

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE AWARD CEREMONY OF VELAMMAL INNOVATION SUMMIT
AWARDS ORGANISED BY VELAMMAL MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL &
RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT IDA SCUDDER AUDITORIUM, MADURAI
ON 10.11.2018 AT 5.30 PM**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Thiru. M.V. Muthuramalingam,
Chairman,
Velammal Educational Trust

Dr. C. Palanivelu,
Chairman,
GEM Hospital & Research Centre, Coimbatore

Dr. S. Geethalakshmi,
Vice-Chancellor,
The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University

Dr. R. M. Raja Muthiah,
Dean,
Velammal Medical College Hospital & Research Institute

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

I am happy to be here today for the awards presentation ceremony organised to honour innovations in the health care sector. The fact that such a function is being organised for the first time by this hospital in Madurai gives the awards an added aura of importance.

Madurai the seat of Tamil erudition and learning dating back to the Sangam era is a teeming metropolis today with a population of 16 lakhs and a plethora of temples of which the most famous is the Madurai Meenakshi amman temple located at a distance of about 5 kms from this hospital.

The Velammal Medical College and Hospital, which was started in 2012 is playing a significant role in the delivery of health care services for the people of this region.

The nobility in the activities of healing and teaching needs no emphasis. From times, immemorial, philosophers and thinkers have laid stress on the importance of concern and Compassion for societal welfare if a civilization is to flourish. Our Indian civilization which has flourished over more than 5000 years can justifiably lay claim to have held aloft the noble values of kindness and compassion. In that respect the services rendered by this college and hospital reflect this special characteristic of Indian civilization.

Tamil Nadu has always been an important centre for medical diagnosis and treatment. It was the first State to enact the Public Health Act. The Government General Hospital and the Government Eye Hospital are among the oldest in ASIA. The State enjoys an impressive record in the reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality rates.

The State ranks first in the country in terms of number of children immunized and takes pride in the thousands of eminent medical practitioners specializing in various fields of medicine. Hence, it is no wonder that Tamil Nadu serves as a hub for medical services in the eastern part of the globe. It has been estimated by the Confederation of Indian Industry that every year about 15 lakh patients come into Tamil Nadu for medical diagnosis and treatment alone. Private sector involvement in the establishment of hospitals for medical treatment has also been existent in Tamil Nadu for several decades.

The 71st National Sample Survey (NSS) of 2014 has revealed that out of the total hospitalisation cases in rural areas, 42% were in public hospitals and 58% in private facilities. The corresponding shares in urban areas were 32% in public and 68% in private. For some decades now, the trend has been to move towards private care facilities. With the expected growth of health insurance as provided for under the National Health Protection Scheme, private institutions providing quality healthcare at affordable rates will definitely be sought after.

The Union Government has come up with a new scheme to ensure the better delivery of health care services. This is unique since access to health care varies across countries. Even among the OECD Countries, universal health coverage is not available in US and Mexico. With a view towards ensuring the availability of Universal health

care, the Government of India has recently launched the Ayushman Bharat - National Health Protection Mission. The scheme has the benefit of health cover for Rs. 5 lakh per family per year. The target beneficiaries of the scheme will be the poor and vulnerable groups and nearly 50 crore people will get the benefit of health insurance. This is expected to make a big impact on raising the quality of life, since it will lead to increased access to health care and medication. In addition, the unmet needs of the population which remained hidden due to lack of financial resources will be catered to. It will lead to timely treatments, improvements in health outcomes, patient satisfaction, improvement in productivity and efficiency, job creation thus leading to improvement in quality of life.

The delivery of modern healthcare depends on groups of trained professionals and para professionals coming together to form inter-disciplinary teams. This includes professionals in medicine, psychology, nursing, physiotherapy working along with many others such as community health workers, so as to be able to provide the best preventive, curative and rehabilitative care services to the people.

The strength of an institution is characterized by the close mentoring done by a dedicated faculty, a high standard of clinical care, and the fostering of an environment based on compassion, care and holistic health.

I am happy to see that this hospital has taken the initiative to encourage innovations in health care delivery. A variety of papers have been submitted covering a wide range of medical methodologies from anti diabetic potential of herbal formulations to anti microbial susceptibility of certain bacterial.

I am informed that the range covers eye care, cardiology, platelet transfusion, brain trauma, stress disorder orthopaedic oncology surgery and DJ stent removal by suture loop method. I am informed the evaluation of these innovations has been done by a group of acclaimed experts and that the award winners have been justly finalized. My congratulations to all the award winners and a special word of praise for all those who have participated in this noble effort of innovating for the benefit of mankind.

Today, with changes in lifestyle, we have an inversion of disease patterns: a significant burden of non-communicable diseases, and a lower but still formidable level of infectious diseases. Our interventions must therefore cover tuberculosis and malaria on the one side, as well as diabetes, chronic kidney disease, hypertension and

rheumatic heart diseases on the other. If malnutrition is a major problem, so is pollution. Reports indicate that 55 percent of Indian women between ages 15 and 49 have anemia or low blood count. There are many, many such health issues that need attention.

Let me summarise by saying that the mission before us is to make health care comprehensive, universal, affordable and qualitatively professional. For achieving this objective, the road ahead is going to be complex and arduous.

It is important for us to work together in a constructive manner to fight the common enemy i.e. disease. Distinctions based on public vs private sector, allopathy vs traditional systems and urban areas vs rural areas, should not be given any importance. We should all join hand in hand and march together so that we achieve success.

I appreciate the efforts of the hospital management who have shown enterprise in pioneering this effort of encouraging innovations in the health care sector. I wish to conclude by wishing them well. May success greet them at every step, in their journey whose quest is to bring quality medical care within the reach of the local community.

Nandri Vanakkam

Jai Hind