

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT RAJYA PURASKAR AWARDS TO THE SCOUTS AND
GUIDES ON 14/06/2018 AT 5.00 PM**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

**Thiru. K.A. Sengottaiyan,
Hon'ble Minister for School Education**

Thiru. Pradeep Yadav

Dr. P. Mani

Dr. R. Elangovan

Distinguished Invitees

Teachers and Students

Friends From Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to be here amongst you for the distribution of the Rajya Puraskar Award to outstanding Scouts and Guides who have done our nation proud.

The tradition of Rajyapuraskar Awards for scouts and guides started in 1961 when the first President of India, Dr Rajendra Prasad associated himself with the Bharat Scouts & Guides Association.

This award has inspired many Scouts and Guides to work for nation building and it is indeed heartening that starting at a tender age, scouts and guides grow to become individuals working for national integration as well as societal harmony.

The Scouts and Guides movement has a hoary history. In 1907, Mr. Baden Powell, the founder of the Scouts Movement conducted an experimental camp, after which he wrote articles about his experience in the name of "Scouting for Boys". These articles created a lot of interest in young minds in England. So when Baden Powell called for a Rally in 1909 at

Crystal palace in England, more than 20,000 boys gathered for the event. This created a huge awareness about the Scout movement and then spread to every nook and corner of the world.

Today there are lakhs of Scouts and Guides backpacking in the outdoors in 155 countries around the world!

The spread of the Scouts movement to the USA from the U.K. where it originated is interesting to know.

A publisher William Boyce was lost in the London fog when a Boy Scout came to his aid. After guiding Boyce to his destination, the boy refused a tip, explaining that as a Scout he would not accept payment for doing a good deed.

This gesture inspired Boyce to bring together several regional U.S. youth organizations into the Scouts of America.

Scouting in India was initially open only to European and Anglo Indian children. That was in 1909 when Captain T. H. Baker established the first Scout Troop in Bangalore and got it registered with imperial Headquarters in London. Then, Scout Troops were formed in Pune Shimla, Madras, Jabalpur and Lonavala.

Efforts were made for unification of different scout groups existing in India during the visit of Mr. Baden Powell to India in 1921 and 1937 but they failed! The main reason for the failure was the promise clause which included the word "Duty to King".

The Patriotic sentiments of our Nationalist leaders did not approve of the allegiance to the British Empire and it was insisted that allegiance of loyalty to the Country should be part of the Scout Promise.

After Independence, efforts were made for unification of the Scout and Guide Associations functioning in India. The Final merger took place on November 7th, 1950. The unified Organisation was called, "The Bharat Scouts and Guides". The Girl Guides Association joined the Bharat Scouts and Guides on 15th August 1951.

Today the Bharat Scouts and Guides has a membership of 5.7 million and is one of the largest non-governmental, educational, non-political, voluntary youth organisations in our land. This is a large resource pool that can make for remarkable transformation in our society.

The Tamil Nadu wing of the Bharat Scouts and Guides has a total membership of 2,79,004 with 1,76,812 scouts and 1,02,192 guides. This makes Tamil Nadu the 3rd largest in the country in terms of the total enrolment of Scouts and Guides.

The movement of Scouts and Guides is a unique platform available for the youth to learn the values of friendship, hard work and self reliance through experience.

There is a wide spectrum of activities that the Bharat Scouts and Guides have been engaged in the last 68 years. Such efforts have encompassed humanitarian aid during natural calamities, social campaigns to combat disease and debilitating habits, community workshops for skill-development, joint activities related to Millennium Development Goals and participation in international meets.

I was very happy to learn that members of Bharat Scouts & Guides have actively responded to the appeal of the Hon'ble Prime Minister for actively participating in the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and that the volunteers are implementing it throughout the country with great enthusiasm.

Taking part in the activities of scouts and guides movement has great immediate benefits for students.

The noble qualities of courage, self confidence and social responsibilities imbibed at an early age definitely serve them in good stead in their professional careers. Those with experience in the Scouts and Guides movement can also avail the benefit of special privileges for employment in organizations like the Indian Railways.

Bharat Scouts is divided as per age into groups called Bunnies between the age 3 to 5 years, Cubs between the age of 5 to 10 years, Scouts between the age of 10 to 17 years and Rovers aged between 15 to 25 years. Bharat

Guides has its own age divisions for girls under the categories Bulbuls, Guides and Rangers.

The vision statement of the Bharat Scouts and Guides says, and I quote, “By 2024, The Bharat Scouts and Guides will be a globally-visible, consistently-growing and self-reliant premium youth movement that is gender-balanced, vibrant and responsive to trends”. May you achieve your goal and may the spirit of public service based on character that the scouting movement represents grow stronger and spread to every member of our society.

I wish to conclude by saying that the future leadership of the nation is in the hands of youth like you. It is therefore necessary that the right virtues are sown in the young minds. By giving youth a sense of devotion to their motherland, a sense of attachment to their society and a sense of responsibility towards their fellow citizens we are laying the foundations for peace, prosperity and progress in the future.

I have realized from experience that it is important to have right role models to enable youth to flourish by following in their footsteps. I am sure that all of you have found your role model in a Velu Nachiar or Abdul Kalam or a Bharati or Gandhiji. All of them displayed an unique sense of patriotism, imbued with courage and self respect, phenomenal talent and an ability to inspire. May you all travel in their paths to acquire greatness and fame.

Nadri Vanakkam...

Jai Hind...