

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT NAVATI SAMVATSARA MAHOTSAVA 90TH ANNIVERSARY
VALEDICTORY CELEBRATIONS ORGANISED BY THE SAMSKRITA ACADEMY,
MADRAS AT THE MADRAS SANSKRIT COLLEGE PREMISES,
MYLAPORE, CHENNAI ON 23.03.2019 AT 5.00 P.M**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Dr. Justice Anitha Sumanth,

Dr. K. Srinivasan,
President,
Sanskrita Academy

Dr. Sita Sundar Ram

Dr. T.P. Radhakrishnan,

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to be here at the Madras Sanskrit College for the Navati Samvatsara Mohotsava 90th Anniversary Valedictory Celebrations being organized by the Samskrita Academy.

I am happy to see that the Samskrita Academy has been diligently working for the promotion of Indian Culture by publishing books, conducting lectures and by honouring scholars and savants for their meritorious works.

Pursuit of knowledge has been a matter of faith for Indians for several generations. The Aitareya Upanishad raises the pursuit of knowledge to the level of God when it says- प्रज्ञानम् ब्रह्म. Indian society was always open to the flow of

knowledge from all parts of the world –आनो भद्राः
ऋतवो यन्तु विश्वतः – says the Rigveda. That is why
India is known as Bharath. Bharath means “the
vehicle of knowledge”. There can be no other
better description of the natural desire to pursue
knowledge that has been existent in India, than
this name for India.

Prof. K.V. Sharma’s work of research “Science
texts in Sanskrit in the Manuscript repositories of
Kerala and Tamil Nadu” mentions that there are
about a lakh and half manuscripts of Sanskrit in
public repositories and in private collections in
these two states alone. Of them 12,250
manuscripts are related to science. Of these 3,500
are major treatises on science. Dr. K.V. Sharma

further concluded that scholars and historians of India have all along been accessing only 7% of texts in Sanskrit and that much more needs to be done.

Taking the case of Mathematics as an example, the contribution of Sanskrit has been priceless. The concept of Zero was invented in India. Aryabhata, Varahamihira, Bhaskara, Brahmagupta and others have documented their brilliant exposition of mathematical rules more than a thousand years ago in Sanskrit. It will be enlightening for the people of the current generation to know that Trigonometry and Geometry also derive their origin from Sanskrit.

Another example which comes to my mind is medicine. Sushruta, Jivaka Kumarabhacca, and Charaka were famous medical experts who wrote their treatises in Sanskrit to show 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.

It is not just in the field of mathematics and medicine but also in various other fields that one finds treatises and discoveries that make us marvel at the brilliance of our ancestors and the manner in which they have expressed themselves in Sanskrit.

There are many eminent personalities who are being honoured today, for their contributions to Sanskrit and to societal welfare in general. I convey my hearty congratulations to them.

1. Sri Azhisur Srinivasachar who is engaged in the teaching of Philosophy is a renowned scholar who has spent his entire life in the service of Sanskrit.
2. Sri S Ranganatha Sarma who is one of the senior most Sanskrit scholars of India has written many poems and books thus enriching the language.
3. Dr.V.Shantha has dedicated her life to the treatment of cancer patients. Her service has attracted admiration from all over the globe

and the Padma Vibhushan was conferred on her by the Government of India last year.

4. Sri.T.H. Vinayak Ram who is an expert on the percussion instrument Ghatam has been decorated with the many Awards including the Grammy Award and the Padma Bhushan.
5. Sri.V.P.Dhannjayan who was trained by the legendary Smt. Rukmini Devi has been teaching and propagating the Indian dance forms for several decades, is a recipient of the Padma Bhushan by the Government of India.
6. His wife Smt Shanta Dhnanjayan an expert in Bharatanatyam and Kathakali in her own right has been honoured by the UNESCO and is a

recipient of the Padma Bhushan by the Government of India.

7. Dr.T.Sathyamurthy who served as a curator in many museums of the Archeological Survey of India has engaged himself in the conservation of our ancient monuments particularly in places like Mathura, Ayodhya, Mahabalipuram and Adichanallur.

I am happy that these doyens of Indian culture are being honoured today.

India is a nation of great linguistic diversity and language should be seen as a means of communication. While it is important that proficiency in the mother tongue is fully supported and encouraged, it must be understood that

learning of other languages helps us to acquire additional knowledge and communicate with people from other regions and nations.

This spirit of linguistic brotherhood is alive and widely prevalent in India. Steps taken in the right direction will enable the people of India to embrace each other linguistically so that the benefits of literary and cultural treasures that have been inherited from our ancestors are passed on to succeeding generations.

In this respect the leaning of Sanskrit which has been promoted by this Academy for 90 years will be extremely useful, since the language is the mother from which many languages of Indian have been derived. Sanskrit is a cultural form whose

expanse extends into a variety of sciences extremely useful to mankind. It is also a source of joy and inspiration for it has given us the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Bhagavad Gita, the brilliant works of Kalidas and so many other literary masterpieces.

In this context, I am reminded of the sayings of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Gandhiji said and I quote, “I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any”. Nehru wanted the nation to benefit from the treasures of Sanskrit. He said and I quote, “Apart from it being a treasure of

the past, it is, to an astonishing degree, for so ancient a language, a living tradition. I should like to promote the study of Sanskrit and to put our scholars to work to explore and bring to light the buried literature in this language.”

I congratulate the Samskrita Academy on the achievement of attaining the grand old age of ninety years. May success visit them in all their endeavours to keep the banner of Sanskrit and Indian Culture flying high for all times to come.

Nandri Vanakkam...

Jai Hind....