

**Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu participated as the Chief Guest at the inauguration of 5<sup>th</sup> Annual World Tamar Festival**

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit participated as the Chief Guest at the inauguration of 5<sup>th</sup> Annual World Tamar Festival 2019 and Global Organisation of Tamil Origin Meet at Kalaivanar Arangam, Chennai today (05.01.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "I am glad to be here at the 5<sup>th</sup> World Tamar Festival and Global Organisation of Tamil Origin Meet organized by Global Organisation for Tamil Origin and World Tamil Chamber of Commerce.

There is much about which Tamil and Tamilians can be proud about. During the last 14 months of my stay in the State, I have come across fascinating aspects of Tamil literature, the Tamil system of medicine, Saiva Siddhantam and the Thirukkural which I would like to share with you.

The Thirukkural which was written more than 2000 years ago focuses almost on all aspects of life. It is loaded with nuggets of wisdom on good governance, planning, specialization, merit selection, placement, communication, equality, time management, financial management, water management, etc. These valuable pearls of wisdom are relevant to present day living.

That is why Poetess Avvaiyar observed, "Thiruvalluvar pierced an atom and injected in it the seven seas and compressed it into what we have today as the Thirukkural."

Thirukkural is appealing to the mind and sweet to the ears, conveying maximum sense in minimum words. Its construction resembles that of a design in a mosaic.

Mahathma Gandhi after reading a translation of Thirukkural remarked "The maxims of Thiruvalluvar have touched my heart and soul. There is none who has given such a treasure of wisdom like him."

Thirukkural lays emphasis on things to be done and methods to be employed for accomplishing tasks. It emphasises on able ministers, good advisors, wise ambassadors, efficient administrators etc. Above all Thirukkural emphasises on righteous conduct, absolute purity of action and moral values.

One is reminded of a poem by Namakkal Ramalingam Pillai in this regard. He calls the Thirukkural a dictionary of ethics for all humanity to live a life of happiness. He goes on to add that the Ramayana as presented by Kambar, illustrates through the narrative of Rama's life all the great values embodied in the Thirukkural. This shows the extent of the massive influence of the Thirukkural on later works in Tamil!

Let me give an example of the directness and sublimity of the Kural with one couplet, Kural 33, in which Tiruvalluvar says that purity of heart is all that matters in life.

He says, "All ethics boils down to being pure in the heart". After accomplishing his purpose even in the first line, he hits the nail on the head with the second line, saying, 'Everything else is vain and empty display!' (आगुल नीर पिर Aagula Neera Pira).

I am informed that the Siddha system of medicine traces its origins to the Podhigai hills of Tamil Nadu. In fact the system of Medicine derives its name from the word, "SIDDHI", which means "Eternal Bliss". The saint Agasthiyar is recognized as the father of Siddha medicine.

The fundamental principal that forms the bedrock for the Siddha System is that the instrument for attaining Siddhi is the human body which should be kept healthy if eternal bliss is to be achieved. The focus of the Siddha system of medicine is therefore towards maintaining bodily health. For this, the science emphasises the means for physical, mental, social and spiritual well being. Simple lifestyle practices, dietary regimens and effective nature based medicines based on the holistic approach for healthy living form the prescriptions under the Siddha system.

The Siddhars who were saints lived thousands of years ago and practised the eight types of yogic practices – i.e. Ashtanga yogam. They were 18 in number and among them, Agasthiyar, is considered to be the pioneer who laid the foundations for the development of Siddha Medicine, Astrology, Philosophy, and Alchemy.

Some other Siddhars such as Bogar, Punaikannar, Sattanathar and Romarishi are credited with propagating Siddha medicine beyond the borders of India in countries such as China, Sri Lanka, Italy and Egypt.

The poems belonging to Sangam literature were composed by Tamil poets, both men and women, from various professions and classes of society. These poems which were later edited & compiled into various anthologies, by anthologists and annotators were rediscovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by scholars such as Arumuga Navalar, C.W. Thamothersampillai and U.V.Swaminatha Iyer.

