

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT UNITED IFTAAR PROGRAMME ORGANSIED BY SHIA SUNNI
UNITY MOVEMENT INDIA AT EN SSHA MAHAL ON 28.05.2019 AT 6.00 P.M**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Dr. Nilofer Kafeel,
Minister for Labour

Thiru Mufti Salahudeen Mohammed Ayub Sahib,
Chief Khazi, Government of Tamil Nadu

Thirumathi. Amatul Aatifa,
Member Tamil Nadu Wakf Board

Rev. Fr. Stanley Sebestian,
Vicar General, Archdiocese of Madras Mylapore

**Distinguished Invitees
Ladies & Gentlemen**

I am happy to be here today to extend my greetings at the Iftar function being organised by Shia Sunni Unity Movement India held in the month of Ramadan.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, and is observed worldwide as a month of fasting from dawn until sunset, by Muslims to commemorate the first revelation of the Quran to Prophet Muhammad. This annual observance is regarded as one of the Five Pillars of Islam.

This is a period of spiritual reflection, increased devotion and worship, the intention behind the effort being the focus to redirect the mind and the heart away from worldly activities. Fasting enables the Self to travel within, so as to attain oneness with God. It also brings about self-discipline, self-control, sacrifice and empathy for those who are less fortunate; thus encouraging actions of generosity and charity which is called Zakat.

When fasting from dawn until sunset, the devout refrain from consuming food, drinking liquids, smoking etc. They are also instructed to refrain from behavior that may negate the reward of fasting, such as insulting, cursing, lying, etc. Though the essence of fasting during Ramadan is spiritual, it also offers a number of health benefits, which have been confirmed by doctors and scientists worldwide.

How we see God is a direct reflection of how we see ourselves. If God brings to mind mostly fear and blame, it means there is too much fear and blame welled up

inside us. If we see God as full of love and compassion, so are we full of love and compassion". The verses of the Quran also lay emphasis on the importance of being kind, compassionate, benevolent and highlight the value of the quality of forgiveness.

Islam means submission to the will of God and obedience to His Law. It underlines peace, purity, submission and obedience. It stresses on values such as compassion, benevolence, wisdom and justice.

The Vedantic philosophy of India also visualises the human race as Vasudeiva Kutumbakam, or belonging to a single family of God, a message that finds an echo in the Quranic concept of unity of mankind.

India is a land of unity in diversity. The nation is united by bonds of culture and thought that have been handed down to us over several centuries. Our culture and heritage have created in each one of us the Indianness about which we are proud of.

The need to nurture this nationalistic outlook within us is very important in the globalizing world of today. As nations work together for a better tomorrow, every nation is simultaneously trying to get a better deal for its own citizens so that they receive a larger share of the cake. In the background of this global scenario, this is the time for all Indians to come together to contribute their best for the nation. If a Bakht Khan could fight alongside a Mangal Pandey in the First War of Indian Independence and an Asaf Ali could participate with the same vigour as a Usha Mehta in the Quit India Movement. I am sure that all of us today can follow in their footsteps to make our nation great.

I wish to conclude by saying that "What is needed is a fellow feeling between the followers of different religions. This should spring from a feeling of mutual respect, and not the condescending, patronizing, niggardly expression of goodwill." The Shia – Sunni movement by recognizing this feeling has taken a step in the right direction.

On this joyous occasion, I wish that good health and well-being and prosperity be showered on all those assembled here and their families. May Ramadan bring joy and serenity in all our homes. Ramadan Mubarak.

Nandri Vanakkam...

Jai Tamil Nadu....

Jai Hind....