

REPUBLIC DAY MESSAGE BY
THIRU R.N.RAVI, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF TAMIL NADU
ON 26.01.2023

Vanakkam,

74 வது ஆண்டு குடியரசு தின விழாவில் தமிழ்நாட்டின் எனது அனைத்து சகோதர சகோதரிகளுக்கும், உலகெங்கும் வாழும் தமிழ் நாட்டு மக்களுக்கும் எனது உளப்பூர்வமான வாழ்த்துக்களைத் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்.

On this day, we pay our heartfelt gratitude to Baba Shaheb Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, the father of our Constitution for giving us the beautiful Constitution written with incredible genius and extraordinary forethought which has stood the test of time and helped India growing into a robust plural democracy.

On this day, the grateful nation remembers with gratitude all the brave sons and daughters of India who gave their life and suffered unspeakable torture for the freedom of our Country. They defended every inch of our motherland with their blood, sweat and sacrifices.

We remember

VO Chidambaram Pillai, Mahakavi Subramanya Bharathi, Veeramangai Rani Velu Nachiyar, Maruthu Brothers, Virupachi Gopal Naicker, Subramaniya Siva, Maaveeran Alagumuthu Kone, Vaanchinathan, Tiruppur Kumaran, Dheeran Chinnamalai, Puli Thevar, Veerapandiya Kattabomman, V.V.S.Aiyar, Singaravelar, Smt.Rukmini Lakshmipati, Thillaiyaadi Valliammai, Kuyili, Sundara Shastri Satyamurthi, Anjalai Ammal and many other unsung heroes who gave their everything for the freedom of our Country.

We remember with utmost gratitude the families of all these great men and women who stood by them against all odds during the national freedom movement.

On this day, the nation salutes our military and remembers with gratitude our brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bharath and defeating the misadventures of the enemies. The nation shall ever remain proud of and grateful to them for their sacrifices. Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi naming 21 Islands of the Andaman Nicobar after our Param Virs is nation's humble tribute to our great heroes.

On this day, the nation pays homage to thousands of Police men and women and brave hearts of Central Security Forces who sacrificed their lives fighting the enemies of the nation at the border and within the Country and ensuring peace and harmony in the society. They gave their lives defending our sacred constitutional values of secular plural democracy.

The nation pays gratitude to our farmers who are the guardians of our nation's food security, who turned our country from food deficient to food surplus. Thanks to our farmers, our food grain production is such that during the last three years of the global pandemic – Covid, the Central Government has been able to provide free food grains to some 800 million of our people. Thanks to our farmers, we have also tried to mitigate hunger in several countries of the world by providing food grains.

The nation pays respectful tribute to our doctors, health workers, volunteers who facing threats to their lives, helped and saved millions of our country men and women during the lethal global pandemic. The nation is grateful to our scientists who invented effective vaccines against the Covid in a record short time that helped the Country to fight

the pandemic with confidence and bounce our economy back to normal within record time, while most of the world is still in a recession like situation. The entire health sector fraternity deserves congratulations for an efficient and exemplary vaccination campaign covering our entire eligible population.

The nation shall ever be thankful to our innovators, entrepreneurs and industrialists who built the nation's economy with their enterprise. Today India is the fastest growing large economy and is among the fastest growing start-up eco-system in the World.

I extend my greetings and good wishes to all the sports persons of Tamil Nadu who with their brilliant performance at national and international levels have made our Country and our State proud.

The nation can never forget those countless and often unsung heroes who inspired by their innate sense of service and full dedication have devoted their lives to providing care and well-being to the poor, the marginalised, the physically disabled and intellectually challenged, deprived and the down trodden.

Our physically disabled and autistic citizens have equal rights to live with dignity. We must pay greater attention to their physical and psychological rehabilitation and emotional well-being.

The nation remembers with immense reverence the great sage Thiruvalluvar, great rishis Patanjali, Goraknath, Thirumoolar, the great Nayanars and the Alwars, the great Andal, Avvaiyar Patti, Swami Ramanuja Charya and others whose spiritual compass and moral wisdom not only enriched the Tamil culture, spirituality and civilization, but also shaped the idea and identity of Bharath.

We pay tribute to the great literary geniuses of our Sangam eras whose legacy of great epics reflects the literary richness and intellectual and philosophical depth of Tamil literature and glory of her age-old civilization. We remember the great artists and sculptures and their patron Kings – Cholas, Cheras, Pallavas, Pandyas for leaving behind a chain of magnificent living heritage of Temples and other centres of spirituality and culture which are the bedrock of Tamil culture and identity.