May I make a request to you? For a moment please close your eyes and imagine where Tamil and Tamil Culture world have been if it had not enjoyed the royal patronage of the Pallava and Chola dynasties for nearly 600 years between the 7<sup>th</sup> century and the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. There would have been no Mahabalipuram, no Kambar, no temple building activity and no Sekkizhar and no Periyapuram. The seed for this was sown by a Shaivite Saint Appar who cured Mahendra Varma Pallava of a serious illness. Such is the power of Saiva Siddhantam, the power of spirituality. The Nayanmars followed Appar. The Cholas followed the Pallavas. Dance followed music and the rest is history.

Saiva Siddhantham is an ancient philosophy that has its origins from Agasthiar.

Saiva Siddhanta believes in the three eternal entities of God, Soul and material bondage. According to Saiva Siddanta God is one, Souls are many and Pasam consists of three impurities called anavam, kanmam and mayai.

Anything that has beginning, existence and decay is made by someone. It has a maker. Our physical body the world and the worldly things had a beginning. They exist for a certain period of time and then decay. They, therefore, have a maker who is God. Existence of God is thus established by inference.

The Law of Karma is one of the foundations of Saiva Sidhantam. Good actions results in good or pleasant experience and evil actions result in bad or painful experiences. Hence Shaiva Sidhanta aims to lead its followers on the path of goodness and towards God.

Saiva Siddhantam is a rational philosophy. The concept is similar to the scientific concept that matter and energy get transformed from one form to another. The universe, according to the Big Bang theory in science, had an origin from a 'cosmic egg' and expanded to the present state. Even time was born from it. The Siddhanta concept of maya and its products has a close parallel with this scientific view.

Referring to the universe, the 20<sup>th</sup> century scientist Albert Einstein said, "It is an expanding Universe". The Saiva saint Manickavasakar made the same statement more than about 12 centuries ago.

Music and dance sound the sweetest when they find expression in a language known to the listener.

The tradition of Tamil music goes back to the ancient era of Tamil history. There are various references to this musical tradition found in the ancient Sangam books such as Ettuthokai and Pathupattu. The ancient grammatical work Tolkappiyam mentions the various musical expressions pertaining to the five landscapes of the Sangam literature.

In the post-Sangam period, Tamil music evolved to a different level of sophistication. The Cilappatikaram describes music based on logical, systematic and scientific calculations in the arrangement of the dancers on stage to represent the notes and tunes.

The compositions of the Tamil Saivite saints such as Appar and the Vaishnavite saints such as Perialvar between the sixth and the tenth centuries CE were set to music and sung in temples. The musical poet Arunagirinathar further embellished the Tamil musical tradition through his compositions of Tamil hymns.

The Tamil Trinity of Muthu Thandavar, Arunachala Kavi and Marimutthu Pillai have hundreds of devotional songs in Tamil to their credit and these songs have immensely helped in the evolution of Carnatic music.

I have touched upon a few elements of the greatness of Tamil and Tamil Culture. The language of Tamil is like a limitless ocean whose limits are unfathomable. I am happy that all of you have assembled here to appreciate the beauty of Tamil and Tamil Culture for it to be propagated from one generation to another. The Tamil Diaspora which is a highly enterprising group of intellectuals spread all over the globe is using this opportunity to strengthen the roots which are of Tamil origin. I am glad that they are celebrating this event annually. I congratulate the office bearers of the World Tamil Chamber of Commerce for having taken painstaking efforts to convene Global Organization of Tamil Origin Meet. May success greet them in all their endeavours. I extend my best wishes and greetings to all of you from the bottom of my heart”.

On this occasion, Thiru. Selva Kumar, President, World Tamil Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Viswanathan, Founder & Chancellor, VIT University, Thiru. Isari K. Ganesh, Chairman, VELS University and other dignitaries participated.

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Raj Bhavan, Chennai -22

Sd/-

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Joint Director (PR)