

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE INAUGURATION OF NEW CAMPUS OF AKSHAR – ARBOL
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AT INJAMBAKKAM, ECR, CHENNAI
ON 05.09.2018 AT 5.00 P.M.**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Dr. R. Nataraj, I.P.S., (Retd.),
Member of Legislative Assembly,
Chairman of Advisory Board

Thiru. S.Ramadorai,
Chairperson, Governing Board,
Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Thiru. Subramanian,
Chairman of the Governing Body

Thiru. Gokul S Dixit
Executive Director of Governing Body

Thirumathi. Padmini Sankaran,
Head of School

Distinguished Invitees

Teachers and Students

Ladies & Gentlemen

I am happy today to be here today, for the inauguration of Akshar-Arbol International School's new campus at Injambakkam.

The emergence of new-age schools like Akshar Arbol who are taking on the challenges of providing a holistic education at a

time when school success is characterized by the scoring of marks rather than by the extent of relevant learning is a development which deserves our encouragement.

The twenty first century is characterized by the emergence of multiculturalism due to industrialization, urbanization and globalisation. Since education is an instrument for 'societal change' it should develop the right cognitive capabilities, tolerance to withstand multicultural impulses and an understanding of diversity so as to prepare the youth to face the complex realities of globalisation.

Education and more particularly school education is to provide the right training for all this to happen.

Swami Vivekananda defined education to be the manifestation of the perfection already in man. He elaborated on how all the wealth of the world cannot help one little Indian village if the people are not taught to help themselves. He therefore exhorted that our work should be mainly educational both morally and intellectually.

The famous Tamil Poet Thiruvalluvar also says this about education –

Learn thoroughly and flawlessly, without any doubt, that which is worthy of learning, and abide by what you have learnt.

Our sweetest moments in life normally are linked to the times we spent in school. Those are the days when children pursue learning without rivalry, develop friendships without selfishness and imbibe the teachings of the Guru treating him as their role model. These are also the most formative years in anybody's life.

Therefore anyone who establishes a school should remember that he has been given the responsibility to mould the future of all the students in the school.

In fact the demand on schools such as this one has increased manifold in the last few decades since the world has become highly competitive.

An international school can succeed only if it satisfies the aspirations of the parents who are dreaming that their children will ascend to positions of international eminence in science, engineering, economics, medicine, etc. Another aspiration of these parents will be, that their children should be rooted in the Indian values so that their cultural foundations are intact.

Schools such as this will have to do a lot of detailed planning for achieving the twin objects of academic excellence and cultural training. Not only do the teachers have to be well trained they also have to represent a wide range of expertise. They should also be attuned to the requirements of teaching at an international

school where the students come from a variety of diverse backgrounds.

In the words of Nelson Mandela, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nowhere can better evidence be seen than in Tamil Nadu. The growth of education in the state has been stupendous resulting in greater prosperity. The importance attached to education has also been relentlessly pursued over the last 6 decades resulting in better enrolment, higher nutritional standards and a greater motivation to pursue higher education. The gross enrolment ratio for higher education is 46% in Tamil Nadu compared to the National average of 26%. The large number of engineering colleges in the State has not only spurred on domestic growth of industry. But it has also resulted in the people of the State settling down in large number in other countries from where their earnings come back to their families in the form of precious foreign exchange.

Before I conclude I wish to emphasise two very important points which schools such as this one should actively promote. The first one is the spirit of inquiry. It is this which enables a student to be creative and constructive. When ideas are stifled and mere learning by rote is encouraged the student becomes a

machine, bereft of ideas. Ideas have great value and one brilliant idea can change the manner in which mankind is led. Was it not the concept of Satyagraha that led India and many other Nations of the World to freedom. Was it not the scientific discovery about the atom which led to the end of the Second World War.

Was it not the idea INTERNET that has revolutionized information sharing, entertainment and communication across the globe.

The second point I wish to emphasise is character building.

Any education would be incomplete if the right values are not imparted to students at the school level. We must foster positive, compassionate and disciplined behavior. There should be focus on gender equality conflict resolution, nation building and selfless service.

Gandhiji used to say, “The true text book for the pupil is the teacher”.

The compassion, understanding and true motivation of a teacher determines the future of every child in the class. Every gesture, every action, every thought of the teacher silently hones the personality of the child!

Gandhiji also put forward his view of both the student and the teacher learning from the process of teaching, in a talk he gave to Khadi Vidyalaya Students in Sevagram in February 1942,

and I quote, “A teacher who establishes rapport with the taught, becomes one with them, learns more from them than he teaches them. Whenever I talk with some one, I learn from him. I take from him more than I give him. In this way, a true teacher regards himself as a student of his students. If you teach your pupils with this attitude, you will benefit much from them”. Unquote.

This concept of learning is what we should all be focused on. There can be no better day than today which happens to be Teacher’s Day, to resolve to adopt all of the above salient points in the task of imparting education. As you are all aware Teacher’s Day is celebrated on the birthday of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who started life as a teacher and rose to become a philosopher, Vice Chancellor, Ambassador, Vice President and President of India.

Dr. Radhakrishnan’s views on education are encapsulated in this quotation “One can shape National Solidarity by using neither bricks and lime nor hammer and chisel. It should bloom in the heart of every human. For the flower to emit fragrance we need to water the plant in the form of education.

I say all this to emphasise the importance of drawing inspiration from illustrious personalities for imparting the right kind of training in schools. I am happy to see that nowadays Schools are also the centres for inculcation of skills that enable students to

get employed after completing their education. Communication skills, vocational skills and creative skills are also being honed along with the learning of subjects such as history, geography, mathematics, etc.

An institution is known by the students that it produces and the students are known by the values that they display and the values are borne out of the character building that is undertaken by the teachers and the teachers are guided by the policy set out by the school management. From this it should be quite clear to the school management that the sequence of activities is in their hands and I am sure that they will provide the right guidance and leadership.

The school has been started with a lot of promise and hope. I extend my best wishes to the teachers, parents and students on this happy occasion and wish the school management all success in their endeavours.

Nandri Vanakkam....

Jai Hind....