

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit participated as Chief Guest at the inauguration of 47th ISAAME FORUM 2019 organised by the International Association of Lions Clubs

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu participated as Chief Guest at the inauguration of 47th ISAAME FORUM 2019 organised by the International Association of Lions Clubs at Hotel ITC Chola, Guindy, Chennai today (14.12.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "I am happy to be here at the function organised by the International Association of Lions Clubs on the occasion of the inauguration of 47th ISAAME FORUM 2019, which stands for India, South Asia, Africa and Middle East comprising around 65 countries.

All religions preach Ahimsa, Love and Compassion. Religions may be different but the message is one. The religion of humanity is the message of all religions. The saying that all human beings belong to one family underlines this concept.

चिडिया चोंच भर ले गई,
नदी को घट्यो ना नीर,
दान दिये धन ना घटे,
कह गये दास कबीर ||

Saint Kabir in his beautiful poetic expression says that a river or stream, does not dry up if a sparrow lifts a drop of the water with its beak. Similarly the wealth of a person does not get drained out or exhausted by charity to fellow human beings.

Prophet Muhammed said,

"Charity is a duty unto every Muslim; He who hath the means there to, let him do a good act and abstain from an evil one. That is his charity."

Christianity says "Know thou, that in the service of thy fellowmen, do thou serveth me."

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."

It is always a pleasure to participate in any function of NGOs like The International Association of Lions Clubs for the reason that this movement is meant to help others in the Community.

I have been informed that 1600 Delegates have registered for this Forum of which 800 are Foreign delegates. Superb! I welcome all of them here in Chennai and wish them a good stay. This is beautiful time to visit Tamil Nadu and particularly Chennai. Please enjoy the Music Festival here.

Exchange of information and sharing of best practices among yourselves will certainly help you to understand and ease out the complexity of Life.

I am sure, this Forum is working in that direction.

Therefore, I congratulate all the Delegates as well as the Organizing Committee Chairman, Past International Director Lion G. Ramaswamy.

Only recently, Africa has been named a separate Constitutional Area and thereby it has now become **ISAAME** with 14 countries – India, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and other 8 countries from Middle East.

Lions Clubs International today is spread in 210 countries with a Membership strength of 14.5 Lakhs. Of this, this Constitutional Area ISAAME has a Membership strength of around 3.6 Lakhs - almost 1/4th of the total membership strength of the whole world.

Further, the Organizing Committee has informed that India has a membership strength of more than 2.85 Lakhs with 11 Multiple Districts comprising 75 Sub-Districts led by popular District Governors in their respective areas.

Here again, I am given to understand that Tamil Nadu has a Membership strength of around 69,000 which is roughly 25% of Indian Lions population.

I should congratulate and compliment all those who are responsible for such a tremendous growth of Lions movement in this part of the Country. Such growth indicates that there are more philanthropists who are willing to come forward to adopt service as their way of Life.

I have also been given to understand that with 102 years of serving the Humanity, your association is taking it to the next level of serving the Society through different methods. It is unbelievable to note that in these 95 years of your service, you have restored vision for 30 million people by means of cataract surgeries.

By your partnership with major Health Conglomerates, you have imparted Training to thousands of people – medical, paramedical as well as other Technicians.

Your partnership with UNICEF and WHO has helped the Africans in eradicating “**RIVER BLINDESS**”, the way we have eradicated Polio. It is heartening to note that all over the World, about 600 Lions Clubs and Districts are running 600 Eye Hospitals directly – of them, 150 are functioning in India.

Your eye hospitals in Bangalore West and Siliguri carried out more than 10,000 Cataract surgeries free of charge to the less fortunate people. They have proved what service-minded people can offer to this world! This is really a yeomen service. Keep it up. I want all others to follow you, particularly the youth of India.

I also learn that there are more than 40 Lion Blood Banks functioning in India collecting and distributing more than 50,000 units of Blood every month mostly through Government Hospitals.

In Chennai City, I learn that Lions Clubs are running Diagnostics Centre, Dialysis Centres, a few Cancer Hospitals offering their services like MRI, CT scans and all the Medical Investigations to the needy at the lowest possible rates.

When Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, announced “**Swachh Bharat Initiative**”, Lions Clubs International was one of the few NGOs who came first voluntarily to associate themselves with the Prime Minister's Initiative.

Whenever Natural Disasters strike any part of the world, Lions Club reach out to the affected people bringing succour and relief to them. I came to know that when Gujarat was hit by earthquake 19 years ago, when Tsunami struck South India, Lions Clubs came forward to construct houses for those who were rendered homeless. Whether it is a cyclone or flood, Lion members always come as volunteers bringing relief and solace to the affected people.

It is the voluntary agencies that should come forward to strengthen the hands of the Government to make this world a better place to live in.

I am happy to learn that Lions Club has dedicated itself in line with its thrust areas which include Fight against Hunger, Diabetes, Childhood Cancer, Environment and Vision.

It is the spirit of compassion and love to extend all possible help to the poor and needy and those in distress that has made likeminded people join hands for a noble

cause giving birth to many voluntary and social service organisations like the Lions, Rotary, Charitable Trusts, etc.

I congratulate the Members of the International Association of Lions Clubs for its commitment and dedication in service to society. I appeal to the youth of India and also world to inculcate the passion for selfless service, dedicate themselves to social good and do more and more social service for the needy.

I convey my warm felicitations to the office bearers and members of the International Association of Lions Clubs of and to all the generous donors who have been engaged in promoting the cause of the organization in a selfless and dedicated manner.

May I add a personal note here! Years ago, I was a Lion myself, and still carry fine memories of those days of social service. That I was of much use to the needy through Lionism was a matter of such a great satisfaction -- which I find difficult to express in words.

And that is the reason I can understand every nuance of the satisfaction all of you derive from your work in such a great organisation. May God bless you all.

I conclude with the words of Thiruvalluvar. The Saint Poet said in one of his couplets and I quote,

“Smile, Charity, pleasant words and civility-These four are marks of true nobility.”

I wish you all success in your service to the society.

My greetings to you all.”

On this occasion, Lion Dr. Jung-Yul Chol, International President, Lion Qazi Akramuddin Ahmed, International Director & Chairman – Planning Committee, Lion G. Ramaswamy, Past International Director & Chairman – Organising Committee, Lion Gudrun Bjort Yngvadottir, LCIF, Chairperson and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai – 22

Sd/-

Date : 24.12.2019

Addl. Director (PR)