

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE PONGAL PERUVIZHA 2021 AND DISTRIBUTION OF
MOBILITY AIDS AND APPLIANCES TO THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED AT
DARBAR HALL, RAJ BHAVAN, CHENNAI ON 12.01.2021 AT 4.00 P.M**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Nawab Mohammed Abdul Ali

Prince of Arcot

Dr.Sunder

Managing Director, Founder & Managing Trustee,
Freedom Trust

Thiru. N. Ravi, Chairman,

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chennai Kendra,

Thiru.K.N.Ramaswamy,

Director – Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Dr Sudha Seshayyan,

Vice-Chancellor,

The Tamilnadu Dr.M.G.R. Medical University

Padmashri Thiru. Nalli. Kuppuswamy Chettiyar,

Thiru. Anandrao V. Patil, I.A.S.,

Secretary to Governor

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

Anaivarukkum Eniya Pongal Vazhthukkal

அனைவருக்கும் இனிய பொங்கல் வாழ்த்துக்கள்

It gives me immense pleasure to celebrate the Pongal Festival at Raj Bhavan and distribution of Mobility Aids and

Appliances. As you are aware, Pongal Festival is celebrated as a public event at Raj Bhavan for the fourth time. However, this is a very special one, as I am celebrating this year Pongal festival with you differently abled members and Raj Bhavan staff members.

Pongal festival is indeed very special to us across the country and very significant in Tamil Nadu. The uniqueness of the festival reminds us the importance of natural resources, especially when the entire world is battling environmental change and Pandemic

The festival of Pongal has a scientific, economic & cultural basis. Scientifically speaking, it is on the day of Pongal that the effects of the Sun's rays are felt to be moving closer to India. The Sun brings with it life and prosperity. And the North East monsoon which brings in rain to the State of Tamil Nadu creates the right conditions for agriculture thus making Pongal coincide with the beginning of the harvest season.

Today is indeed a very special day. We have all assembled to celebrate Pongal and also to express our love and affection to the differently abled brothers & sisters and to empower them with Mobility Aids.

Swami Vivekananda said and I quote, "It is a privilege to serve mankind, for this is the worship of God. God is here, in all these human souls. He is the soul of man."

I am happy to see that Freedom Trust is reaching out to the physically challenged persons in rural Tamil Nadu.

Mobility is very important; to make a child go to school, to enable a student travel to college, and to make a worker go to office. Persons with locomotor disability need mobility aids to mainstream themselves in society. Some need wheelchairs, others need calipers, and some need artificial limbs. Those in rural areas cannot afford to come to the city or towns where qualified rehabilitation teams are situated; they neglect their handicap and later develop deformities which are difficult to correct, except by surgical means.

Freedom Trust has been relentlessly working for the cause of such physically challenged persons and has helped them with mobility aids which is a fundamental need.

Every human being is a creation of the Almighty and every one of us are special in one way or the other.

Mr. Noel Helm said and I quote "Being disabled does not mean Un-abled, just Differently Abled"

The best way to help the differently abled is by giving them unconditional love and support through words and action. It is necessary to develop the courage and the confidence in the person to overcome the disability that they face in their life.

Let noble goals be our quest and actions for the upliftment of mankind be our guiding spirit. The blessings of God will definitely be showered on those people who help others to lead better lives.

I would like to mention few stalwarts like Padmashri Gayathri Sankaran, musician, Dr. Aiswarya J. Anuradha, winner

of wheel chair race in Chennai marathon, K. Radhabai, first visually disabled woman to receive a Ph.D degree in South India. They have never let any form of disability come in their way of success and have left an unforgettable mark in their respective fields.

Mariyappan Thangavelu who hails from Tamil Nadu is another notable achiever. He won the gold medal in the Paralympic games held in Rio in 2016. Recognising this glorious achievement Government of India has conferred "Padma Shri" and "Arjuna" award for his contribution towards sports.

I wish to conclude by the quote that impacted me a lot. Neil Marcus said "Disability is not a brave struggle or courage in the face of adversity. Disability is an art. It's an ingenious way to live."

I extend my best wishes and greetings to all of you. May the onset of Pongal bring with it greater happiness, good health and prosperity in all our families.

Happy New Year.

Nandri Vanakkam.

Jai Hind.

Jai Tamil Nadu.