

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR
OF TAMIL NADU AT RELEASE OF BHAVAN'S JOURNAL
"SHRADHANJALI", CHENNAI ON 01/04/2018 AT 10:30 AM**

Anaivarukkum Vanakkam

Thiru N. Ravi,

Thiru S. Gurumurthy

Thiru Aravind Sitaraman,

Thiru K.N. Ramaswamy

Distinguished Invitees

Friends from Media,

Ladies & Gentlemen

Today we have all come together to pay homage to someone who dedicated His entire life to the service of humanity, dharma, and goodness, transcending divisions such as religion, race, money, caste etc. Indeed His Holiness Pujyasri Jayendra Saraswati Sankarachariya Swamigal will always be remembered as the great soul who brought relief, happiness, and most importantly spirituality to crores of lives.

His Holiness was the 69th pontiff in the long line of Acharyas of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam started by Sri Adi Sankara Himself.

Displaying a keen intellect, great devotion, a fearless approach to issues, and a bold outlook he became the Saint-warrior who used his legs as his Rath to travel 15-20 kilometres every day through scorching sun, rain, and freezing cold, thrice along the length and breadth of Bharatha Varsha performing the Chandra Mouleeshwarar Puja, without fail, all along the way. His retinue included elephants, camels and cattle. His Journeys took him to some of the poorest villages and richest towns. Political leaders, monarchs, spiritual heads, bureaucrats, judges, professionals and common people were drawn to him. He

treated everyone with equal kindness relieving their troubles with Prasadam and counsel.

During the course of his travels, he saw the difficulties faced by the common people and devised several programs to alleviate their suffering. He started Mission Hospitals where patients, regardless of their social background, would have access to free or affordable healthcare. He brought to life some of the world's best eye-care facilities through hospitals in Chennai, Assam and Odisha in Sri Adi Shankara's name. He built Vrdhasramams for the elderly, Annadhana Kudams for the Hungry and Yatri Nivas Homes for the poor traveler. Seeing that children were moving away from traditional values, he started the Sankara Schools providing affordable education steeped in moral values to children. Noticing that ancient temples were not getting the attention they needed, he performed numerous Kumbabhisekams infusing new life in neglected rural areas. He supported and built many Gho Salas to household and abandoned cattle. Knowing that the Vedas are the fundamental gospels of India, he nurtured them through various initiatives. He organized the performance of Homas and Yagams for the welfare of humanity. He set up and rejuvenated Gurukulams that taught the Vedas. He also established several schools where children learnt the Vedas in addition to contemporary subjects.

He also took several initiatives to develop and encourage the local language in the places he visited. Pattasalas offering free education, food, clothing and shelter in Nepal and many North-Indian cities, Tamizh Pattasalas in Tamil Nadu are some examples of this.

To preserve and propagate Indian classical music, he organised the purchase and renovation of the houses of the Thanjavur Trinity so that they are preserved for posterity. He also organized several festivals that brought the common man closer to Carnatic music. He inspired famous musicians like M.S. Vishwanathan and T.M. Soundarajan, to compose and sing Bhakthi songs so as to attract people to classical music. Seeing the decline of the use of

Nadhaswaram in religious and secular functions, he started Nadhaswaram schools in Andhra Pradesh so there always is a steady flow of skilled artists playing this Mangala Vadyam.

So great was his concern about disenfranchised and disempowered communities that he frequented their colonies during his tours. In addition he often used to visit urban slums to provide succor to these populations. Apart from food and clothes that he usually gifted them, he also donated sewing machines and other items commonly used by women in the household.

He knew the importance of Kanchipuram as a tourist destination and therefore counseled political leaders and senior bureaucrats at the state and central level to build a New Railway station in Kanchipuram, complete with broad gauge lines and electrification. This helped pilgrims wanting to visit Kanchipuram and also brought large scale economic advancement to this region.

Thus the life of His Holiness was selfless and epitomised the highest levels of service to the public.

I am here in various capacities: As a representative of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan it is my duty to be here when the Bhavan is performing Shreddhanjali for the great soul. I am also here by virtue of being the person who had the fortune to call on His Holiness on the day before his Samadhi. His affection and love towards me on that day will always remain evergreen in my mind. I am also here as a Governor of the State where His Holiness lived and directed the course of spirituality in India and the world. I should also recount here some of the sayings of His Holiness with regard to Shree Ram and Hanumanji to both of whom I offer my prayers everyday.

About Shree Ram His Holiness spoken thus "There are four things which characterize Sri Ram's qualities. He was a poorvabhashi, mridubhashi, smitabhashi and satyabhashi. He used to think well before doing any action. He used to speak softly and never in a harsh manner. He always used to speak with a smile on his face. He always used to speak only truth all the time. I wish that

we all learn lessons from this and endeavour to follow in the footsteps of His Holiness.

On Hanumanji his sayings ran thus “The ideal role model which I would like to mention in regard to service is Hanuman. Rama’s brother Bharata served Rama by enthroning his padukas on the throne. The monkey king Sugriva served Rama by helping him to trace the whereabouts of Sita. But the service rendered by Hanuman was something selfless. While the service rendered by others may have been motivated by some selfish desire, in the case of Hanuman it was utterly selfless service. He was practicing what the Bagavad Gita says,

“Karmanyeva adhikaaraste maa phaleshu kadaachana” Service for its own sake without any expectation of the fruits thereof is the essence of the Gita. Thus, Hanuman’s service stands out as the shining example of an ideal one.

Of course, everybody cannot become a sanyasi and be detached from all desires or the fruits of an action. But what is required is dedication while doing an action. When we do service in an office, we should do it with a spirit of dedication. We should have the feeling that we are serving the nation by doing that action. It is unfortunate that this spirit of dedication is on the decline. This has led to corruption etc., in administration and management and all walks of life. If the question was asked how corruption should be weeded out, His Holiness used to say that if work is done with dedication and in a spirit of service to the people, then corruption will automatically disappear.

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan which serves as the custodian of Indian culture and traditions has done itself proud by publishing a ‘Shradhanjali’ issue of His Holiness. I commend them for this effort the publication contains many articles which throw light on the life and contributions of His Holiness. The contributions made by leading thinkers and philosophers in this publication, I am sure, will enlighten and inspire lacs of people in India and around the world, to follow the path of Dharma as explained by His Holiness.

I am thankful to the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan for having given me this opportunity to perform Shreddhanjali in memory of His Holiness Pujyasri Jayendra Saraswathi Sankaracharya Swamigal.

Someone like Puddu Periyava, as He is affectionately called by devotees is very rarely seen in this mortal world. His immortal work reminds us of how fortunate we are to have been with Him, and received his blessings. As a homage to His enormous sacrifice, let us all take a pledge to carry forward his visionary projects, which were aimed at uplifting India, Indian culture, the Indian people and Sanathana Dharma.

Thank you

Jai Hind