

Press Release No.104

Date : 26.11.2021

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. R.N.Ravi participated as chief guest at the inauguration of the Annual Cultural Festival organised by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. R.N.Ravi participated as chief guest at the inauguration of the Annual Cultural Festival organised by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan at Bhavan's Main Auditorium, Chennai today (26.11.2021) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "I am delighted to be part of the all famous Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Cultural Festival 2021.

We are all aware of the fact that Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan came into existence in 1938 and since then it has been on an eternal pilgrimage to preserve and propagate India's rich cultural and spiritual heritage. Through its hundreds of Kendras all over the country, it has been doing an yeoman service of nation building. Known for its higher standards of teaching and learning, it attracts large number of students. However, the idea of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has an interesting and painful background which every Indian must not forget.

The British were all out to destroy India. Their rule was not limited to utter political subjugation and reckless want on economic exploitation of India but they tried their best to kill the sense of self-hood (Swa) of India, the sense of Indianness that was deeply embedded in the cultural and spiritual life of an ordinary Indian preserved since thousands of years through the traditional knowledge system (Gyan Parampara), everyday rites and rituals and the warp and woof of our culture.

The British saw in this sense of Swa (Selfhood) a major potential threat to their empire. They marshalled all their political, intellectual and military resources to destroy the sense of Swa (Selfhood) of India.

The British Parliament made laws like India Charter Act – 1813 mandating the East India Company and its patron the British Government to do everything possible for religious and moral redemption of India. The British had concluded that Indians were religiously deprived and morally depraved. They marshalled theologians like William

Wilberforce, and intellectuals like James Mill and Karl Marx for their project of total annihilation of the Indian society.

Through Peels Act 1802, they introduced an education system to replace the traditional knowledge system of India. They killed the traditional institutions of knowledge which were the watering holes of India's cultural and spiritual life and introduced institutions designed to produce Indians with a sense of shame in everything Indian and in India's past and a sense of envy for things British – their language, their institutions, their world view and their mannerism.

This cultural and spiritual ruination of India by the British pained and provoked Mahatma Gandhi and other freedom fighters to adopt a resolution for Purna Swaraj on 26th January 1930. The resolution stated that the British rule had ruined India **politically, economically, culturally and spiritually**. This fact was amply described and illustrated with loads of facts by Mahatma Gandhi in his address to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London on 20th October 1931 (known as Round Table Conference).

The challenge before the country was that while the movement for political freedom was likely to be a long drawn – because in 1930 nobody could imagine that the British would leave India one and half decades later. It was the 2nd World War that had enfeebled and exhausted the British who began feeling the impact of India's resistance much more severely than before. In 1930s the British were comfortably entrenched in India. There was no inkling of their leaving this country and sparing its resources anytime soon.

In this backdrop, Shri K.M.Munshi, a great son of India, a true Gandhian, an accomplished writer, a staunch freedom fighter and a great visionary conceived the idea of a network of an institution which on the one hand welcome the modern science and technology and at the same time could protect the cultural and spiritual heritage of India from the brutal British onslaught. Encouraged by Mahatma Gandhi, he conceived the idea of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan – a network of educational institutions in the country that would impart our youth an education that would equip them with knowledge of modern science and also the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of India. The Motto

Aano Bhadrah Kratavo Yantu Vishwatah (Let noble thoughts from all the world come).

While Shri K.M.Munshi conceived the idea of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, it took another great man Shri S.Anantha Ramakrishnan, a well known philanthropist to make it happen in Chennai. He donated the Bhavan's Mylapore premises for it. It is only appropriate that on this day we have shown our heartfelt gratitude to Shri S.Anantha Ramakrishnan by unveiling his portrait. It will be a source of inspiration for our youth and encouragement to the potential philanthropists.

Song and Music constitute the soul of a people, a nation. They are crucial elements of a culture. India's music and song are abode of India's soul. I would like to thank the people of Chennai for being such a loving patron of music and song that this city has made a name for itself in the world. Its loving patronage has a magnetic force that attracts legends and music lovers from across the country and the world. Let this spirit continue forever and further blossom.

I would like to conclude with a note of caution. The global pandemic is not yet over. It has tendency to come again and again. Some countries are still facing the brunt of it.

Here in India, thanks to the visionary and dynamic leadership of the Prime Minister that we are in a relatively much better position than even the most advanced countries in the world.

There is no shortage of vaccine and an efficient vaccination infrastructure is in place. Those who have not yet taken the 2nd dose, must come forward, take it and make the country safe from COVID.

Let us not lower our guard on COVID protocol. Let us celebrate the music festival in all its glory with zest observing the COVID protocol.

My warm greetings to all the artists, participants and organisers. I wish this festival all the best."

On this occasion, **Thiru N.Ravi**, Chairman, Bhavan's Chennai Kendra, **Thiru Nalli Kuppusami Chetti**, Vice-Chairman, Bhavan's Chennai Kendra, **Tmt. Mallika Srinivasan**, Chairman & CEO, TAFE Limited, **Thiru Sriram**, Historian, **Thiru M.Murali**,

Secretary, Bhavan's Chennai Kendra, **Thiru K.N.Ramaswamy**, Director, Bhavan's Chennai Kendra and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai – 22

Sd/-

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Addl. Director (PR)