

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR
OF TAMIL NADU AT THE DEFENCE EXPO AT THIRUVIDANTHAI
ON 14.04.2018 AT 9:00 AM**

Anaivarukkum Kaalai Vanakkam

Dr. Ajay Kumar,
Secretary, Defence production

Thiru. Subhash Chandra
Additional Secretary, Defence production

Thiru. T. Suvarna Raju
Managing Director of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited

Thiru. P.Ponniah
District Collector, Kanchipuram

Distinguished Invitees
Ladies & Gentlemen

It is a privilege and honour to be here to preside over this valedictory function at the Defence Expo being held at Thiruvudanthai near Chennai. The day of the function coinciding with Tamil New Year's Day gives it a special flavor. The celebrations to mark the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar give a special lustre to this event being organized by the Ministry of Defence.

I was here a couple of days back when the Honorable Prime Minister of India inaugurated the Defence Expo. On that day he elucidated the defence policy of India and as to how the country's defence preparedness has been an important focal point of his Government. Consequently India's capabilities in defence production are being respected internationally and enjoy World Wide acceptance. The remarkable strides in missile technology made by the Defence Research and Development Organisation in conjunction with the Army, Navy and Air Force are the envy of the world. During the demonstrations on display here,

yesterday and the day before, the feats performed by our pilots, artillery experts and naval officers are sure to have left people staring in amazement and surprise and applauding with admiration and pride. The level of skills on display was of a very high order and made all of us proud about being Indians. The pavilions erected by the Ministry of Defence with the support and partnership of public sector and private sector giants such as Bharat Electronics, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, Larsen & Toubro, The Tata's Bharat Forge Solar etc. displayed a range of military equipment that many nations of the World will be aspiring to purchase. Showcasing these unique hardware through field demonstrations performed with super natural military skills was a record breaking achievement that has been achieved for the first time in Indian History.

The speciality of the event has been accentuated by the timing of the Expo coinciding with the auspicious occurrence of Tamil New Year's day. Tamil New Year's day is celebrated on the first day of the month of Chithirai to mark the entry of the Sun God into the first house of the Zodiac. The celebration is widespread, all across the State of Tamil Nadu and people welcome the New Year by wearing new clothes, by going to temples, and by making offerings of fruits, flowers and sweets.

The Tolkaapiyam the oldest surviving Tamil grammar divides the year into six seasons where Chithirai marks the start of the Ilavenil season or summer. The 8th century Silappadikaaram mentions the 12 Raasis or Zodiac signs starting with the month of Chithirai. Such is the antiquity and classical nature of Tamil tradition and culture.

Similarly the New Year is celebrated as Vishu in Kerala on the same day. The harvest festival of Baisakhi of the Punjabis also falls on the same day. Can one expect a more auspicious moment than this for organizing the Defence Expo?

This day of April 14th is also special for independent India, in that it marks the birth anniversary of India's first Law Minister Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. As

you all know, he was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution of India. Rising from humble beginnings Dr. Ambedkar proved his brilliance in academics by earning doctorates in Economics from Colombia University, USA and London School of Economics in UK. Few would know that Dr. Ambedkar was the first from his community to enter Elephantine's college, a prestigious institution in Bombay and after completing his graduation there, he did his Post Graduation in Economics from Colombia University, USA. It was only later that he did his postgraduation at the London School of Economics where he worked on his doctoral thesis. On his return to India, there was an occurrence which links Dr. Ambedkar with defence matters. Having been supported by the Raja of Baroda for his studies abroad, Dr. Ambedkar was obliged to take up a job under that princely State. He was made the Military Secretary to the Raja. Soon his political inclinations and campaign for Dalith rights steered him towards the legal profession and he started practicing Law in the Bombay High Court. Events followed one after another in close succession and from 1927 he launched an active movement against untouchability. There were many significant events in Dr. Ambedkar's life between this and 1946 such as the Pune pact, the establishment of a scheduled castes federation, participation in the electoral process, etc. In 1946 he was elected to the Constituent Assembly from Bengal and became the Chairman of the Drafting Committee. I mention all this to show as to how a person with humble beginnings rose to become one of the most revered leaders in India by dint of his hard work, passion and commitment to the cause that was dear to his heart and untiring dedication.

These are all qualities that are needed for perfection to be attained in any field.

I congratulate the Department of Defence Production for having organized the Defence Expo in such a grand manner and I am particularly thankful that Tamil Nadu was chosen as the venue for the event. We have had participants from more than 60 countries of the world at this Expo along with leading public

sector and private sector corporations from India. I am sure that a wealth of knowledge and expertise would have been exchanged at the event among the leaders in the field of Defence production. This is going to see the beginning of a massive upsurge in Indian Defence production capabilities both in terms of quantity and quality so as to capture a larger share of the international market. I conclude my address by wishing success to all the participants who endeavored for this Expo and request that they should all work together to make India a leading manufacturer of defence equipment in the world.

Nandri, Vanakkam

Jai Hind