

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAR PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF TAMIL NADU AT THE 9th
GRADUATION DAY OF VIDHYASAGAR WOMENS COLLEGE, CHENGALPET ON 24.02.2018 AT 10.30 A.M.**

AnaivarukkumKalai Vanakkam.

Thiru. HastimalSurana,
Chairman.

Dr. Shalini Kumar,
Principal
Thiru B.G. Acharya
Director

Dignitaries on the Dais
Faculties, Staff and Students
Distinguished Invitees
Friends from the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to be here as the Chief Guest at the 9th Graduation Day of VidyaSagar Women's College, Chengalpattu.

Swami Vivekananda defined education to be the manifestation of the perfection already in man. He elaborated on how all the wealth of the world cannot help one little Indian village if the people are not taught to help themselves. He therefore exhorted that our work should be mainly educational both morally and intellectually. Going by the record of the Vidya Stions in promoting the cause of education, I should say that they have performed the crucial role that Swami Vivekananda wanted society to devote itself to.

The Upanishads speak of Gaargi, Maitreyi and Lopamudra, among others, as savants full of spiritual wisdom. In Tamil Nadu you have Avvaiyar who distilled the wisdom of the ages in short pithy sayings.

I have been the Governor of Tamil Nadu for nearly five months now and I am extremely happy to see the status that education enjoys in the State. The achievements of the State in the field of education are exemplary. The dropout rate is extremely low. The teacher-student ratio is about one teacher for 30 to 40 students. Nearly 45% of the children who finish school education take to higher education. The number of medical colleges and the number of engineering colleges available in the State speak for the tremendous interest that students have for pursuing these professional courses.

The Government of Tamil Nadu has been actively promoting the cause of education since Independence. The State was a pioneer in promoting the concept of aided schools. This enabled the rapid spread of education, particularly in the rural areas. This also triggered the growth of training institutions for teachers enabling the growth of employment opportunities. When it was realised that many families could not afford to send their children to schools provision of midday meals was done on a universal scale along with the provision of uniforms, footwear, textbooks, bus passes, etc. free of cost.

The contribution of the private sector for promoting the cause of education has also been impressive. Many private entrepreneurs have come forward to set up schools, colleges and universities in the State. Some of the institutions attract students from all over India and even from many countries of the world.

I am also happy to see that the colleges both in the public and private sectors 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 being honed along with the learning of subjects normally provided in the college curriculum such as History, Physics, Mathematics, etc.

India has the largest scientific manpower in the world. Tamil Nadu, by virtue of its excellent infrastructure in higher education, is well placed to become a model for other States to follow. All this requires enterprise, innovation, commitment and hard work. 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.

I am happy to also see that 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.

The bright and cheerful faces of young women who have completed their courses successfully and are on the verge of a new life society gives me the hope that India is going to reap the benefit of the demographic dividend.

What gladdens me even more is the accent to quality given by the management of this college.

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. Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to say "As long as I live, so long do I learn".

I therefore request 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.

Nandri Vanakkam
Jai Hind Jai Tamil Nadu