

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF  
TAMIL NADU AT PONGAL PERU VIZHA, RAJ BHAVAN, CHENNAI  
ON 15.01.2019 AT 5.00 P.M**

**Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam**

Distinguished invitees, ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me great happiness to be celebrating the Pongal Festival with all of you here at Raj Bhavan today. As you are all aware the Pongal Festival was celebrated as a public event at Raj Bhavan for the first time last year. This year we are doing it on a grander scale with greater participation from all of you.

Pongal is Unique to Tamil Nadu. All over India this day is being celebrated as Makar Sankranti ie the commencement of the Uttarayana when the

days will get longer and the nights shorter. It is a celebration in honour of the Sun God as it signifies the movement of the Sun God to the house of Makar or Capricorn in the Zodiac.

The Pongal festival which coincides with Sankranti gains special prominence as the harvest festival of Tamil Nadu since the State receives the bulk of its rainfall from the North East Monsoon unlike the rest of the country which mainly depends on the South West Monsoon. The Pongal festival is a celebration for the harvest, and a thanks giving to the Sun God for having providing the energy vitality and life for day to day living. It is therefore no wonder that on this day the first grains of paddy

harvested and the pulses produced are mixed together with the sweetens of Jaggery and the taste and aroma of spices, cashew nuts and dry grapes to be cooked and offered to the Sun God as Sweet Pongal or Sakkarai Pongal.

The festival Pongal encompasses within itself the concepts of festivity, equality and fraternity. The day is marked by kolams, floral decorations, songs, dances, merriment and joy. The sweet Pongal which is cooked in earthen pots and offered to the Sun God brings everybody out of their houses into the open without any distinction of poor or rich. The Mattu Pongal and Kaanum Pongal which follow the day of Pongal demonstrate our feeling of oneness

with the cows and bulls that assist in agriculture and are celebrated with relatives and friends in a convivial spirit of good will and harmony. Pongal sees no distinctions of caste, creed or religion and is universal in character.

On this auspicious occasion I extend my best wishes and greetings to all of you and through you to the people of Tamil Nadu. May the onset of Pongal bring with it greater happiness and prosperity in all our families.

Nandri Vanakkam....

Jai Hind....