

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT NATCHATHIRA SATHANAIYALAR 2019 - FUNCTION
ORGANISED BY DINAMANI TAMIL DAILY AT KALAIVANAR ARANGAM,
WALAJA ROAD, CHENNAI ON 08.03.2019 AT 7.30 P.M**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Veteran Women achievers adorning the stage

Mrs. Vyjayanthimala

Mrs. Sowcar Janaki

Mrs. K.R. Vijaya

Mrs. Jamuna

Mrs. Saradha

Ms. Vennira Aadai Nirmala

Ms. Kanchana

Ms. Sacchu

Mrs. Rajasree

**Mr. K. Vaidiyanathan,
Editor,
Dinamani**

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me happiness to be present here today at this function organised by the Tamil Daily Dinamani on the occasion of International Women's Day. My happiness grows manifold on seeing the award winners seated on the dais, all of whom are women achievers. This is indeed a fitting tribute to mark the greatness and special nature of the occasion.

Dinamani the Tamil daily was launched on September 11th 1934 by T.S. Chokkalingam, a renowned freedom fighter, with the twin major objectives of providing strength to the freedom movement led by Mahatma Gandhi and to uphold and propagate the vision and ideals of Mahakavi Subramaniya Bharathi.

Since its inception till date, the newspaper continues to remain a torch bearer of Indian nationalism and fights against the fissiparous and disintegrating and chauvenestic tendencies that surface from time to time. That the daily has decided to observe the International Women's Day in a grand manner is a matter of pride for the women readers of this Tamil Daily.

The first Women's Day for a nation was observed in the United States on 28 February 1908. The day was observed to honour the garment workers strike in New York, where women protested against the difficult and inhuman working conditions.

Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland followed suit with celebrations in 1911 where more than one million people attended rallies. These protesters demanded the right of women to vote, to hold public office, to work and to receive vocational training.

Taking a cue from this, the Women of Russia chose to protest for "Bread and Peace" on the 8th of March in 1917. The protest achieved immediate success. Four days later, the Czar abdicated and the provisional Government granted women the right to vote. It was to mark this occasion, that the United Nations, many decades later began celebrating International Women's Day on the 8th of March.

Today's function, seen in that context in fact is not merely an awards function but also a celebration of the greatness of the leading lady in the Tamil film industry.

It will be interesting to see how Cinema took roots in Madras and glowed with luminescence all these decades. In 1909, a grand exhibition was organised in Madras where the major attraction was the screening of short films by a British company.

At that time, Raghupathy Venkiah Naidu, a photographer, took over the equipment after the exhibition and set up a tent cinema near the Madras High Court. When this proved successful, he screened the films in a tent set up in

Esplanade. When he had gathered enough money, he then put up a permanent cinema house in Madras – Gaiety, in 1914, the first cinema house in Madras to be built by an Indian. He soon added two more, Crown Theatre in Mint and Globe (later called Roxy) in Purasawalkam.

When the talkies appeared, film producers had to travel to Bombay or Calcutta to make films. The scene changed in 1934 when Madras got its first sound studio. Srinivasa Kalyanam (1934), directed by Narayanan, who set up the first sound studio Srinivasa Cinetone was the first talkie film produced in Madras.

Soon, great names in the film industry such as the legendary Modern Theatres, Gemini Studios

and AVM attained success of unbelievable proportions. Some of them are still standing tall and continue to render services to the Tamil people through the film industry.

Tamil cinema also had a profound effect on other filmmaking industries of India, establishing Madras as a hub for the other South Indian states as well.

It is therefore no wonder that among the women achievers we see on stage many of them owe their origins to the other South Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

In fact all them have acted in films made in the various South Indian languages. Some of them

like Thirumathi Vyjayanthimala have acted in Hindi films as well. Thus the growth of the film industry in Madras paved the way for greater integration among the South Indian States and also contributed to national integration.

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 the film industry in Tamil Society have been praiseworthy and unparalleled.

All of us 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 on 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 organized on a grand scale.

While we celebrate the power of Skakthi in religion and culture, history also speak about the great women leaders who adorned our illustrious array of thinkers, poetesses and warriors.

Avvaiyar whose memory is being celebrated by the Government of Tamil Nadu today was one of the most famous and important female poets of the Tamil Sangam. Karaikkal Ammaiya a great philosopher has sung devotional hymns which inspire the soul. Women like Rani Mangammal,

Kittur Chennamma and Velu Nachiyar are some of the important generals who fought with courage and bravery to defeat the oppressor.

Music and dance have also witnessed many famous personalities among women such as Rukmini Devi Arundale, Dr.M.S.Subbulakshmi and Balasaraswati.

While there are leading women achievers, it is also true that hundreds of years of foreign rule in India starting from the beginning of 13 Century till almost the middle of the 20th Century have created a number of factors in society that suppressed women and kept them confined within closed doors. Hence, India witnessed disparities in development which affected women adversely.

After Independence there has been an improvement in the conditions of women in a gradual manner.

Each of the award winners seated here has played a role in changing the manner in which society looks at women. They have through their performances on the silver screen enabled society to see the role of women as it should be, in a family, in society and in positions of power. They have provided the audiences of the 50s, 60s and the 70s the complete versatility of the talents of women in all its forms.

I am sure that all of you are proud of their achievements which have brought about a change for the better. And they have won my admiration

because they displayed their greatness in the golden era of the Tamil film industry when giants such as M.G.R, Sivaji Ganesan and Gemini Ganesan, N.T.Rama Rao, Nageswara Rao and Prem Nazir and Raj Kumar played the lead male role. I extend my greetings to them on the occasion of International Women's Day and wish that they continue to remain a living inspiration for many more years to come.

I am thankful to the organizers for having invited me to this function. May this celebration create a resolve in each one of us to work towards the noble goal of elevating our society to the pedestal of an ideal one where men and women

play an equal and significant role in all aspects of public affairs.

Nandri Vanakkam.....

Jai Hind.....