it and compressed it into what we have today as Kural". According to Albert Schweitzer, "there hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much of lofty wisdom." Leo Tolstoy called it "the Hindu Kural," and Mahatma Gandhi called it "a textbook of indispensable authority on moral life" and went on to say, "The maxims of Valluvar have touched my soul. There is none who has given such a treasure of wisdom like him.

The Kural is the most reviewed of all works in Tamil literature, and almost every major writer has written commentaries on it. Apart from the commentaries of the medieval times several commentaries started appearing in the 19th and the 20th centuries. In 1935, V. O. Chidambaram Pillai had written a commentary on the first part of the Kural (virtue). Some of the commentaries of the 20th century include those by Thiru Vi Ka, Bharathidasan, M. Varadarajan, Namakkalkavignar, etc.,

I commend the organisers for their painstaking efforts in compiling this Thirukural Kalanjyam. It is indeed a privilege and honour to be associated in any manner with the Thirukural, you have given me this grand opportunity to release the Thirukural Kalanjyam and I feel blessed today. It appears to me that the saint of Mylapore as Thiruvalluvar is called has personally sent out a message to me through all of you to learn more about the kural and the nuggets of wisdom that it contains. This, I can assume you will be my endeavour in the coming years.

Nandri

Vanakkam

Jai Hind