Friends, we are proud inheritors of our glorious past. Centuries of predatory invasions and colonisations though wreaked devastating physical ruins, they could not dampen our culture, our spirit and our spirituality. Our duty is to restore the glory of Bharath once again. In this endeavour Tamil Nadu is poised to be the leader. It is because, Tamil Nadu is not only a proud inheritor of several thousand years of a rich and vibrant civilizational heritage, but with robust fundamentals of health, education, infrastructure, industrial base and highly skilled human resource is ideally suited to be the engine of India's resurgence.

Friends, today India is not looked upon as a Third World Country. At every global or multilateral forum India has a seat of pride and the Indian leadership is listened to seriously. Unlike in the past, today our Country is capable of defending the interest of Indian diaspora across the World. The Country is proud of our Tamil global diaspora. I would like to assure them that the Country will stand by you and protect your legitimate interests wherever you are.

In the unfolding story of emerging new India, our Tamil diaspora across the world plays an important role. With their extraordinary intellectual brilliance and industrious life, they are invaluable assets to

the countries of their residence. They have also made India immensely proud. This year India is the Chair of G-20. It is an opportunity for us to further cement our global ties especially with the civil societies in various countries. It is also an opportunity to showcase Brand India to the World. Our Tamil diaspora is best suited in these regards.

India, in keeping with her policy of Neighbourhood first, maintains close relation with Sri Lanka and is committed to protecting the legitimate interests of Sri Lankan Tamils. In their hour of need India is the first responder. While the overall India's development commitment to Sri Lanka is close to US\$ 5bn (amounting to Rs.40,000/- crores approx.) of which US\$ 600 million (amounting to Rs.5000/- crores approx.) is grant, a significant share of it is towards projects for the benefits of Sri Lankan Tamils.

Ever since coming of the Prime Minister Modi, he has been giving special attention to the interests and welfare of Tamils in Sri Lanka. Some of the accomplishments include some 60,000 houses including some 15,000 in the plantation areas, construction of 200 Ward complex in General Hospital, Vavuniya, 150 bed Super Speciality Hospital in Dockoya, construction of Jaffna Cultural Centre with the modern state-

of-the-art facility at US\$ 11 million, construction of 27 schools in the Northern Province, upgradation of Saraswathy Central College, Kandy, restoration of Thirukeeteshwaran temple in Mannar, improvement of Rail infrastructure in Northern Province, renovation of Duraiappah stadium, Northern Province, Island-wide Emergency Ambulance services and many others.

During the recent economic crisis and resultant food shortage in Sri Lanka, the Government of India promptly responded with the needed assistance. The Government of Tamil Nadu also extended humanitarian assistance and sent rice, milk powder and life-saving medicines worth Rs.174 crores.

Due to sustained efforts of Government of India as on date no Indian Fisherman is in Sri Lankan custody.

Tamil, perhaps the oldest living language of the world with its immensely rich heritage of literature and philosophy is pride of India. The rest of our Country must benefit from this priceless wealth. Thanks to various initiatives of Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi ji for promotion of Tamil language, there is increasingly greater awareness of it in the

country. Besides the Subramania Bharathi Chair in Banaras Hindu University for promotion of Tamil, Tamil becoming a medium for writing UPSC examination for higher civil services, now the Staff Selection Commission which is responsible for recruiting staff for subordinate services in the Central Government departments has adopted Tamil as a language of choice for the prospective aspirants. This will give greater opportunities for Central Government jobs to the aspirants from our State. The Government of India is pushing for Tamil as the language of Justice and litigation in the High Court of Madras.

During my recent visit to Banaras Hindu University, I had interactions with Tamil faculties and staff and also non-Tamil students doing diploma courses in Tamil. I was happy to see the enthusiasm of non-Tamil students towards learning Tamil.

I was delighted to listen to the boatmen on the river Ganga in kashi talking fluent Tamil. The recently concluded month-long Kashi-Tamil Sangamam, an initiative of Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi, besides giving opportunities to several thousands of our people from the cross-sections of Tamil Nadu to fulfil their dream of visiting Kashi, it also gave huge impetus to the spread of Tamil language and culture to the rest of the

Country. Several thousand years of cultural connect between Tamil Nadu and Kashi got re-juvenated. Some Forty thousand Tamils living in Kashi for several centuries with their active participation further energised this re-juvenation. Prime Minister Modi released copies of our great Thirukkural in several Indian languages.

