

**Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit participated as Chief Guest at the inauguration of the Seminar on "Revitalizing Indian Philosophy in 21<sup>st</sup> Century" on the occasion of South Zone Philosophy Teachers meet organised by PG & Research Department of Philosophy, Pachaiyappa's College and Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi**

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu participated as Chief Guest at the inauguration of the Seminar on "Revitalizing Indian Philosophy in 21<sup>st</sup> Century" on the occasion of South Zone Philosophy Teachers meet organised by PG & Research Department of Philosophy, Pachaiyappa's College and Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi at Thiruvalluvar Hall, Pachiyappa's College, Chennai today (05.12.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "I am happy to be here to inaugurate the Seminar on "Revitalizing Indian Philosophy in 21<sup>st</sup> Century" on the occasion of the South Zone Philosophy teachers meet being held here at 'Pachaiyappa's College'.

It is great to know that the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR) associated itself with the Department of Philosophy, Pachaiyappa's college for staging the event.

Established through the 'Trust' formed under the direction of High Court of Madras in 1842 by George Norton based on the 'will' left by the great Philanthropist Pachaiyappa Mudaliar, this well known College has grown over almost two centuries (175 years), served in the field of secondary and higher education for even the most disadvantaged section of the society and produced many distinguished personalities in the field of Politics, bureaucracy and police force. It is great to know that C.N.Annadurai, Brahmanada Reddy are few of its illustrious alumni.

The Indian Council of Philosophical Research in accordance with its objective, I have learnt, along with the department of philosophy, is organizing this event in order to 'decolonize' and 'revitalize' Indian philosophy to the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Philosophy is knowledge and its object is the fulfilment of the desire to realise all that life implies. So we seek knowledge of all that exists. This quest for such knowledge is known as philosophical enquiries. The same quest was expressed by the great

scientist **Stephen Hawking** who wrote, "If we could discover a complete theory then we would be able to discuss why we and the universe exist". ("A Brief History of Time", p185). So Philosophy and science seek the perfect knowledge about us and the universe. They are complementary and not contradictory as alleged by some. So long as man struggles to expand his intellectual horizon, Philosophy has a place of great importance among the various disciplines of the human mind.

Since Philosophy is seeking knowledge, generally the West defines it as 'love of wisdom'. But it is not merely seeking of knowledge; it is about life as a whole and how to live it. That is why in Indian tradition, Philosophy is defined as a way of life".

Philosophy in India is more appropriately termed as 'darshana' meaning 'experience'. From this we may say, Philosophy in India is not merely metaphysical speculation but has foundations in experience.

The general concepts Indian philosophy deals with are dharma, karma, birth-death cycle, creator God, Brahman, atman and universe. Any system or darshana of Indian Philosophy has dealt with either one or many of these concepts. In addition to these, every system insists upon the need for the practical discipline, since the aim is not mere intellectual appreciation but an intuitive realisation. This practical teaching is responsible for keeping Religion and Philosophy together in India. The alliance of reason and revelation is responsible for the kinship of religion and philosophy in India. Mere logical enquiry and living a desired and approved moral life are not sufficient to realise the goal of spiritual freedom. But the quest for release does not exclude seeking wealth, kama or righteous life in this very life. A good example is the teachings of Thirukkural where the first three purusharthas are dealt with. In fact all thinkers, from Valluvar to Adam Smith, laid stress on ethics in the conduct of trade and creation of wealth. Thus religion and philosophy go together here.

For India, philosophy is everything. Intrinsically, the identity of Bharat, the earlier name to India, itself is Philosophy, and it shall not be an exaggeration to say that all world philosophy can be traced to the Indic knowledge tradition.

The study of Philosophy as a curriculum is not very well encouraged in Indian universities, believing that it will not fetch job opportunities. This is mainly because philosophy does not lead to any specialized profession (except the teaching of

philosophy), though it could lead, like any other subject, to any general administrative job. At the same time, we find society waking up to a sense of values at the sight of increasing impropriety among individuals. We hear of demands for value-based social activities like politics, economic management, education, medicine, and so on. It is little realized that the special study of values belongs to the realm of philosophy. Now it finds a rightful place in the New Education Policy released by the Union Government. It suggested for introduction of a one year course on ethical and moral reasoning for all the students somewhere in the grades of 6- 8.

Last month on 21<sup>st</sup> (third Thursday of November every year) we celebrated the 'World Philosophy Day', declared by UNESCO that underlines the enduring value of philosophy for the development of human thought. It strives to promote an international culture of philosophical debate that respects human dignity and diversity. The Day encourages academic exchange and highlights the contribution of philosophical knowledge in addressing global issues.

I am told by the organisers that the purpose of this seminar, wherein many of the Philosophy teachers from four southern states have assembled, is to revive the study of our literature in its context.

"There is a clear distinction between what Darshana in Bharat is and what Philosophy in Europe is. Obviously, the Europeans are unaware of this, but as a matter of fact, we ourselves are not very clear about this as well. As a result, we teach our students confused philosophies; again, we must accept another fact that we are yet to popularise a typical Bharatiya perspective towards world philosophies. Creating a Bharatiya perspective shall be the very first step towards decolonising Philosophy in Bharatiya academia. Of course, we really have to work much towards these," says a note from the organisers of this seminar.

Since, at present, everything is anthropocentric, we have to look afresh at our philosophical and religious literature in order to find out solutions to the woes of ordinary man.

India, having rich tradition and cultural background should take the mantle of guiding (viswa guru) the world in 21<sup>st</sup> century. In order to take this position the teachers should bring out the resources available in our literature and highlight them to the world.

I hope the young teachers who are here will take up issues such as social justice, gender justice, equality, freedom, consumerism, environment etc., and address them with inputs from our literature and culture.

May these greatest traditions of scholarship and wisdom guide you all in your vibrant exchanges. My best wishes to all of you for the success of this meet

I extend my best wishes and greetings to the management of the Pachaiyappa's College, Chennai and the Chairman and the members of Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi and applaud their selfless contributions. May they be greeted with success in all their endeavours.

On this occasion, Dr. P. Arulmozhi chelvan, Principal i/c, Pachaiyappa's college, Prof. R.C. Sinha, Chairman, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, Dr. V. Seenivasan, Head of Department of Philosophy, Pachaiyappa's college, Dr.K.Sambathkumar, Member, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, Prof.P.Kanagasabapathi, Swami Srihari Prasad, Vishnu Mohan Foundation and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai -22

Date : 05.12.2019

Sd/-

Addl. Director (PR)