

**ADDRESS BY THIRU. BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF  
TAMIL NADU AT "TAMIL RATHNA AWARD" AT LEELA PALACE,  
MRC NAGAR, CHENNAI ON 19.05.2018**

ANAIVARUKKUM MAALAI VANAKKAM

Thiru. D. Jayakumar

Thiru. K. Pandiarajan

Dr. Tamilsai Soundararajan

Thiru. Thol. Thirumavalavan

Dr. Balagurusamy

Thiru. K. Bhagyaraj

Awardees being honoured with Tamil Rathna Awards

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

I am delighted to be here at the function being organized by News-7 Tamil Channel to honour achievers from Tamil Nadu for their outstanding performance in the fields of Literature, Music, Arts, empowerment of women, Drama, teaching Public service, Trade and Industry, Sports, etc.

A society honours its illustrious sons and daughters when it is in a mood to thank them for the proud position that the society has gained for itself in the world. In that respect the achievements of Tamil Society have been praiseworthy and unparalleled.

"Thirai Kadal Odiyum Diraviam Thedu" is an old Tamil saying. It translates to mean that one should not hesitate to cross even the Seven seas, in the quest for wealth. No wonder, history has documented records of ships from Europe touching the coast of Tamil Nadu at the port of Kaveripoom Pattinam located at the mouth of the Cauvery river. Silappadikaram makes a mention of the prosperity of Poompukar where Kovalan and Kannaki lived and as to how business and trade had resulted in the prosperity of Kovalan's family.

At subsequent points of time in history, one hears of the Chola Kings extending their domination in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and many other parts of South East Asia. Therefore it should come as no surprise for any one to know that Tamilians were among the early settlers in Singapore and Malaysia. I am sure that all of you know about the Mariyamman temple and the predominant Tamil population in little India in Singapore.

In recent decades Tamilians were among the first to migrate to the USA for higher studies and employment making them one of the most affluent groups in America. The state of California has so many Tamilians working in the software industry and today Google and Pepsi are proud to have Tamilians head their global activities. News 7 Tamil by taking upon itself the role of honouring the achievers of Tamil Nadu has done yeomen service to the State and the Tamil language. All these people are unified by the Tamil language which is spoken in more than 25 countries in the world.

Tamilians are in general known for their friendly nature, their hospitality, their hardworking nature, their intelligence and selfless service. You may all like to go back in history to recall that the first three Bharat Ratna awards in the 50s were given to three Tamilians namely Rajaji, C.V. Raman and S. Radhakrishnan. In the subsequent decades also, the state has produced giants in all aspects of societal engagement, be it politics, drama, dance or literature.

The State has for itself some outstanding achievements to be proud of. Tamil Nadu was a pioneer in promoting the concept of aided schools. This enabled the rapid spread of education, particularly in the rural areas. 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.

It was because of the Midday Meals Scheme that the drop-out 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 State enjoys an impressive record in the reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality rates. The State ranks first in the country in terms of number of children immunized and takes pride in the thousands of eminent medical practitioners specialising in various fields of medicine.

The State attracts about 40% of those who come into India for medical treatment. It has been estimated by the Confederation of Indian Industry that about 15 lakh patients come into Tamil Nadu for diagnosis and treatment.

In terms of economic performance Tamil Nadu is the second largest economy among the States of India. It has the highest level of urbanization among the States of India and has been a very attractive location for the inflow of investments in the industries sector. Consequently there has been tremendous growth in employment opportunities particularly in the manufacturing and services sector.

The above impressive record of Tamil Nadu has been made possible by workers, the entrepreneurs and intellectuals of Tamil Nadu who have contributed immensely to the growth of the State. Today we are honouring some of them. The Tamil Ratna award is to be conferred on Dr. Shanta who has been recently decorated with the Padma Vibhushan. I congratulate her and also extend my best wishes to all the other awardees who have been chosen for their significant contribution in their respective fields.

Having been a journalist for almost 40 years, I am aware of the challenges faced by the Press and the visual media. Collecting the information, relaying the information in time, compiling the information after checking its correctness and then projecting the information through newspapers or the visual media so as to benefit the common man are not easy to achieve. Being a regular reader of all newspapers and an avid watcher of T.V. channels should say that barring a few the quality of reporting by all the newspapers and T.V. channels in Tamil Nadu is excellent.

My experience as a Parliamentarian, as an entrepreneur and as a journalist, tells me that every successful venture should have a motto, a guiding principle and a goal. Commitment to the cause guided by the

intention to promote public welfare are very important in public life. This coupled with honesty, talent and hard work is bound to lead to success and the highest level of societal recognition. I am informed by the News 7 channel that their motto is '*Poruppum Pothu Nalanum*' which means "Being responsible and focused on public welfare". This is indeed a laudable and praiseworthy motto. That is probably the reason why they have decided to organize a function of this nature. This function, in fact is not merely an awards function but also a celebration of the greatness of Tamil society. On the stage I find leading political personalities and film personalities. I am sure that in the audience we have a large number of outstanding achievers who can match in merit and experience, the awardees who are receiving awards today. I wish you all well and desire to see all of you attain the highest levels of success in your respective fields. The zenith should be your goal and public welfare the guiding spirit. May we all together contribute for enhancing the greatness of Tamil Nadu and Tamil society.

Nandri Vanakkam.

Jai Hind.