Under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister, a new India is taking birth - a confident and capable India, an increasingly self-reliant India, an India proud of her glorious heritage and conscious of her destiny to be the World leader by 2047, an India committed to Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. This birth of new India is happening through millions of micro revolutions – be it access to health care for the poor, quality and skill based education to all, cleanliness including toilets in every home, every home having access to drinking water, cooking gas cylinder and electricity to every home, needed relief and empowerment of small farmers, increasing thrust on natural and organic farming, internet connectivity to every village, financial inclusion of every household, one-nation-one ration card, protection and education of girl children, special nutrition and health care to mothers, ever new opportunities to youth for experiment and enterprise, unprecedented spurt in innovation and start-ups, increasing voluntary

compliance of tax regime by the citizens, all inclusive growth and development initiatives, correction of iniquitous gender imbalance, unleashing the women-power (Nari Shakti) with every sector including defence, made open to women – are some of the revolutions propelling the birth of new India.

Friends, I am happy that in this historic march forward, our State Tamil Nadu is among the front runners. It is time to give further impetus to this positive revolution.

India is the chair of G-20. We know how significant are the roles of G-20 Countries, with 85% of the global GDP, in shaping the course of global future. Today Member Countries and indeed the World has ever greater expectations from India for showing the way into the future. The Hon'ble Prime Minister, like all the Government of India schemes and programmes, has made G-20 presidency also into a peoples' movement. G-20 events, over 215, will be held in various parts of the Country. Our State Tamil Nadu also will host several such events. It is an opportunity for us to showcase Tamil Nadu to the rest of the World. I urge upon our youth, our entrepreneurs especially women entrepreneurs, our MSME sectors, our institutions of art, culture and

spirituality, our Tamil diaspora to avail themselves of this opportunity to show the World how aspirational and enterprising are our youth including the women, how rich is our culture including art and Tamil language, how inclusive is our spirituality.

Friends, when our country is on a historic march forward, we need to remain alert on the forces trying to disrupt the pace of our rise. There are external forces and internal interest groups who are not comfortable with the rise of new India. They are trying to disrupt the pace of development by hyping sectarian and other imaginary issues. They seem determined to disrupt the social, communal and regional harmony. Some are resorting to acts of terror. Popular Front of India is one such terrorist organisation. This dangerous organisation, committed to disrupt social harmony and destabilise the Constitutional order, is externally funded and has operational links with international terrorist organisations. Unfortunately they have significant presence in our State, Tamil Nadu. They had the audacity to demonstrate their presence with several dozen targeted bomb attacks in the wake of Government of India banning it. The aborted major terror attack in Coimbatore further shows their continuing links with international terrorists. While the law enforcement agencies are expected to deal with them sternly, our

citizens must remain alert in this regard and also assist the law enforcement with timely information on their presence and activities.

In our march into the future, we must ensure that our women's potential is optimally harnessed. We must ensure that no section of our society remains marginalised and behind. We must pay special attention to our brothers and sisters of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Besides affirmative actions to empower women, schedule castes and scheduled tribes, we must ensure that crimes against them are meted with swift justice. The poor conviction rate in crimes against women specially rapes of Dalit women is not acceptable. Perpetrators of crimes against women and Dalits must be met with the full force of justice.

Friends, Our ancient temples are our heritage and our identity. Our Temples are the fountainheads and watering holes of our culture which is our identity. The soul of a temple is spirituality. This spirituality is the soul and source of our Tamil art and culture including dance, music and songs. Some people tend to look at our Temples merely as pieces of art and culture. This is grossly unfair. Stripped of spirituality, it is like a body without soul – a dead body. Such a forensic view of

temples will lead to destruction and distortions of not only our proud heritage but also our identity and culture. We must preserve our temples in fullness of their being. In this regard observations of the UNESCO Commission set up by the Hon'ble Madras High Court on the maintenance of our temples and crucial directions of the Court deserve urgent attention.

My dear brothers and sisters of Tamil Nadu, we are at a crucial moment in the history of our Country and the World. The existing World order that emerged in the wake of 2nd World War has proved grossly inadequate to the existential challenges viz. climate crisis, proliferations of weapons of mass destruction, devastating wars, global pandemic and others facing the World. In many ways, these challenges are by-products of this very World order. At this juncture, the World looks at India with hope and expectation to lead the way into a safe and sustainable future. In significant ways, we have already begun discharging our leadership responsibilities. In order to fulfil the hope and expectations of the World, India has to be fully developed and self-reliant. Our 'Make in India' and 'Vocal for Local' campaigns have begun paying encouraging dividends. In many areas including Defence, we are moving on the path of self-reliance. We are fortunate to be at an age

when we are a proud witness and committed participants in our national journey. I urge you all to be conscious of it in all your endeavours.

Friends, Our Constitution guarantees our Fundamental rights and privileges. At the same time, our Constitution also expects us to fulfil our Fundamental duties. On this occasion, let us commit ourselves to our Constitutional duties. This alone will ensure the rise of India of our freedom fighters' dream.

I once again wish you all a very happy 74th Republic Day.

Nandri,

Vaazhga Tamizh Nadu,

Vaazhga Bharatham.
