

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE 8th ANNUAL CONVOCATION OF VELS INSTITUTE OF
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ADVANCED STUDIES
ON 11/06/2018 AT 10.30 AM**

Anaivarukkum Kaalai Vanakkam

Dr. Ishari K. Ganesh

Dr. A. Jothi Murugan

Dr. Arthi K. Ganesh

Dr. K. Sivan

Dr. P. Swaminathan

Dr. Kallol Roy

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

Teachers & Students

I am happy to be here today to address the young graduands on the occasion of the Eighth Annual Convocation of Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies (VISTAS).

I am informed that the University which was established in 2008, has a diverse set of specialities covering various spheres of learning including Engineering, Basic Sciences, Life Sciences, Management Studies and Commerce, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Physiotherapy, Mass Communication, Law, Education, Music/Fine Arts, Hotel and Catering Management, etc.

There is a Tamil maxim of Avvaiyar, the great Tamil poetess which reads thus:-

“Ila-mai-yil-Kal”. It means, ‘Learn when you are young’.

Of course, learning should continue all through one’s life, as life itself keeps teaching us a new lesson every time we face upto a new challenge.

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 in Rameswaram about 3 months back 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 Bharat Ratnas Dr. Kalam and Dr. M.G.R, who through their work for the nation, stand as examples and role-models for the youth of Tamil Nadu.

We are living in exciting times. On one side India is faced with the challenge of providing the comprehensive benefits of education and health care to its entire population. At the same time the nation is reaching out to match the most developed countries in their achievements in space research, robotics and artificial intelligence. Universities are expected to provide the basic platform for creating the human resources that can enable this accomplishment of the entire range of achievements.

Tamil Nadu has always had a rich tradition of scholarship. Even ordinarily planned families place great emphasis on education. This has had a direct impact on social development indices and on the economy. The State has a proud culture of research and innovation in the fields of science and technology. This is complemented by many historical firsts in the field of humanities. It is therefore no surprise that the gross enrollment ratio in Higher Education in the State is about 46%, far higher than the national average of about 25%.

Tamil Nadu, by virtue of its excellent infrastructure in higher education, is well placed to become a model for other States to follow. With the joint coordinated support of the Central and State Governments, institutions in Tamil Nadu can soar to greater heights, making the State the educational hub of our country.

Colleges both in the public and private sectors should now a days lay stress on the inculcation of skills that enable the students to get employed after completing their education. Communication skills, vocational skills and creative skills are to be honed along with the learning of subjects normally provided in the college curriculum such as History, Physics, Mathematics, etc.

Many of the Universities for which I am the Chancellor, are reaching out to the Indian diaspora all over the world and working out partnerships with various universities. In all these ventures, 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.

I call upon all well-meaning entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu 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.

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 a 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.

The University should be seen as a versatile institution which encourages sports along with academics, elocution, along with experimentation and moral values along with knowledge creation. I am sure that with the untiring efforts of the well wishers of the University and the dedication and service oriented contributions of the faculty members the status and esteem of this University will rise further to attain the highest levels of eminence.

I gather that in today's Convocation 69 Ph.D. scholars, 1,573 Graduates, 440 Post-Graduates and 163 M.Phil. Scholars will be receiving their degrees. I congratulate all these students who are here at the university today. You are all stepping into the wider world with the benefit of education, and the confidence of recognition from society. You have the ability to change

society, to serve society and benefit society through your actions. Think carefully before you act. Once you have decided to act, please do not keep thinking about consequences. Your actions should be free from attachment and be guided by the benefits that they will confer on your society, your State and your Nation.

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. You are now endowed with the tools to gain upward mobility in life. The benefit of this should flow to all those who have made it possible – your Parents, your teachers, your village, your society, your state and your nation. Be grateful and generous to them through your thoughts, words and deeds. This is the path to achieve true progress. My best wishes to all of you.

Nandri Vanakkam

Jai Hind..