

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE DOCTORS DAY AWARDS FUNCTION – 2019
ORGANISED BY TAMIL NADU MEDICAL COUNCIL AT DURBAR HALL,
RAJ BHAVAN, CHENNAI ON 01.07.2019 AT 4.00 P.M**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Dr. K. Senthil,
President,
Tamil Nadu Medical Council

Dr.R.V.S. Surendran,
Vice-President,
Tamil Nadu Medical Council

Dr. M.K.Ponnuraj,
Member, Tamil Nadu Medical Council

Dr.D. Maruthupandian,
Chairman, Awards Committee

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

It is a matter of great happiness to be taking part in the Doctors Day Awards function – 2019 being organized by the Tamil Nadu Medical Council.

As you are all aware Doctors Day is celebrated on 1st of July every year the Birthday of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy MRCP, FRCS, an eminent physician, educationist, philanthropist, freedom fighter and politician who served as the Chief Minister of West Bengal from 1948 to 1962. Dr. B.C. Roy who was awarded the nations highest civilian honour the Bharat Ratna in 1961 believed in total commitment to social work. While delivering the Convocation Address at the University of Lucknow on 15 December 1956, he

said and I quote - you are soldiers in the battle of freedom-freedom from want, fear, ignorance, frustration and helplessness. By dint of hard work for the country, rendered in a spirit of selfless service, may you march ahead with hope and courage.

The B.C. Roy National Award in Dr. Roy's memory is being given annually in recognition of outstanding contributions made in the areas of medicine, politics, science, philosophy, literature and arts.

I find that in a similar fashion, ten top doctors who have rendered outstanding service have been honoured for their commitment to social service.

Placing service above self has always been part of the tradition of India. Swami Vivekananda feelingly spoke of 'Daridhra Narayana', which basically means that service to the poor is equivalent in importance and piety to service to God. Veda Vyasa also brings out the greatness of helping people by stating in two words – 'paropakarah punyaya' – Helping others is the best virtue.

The great Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar has beautifully summed it up in two lines, which when translated into English means "Giving to the poor is charity, all else have the quality of expecting a return".

Our country has a great and glorious past in medical education and medical sciences.

Sushruta, Jivaka Kumarabhacca, and Charaka were famous medical experts who showed the world how to treat diseases and illnesses. At a time when surgeries in England were done primitively, the most complex surgeries were being performed in India by well trained surgeons.

Sushruta is credited with performing advanced surgeries, including plastic and reconstructive surgery. Sushruta was not just a great surgeon, but also a great teacher. He used to advise his students that however well-read they are, they are not competent to treat disease until they have practical, hands-on experience. He taught his

students surgical skills by making incisions on the skin of fruits. He also taught them how to remove foreign bodies from flesh by demonstrating the extraction of seeds from fruits. His students were known to have practiced on dead animals and on leather bags filled with water, before they performed surgeries on patients.

In the present times, diseases have become numerous and lifestyles have become unnatural. Widespread use of substances like plastic, petrol and chemicals has resulted in mankind being subjected to suffering and disease to a level unseen in earlier centuries.

While the diseases of the have -nots are due to malnutrition and unhygienic surroundings, the

affluent in India face a different problem altogether by way of increased incidence of metabolic syndrome comprising of obesity, diabetes, systemic hypertension, and fatty liver. A combination of yoga combined with dhyana, and the right kind of diet would be useful in reducing the incidence of such ailments and disease.

To focus clearly and fully on the enemy i.e., disease, the World Health Organisation has therefore emphasized the integration of the various modern and traditional systems of medicine for ensuring better universal healthcare.

Considerable improvement in health care can be brought about by the use of technology.

This can be understood from the manner in which the growth and development of radiographic tests has taken place. When Rontgen discovered x-rays in 1895, the world found it unbelievable and the New York Times first reported to it as an “alleged discovery of how to photograph the invisible”! No wonder the ray gained the name ‘x’, after the algebra symbol of the unknown quantity.

But soon Rontgen went on to win the first Noble prize for Physics in 1901, "in recognition of the extraordinary services he has rendered by the discovery of the remarkable rays".

X-rays helped revolutionize modern medicine as doctors could see inside living patients’ bodies without having to cut them open.

After computers came into X-rays, we had CT scan or Computed Tomography Scan. This scan is arrived at by acquiring numerous digital radiographs and reconstructing them into a 3 dimensional model using various computations.

The MRI scan a later development is different as it uses magnetic resonance.

The MRI machines use powerful magnets to produce accurate and detailed pictures of internal body structures.

Such Electronic Imaging infrastructure that expedites accurate diagnosis has improved the quality of healthcare. The use of robotic support

for surgery is a recent innovation that has made surgery more precise and quick.

Similarly, forming a National Knowledge Network and creating a digital library and using it for Tele-education and Tele-consultations will make quality medical care available even in remote areas of the country.

I was in Rameswaram some months back where I visited the house of Dr. Abdul Kalam. I am sure that all of you know that Dr. Kalam, who though born in an ordinary family went on to become the President of India. His life was one of achieving excellence through diligence. He excelled as a scientist, as a patriot and as a leader among men. His love for children and students

was unmatched. Every time he found an opportunity he would go and lecture to students in schools and colleges. Once when he was asked about the secret of his perennial enthusiasm and energy, he said “Every moment I keep thinking about what I can give to others”. It is people like and Dr. Kalam, who through their work for the nation, stand as examples and role-models.

We should remember that our knowledge and learning should be used for the benefit of mankind and to lead the people from darkness to light. “Thamasoma Jyothirgamaya” is the saying in our spiritual texts. I am only echoing those words of wisdom.

The mission before us is to make healthcare comprehensive, universal, affordable and qualitatively professional. For achieving this objective, the road ahead is going to be complex and arduous. It is only medical experts such as the award winners of today who can show the way for us to be successful in our mission.

I congratulate the awardees who are role models in the medical profession and wish them well.

To them let me say that it is a matter of pride and honour to be remembered as one who has utilized his talents and contributed to the betterment of the society and the nation through his efforts.

The medical profession is a noble profession.

Let me conclude by quoting what the famous French philosopher Voltaire once said

“Those who are occupied in the restoration of health to others, by the joint exertion of skill and humanity, are above all the great of the earth. They even partake of divinity, since to preserve and renew is almost as noble as to create.”

I congratulate the the Tamil Nadu Medical Council for their efforts in organizing this awards function on the occasion of Doctors Day. May they be greeted with success in all their endeavours.

Nandri Vanakkam...

Jai Tamil Nadu....

Jai Hind....