

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE 10th YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THAMARAI SOCIAL
SERVICE TRUST AT KALAIVANAR ARANGAM, CHENNAI
ON 21.04.2018 AT 5:30 P.M.**

ANAIVARUKKUM MAALAI VANAKKAM

Justice P. Jothimani

Dr. G. Manilal

Thiru. Uthamchand Jain

Mrs. Sathya Ramesh

Thiru. Mahathma Srinivasan

Thiru. O. Arivazhagan

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a matter of happiness to be here at the 'Awards' function of the Thamarai Social Service Trust today. The function is being held to recognize the services of persons who have significantly contributed to the cause of social service.

Social service, which is synonymous with helping people in distress, has always been a part of our tradition. Service to the poor is therefore considered by our people to be equivalent in importance and piety to service to God.

Tamil literature has particularly eulogized the lives of great kings who have considered the welfare of their subjects as more important than their comforts. We are all aware of the legendary greatness of King Pari who provided his chariot to a creeper plant that needed support to spread out and grow. The munificence and generosity of kings like Karna are legendary and find place in

our epics. All this goes to show that recognition of acts of charity and service has been part of our culture from times immemorial.

The first nationalist philosopher saint of India Swami Vivekananda said and I quote, “It is a privilege to serve mankind, for this is worship of God. God is here, in all these human souls. He is the soul of man.”

Prophet Muhammad said, “Charity is a duty unto every Muslim; He who hath the means there to, let him do a good act and abstain from an evil one. That is his charity.”

Christianity says, “Know thou, that in the service of the fellowmen, do thou serveth me.”

Kabirdas, the famous poet and philosopher, in a manner that is typical of him, beautifully says “A river or stream does not dry up if a sparrow lifts a drop of the water through its beak. Similarly the wealth of a person does not get drained out or exhausted by charity to fellow human beings.

It is this spirit of compassion and love to extend all possible help to the poor and needy and those in distress that has made likeminded people join hands for a noble cause giving birth to many voluntary and social service organizations.

Social Service Organisations have been providing assistance to the underprivileged in the fields of education, health and in mobilizing women into groups for empowering them by encouraging entrepreneurship.

I was speaking at a function yesterday in which the importance of entrepreneurship was being stressed. The World Bank’s World Development Report 2013 mentions that around 600 million new jobs will be required in the next 15 years to support a growing workforce. One possible way to address youth unemployment is to support people in creating their own businesses.

Encouraging entrepreneurship in people is an important way of harnessing their enthusiasm, energy and ambition to contribute to economic development. It is generally accepted that entrepreneurs “create jobs, support innovation, raise

competition levels and are responsive to changing economic opportunities and trends. Many entrepreneurs do more than provide important goods and services- they and their businesses help sustain the vitality of the neighbourhoods in which they live and work.

While encouraging the spirit of entrepreneurship in general is important, it is even more necessary to promote the concept of self help among women by encouraging them to be entrepreneurs.

We believe in the concept of Nari Shakthi or Women Power. The concept of Durga as the protector of the human race is embodied in the celebrations of Navarathri, on which day we narrate hymns of her victory over the evil forces. Navarathri is celebrated all over India and in Nagpur, from where I hail, the celebrations of Vijayadasami, the tenth day of victory, are organised on a grand scale.

I find that in Tamil Nadu the women self help groups have been able to uplift large numbers of women from the web of poverty and suffering. Every Self Help Group (SHG) addresses the issues of poverty alleviation and has a positive impact on the health, nutrition and economic status of the women who are part of the group. I am told that there are about six lakh self help groups in the State with a total membership of about one crore. The involvement of social service trusts in promotion of self help groups will go a long way in making this concept stronger and more widespread.

I am happy that today some meritorious students are going to receive awards. They have by dint of their hard work risen from humble beginnings to attain high levels of proficiency in education enabling them to shine in society as award winning personalities.

I find some familiar faces among the recipients of awardees for social service. Some of them have contributed to the cause of women empowerment and some others in poverty alleviation. I applaud the contributions of these

award recipients and hope that more and more people will come forward to work for the upliftment of society through social service.

India is a large country with a population of about 125 crores. We are a young nation who attained independence only in 1947. We are the largest democracy in the world and follow processes that are based on consultation and majority selection. It is only by mobilising people to follow the right track and by opening out our hearts in acts of generosity that we can build an all-inclusive society. Trusts and institutions engaged in social service help us to achieve the goal faster.

I wish them all success in their endeavours.

Nandri Vanakkam

Jai Hind Jai Tamil Nadu