

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE  
GOVERNOR OF TAMIL NADU AT THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION "EMPHASIZING THE NEED FOR  
INCLUSIVE GROWTH", AT ITC GRAND CHOLA, ON 09.05.2018**

Anaivarukkum Kaalai Vanakkam

Thiru. Ravi Sam

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Thiru. B Thiagarajan

Thiru. Milind Kamble

Thiru. S Narasimhan

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

I am happy to be here at the CII Regional Conference on Affirmative Action whose objective is to emphasise the need for inclusive growth. Affirmative action has always been close to my heart and I believe that this is the way forward to overcome the obstacles and limitations imposed on growth in the past, particularly during the years of British rule in India.

Hence when British rule came to an end and Independent India gave unto itself a Constitution which enshrined the values of justice, liberty and equality so as to promote fraternity among the people of India the nation rejoiced together to welcome the arrival of an era of opportunity and growth. The Constituent Assembly had in its ranks redoubtable personalities such as Sardar Patel, Rajaji, Nehru, Kannaiyalal Munshi, Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Balwant Rai Mehta and H.V. Kamath.

It was chaired by Dr. Rajendra Prasad and the Chairman of the Drafting Committee was Bharat Ratna Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

It is necessary for me to mention here, some points from the speech of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly on November 25, 1949, just before the constitution of India was adopted. In his speech he explained about the concept of social democracy, as a way of life which recognises liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life. These principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are not to be treated as separate items in a trinity. They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy.

Without equality, liberty would produce the supremacy of the few over the many. Equality without liberty would kill individual initiative. Without fraternity, liberty and equality could not become a natural course of things. It would require a constable to enforce them. He therefore stressed the need for safeguarding liberty while ensuring equality and promoting fraternity at the same time.

Our Constitution which was created by gleaning the best features from the U.S., the Canadian, the British, the German, the French and Australian Constitutions therefore laid emphasis on liberty, equality and fraternity through the Fundamental Rights, which form a part of its basic structure.

Since Independence, there has been considerable stress on equality and affirmative action for the upliftment of downtrodden and underprivileged people, in particular, on the side of the Government. The Indian Parliament has through its enactments provided for special provisions to protect the interests of the deprived sections by providing for reservation in the election of peoples' representatives to Parliament, Legislative Assemblies and Local Bodies. There are similar provisions made in the provision of employment opportunities in the Government and in admissions to educational institutions.

The organizers of today's function have assembled an array of impressive speakers on the dais and I am sure that today's conference will provide the right insights into developing suitable strategies for affirmative action in the private sector.

In this context I have been informed that CII and the State Government are working together to support the SC/ST Entrepreneurs in two locations where the Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing Development Corporation (TAHDCO) constructed Industrial Estates, 20 years back. CII and TAHDCO have come together at Tiruppur, to address the prevailing issues at Mudalipalayam (Tiruppur district) and Ingur (Erode district) so as to provide effective and sustainable solutions for handholding the deprived communities residing there.

CII along with State Government and Industry under the infrastructure Development initiatives of Affirmative Action, also renovated a Adi Dravida Hostel in Cuddalore district and 9 Anganwadis.

The United Nations has also provided some guidelines for affirmative action. The International Convention of the UN on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination stipulates that affirmative action programs may be required of countries that ratified the convention, in order to rectify systematic discrimination.

The United Nations Human Rights Committee states that “the principle of equality sometimes requires States to take affirmative action in order to diminish or eliminate conditions which cause or help to perpetuate discrimination prohibited by the Covenant. For example,. In a State where the general conditions of a certain part of the population prevent or impair their enjoyment of human rights, the State should take specific action to correct those conditions. Such action may involve granting for a time, to a part of the population concerned, certain preferential treatment, in specific matters as compared with the rest of the population. As long as such action is needed to correct discrimination, it is a case of legitimate differentiation under the Covenant.

There are different models of affirmative action all over the world. While the Government is already playing its role, Corporates could look for Government support or collaborate with CII for initiatives that are aimed at

educating, employing and empowering the underprivileged by creating self-employing opportunities.

India become free from British rule, after long years of sacrifice, struggle and Satyagraha. Freedom was won for all Indian people irrespective of caste, creed, language or religion. This is the fundamental truth that supports our social fabric and it is important for us all to be fully aware of it. Let me also remind the audience of the views of Mahatma Gandhi on trusteeship, a socio economic philosophy by which wealthy people would be trustees of trusts that look after the welfare of the people. Putting it in Gandhiji's words

'Supposing I have come by a fair amount of wealth – either by way of legacy, or by means of trade and industry – I must know that all that wealth does not belong to me, what belongs to me is the right to an honourable livelihood. The rest of my wealth belongs to the community and must be used for the welfare of the community.

Our nation has had such tall and outstanding leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who have through their lives of simplicity and sacrifice shown the way for the evolution of a society based on justice and inclusive growth. Let us follow their paths with sincerity and steadfastness. I am sure success will greet us at every turn.

I should appreciate the efforts of the organizers for their special efforts in organizing this regional conference on affirmative action so as to elevate our society and the nation to a more peaceful, prosperous and privileged position. I thank them for having invited me to participate in the conference and wish all the members of the audience and CII success in all their endeavours.

Nandri      Vanakkam

Jai Hind