

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT 'EID MILAN PARTY', CHENNAI ON 18.06.2018**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

**Nawab, Mohammed Abdul Ali,
Prince of Arcot**

Justice Thiru. F.M.Ibrahim Kalifullah

Dr. G.S.M.P. Khadri

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

I am happy to be here at the Eid celebrations being organized by Nationalist Muslims in Chennai. Eid is a day of rejoicing and festivity, brotherhood and tolerance, charity and compassion. It gives me great joy to be a part of the joyous celebrations on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

India a land of unity in diversity is home to people of all faiths. All through history our nation has witnessed the movement and migration of massive populations into its soil in search of food, shelter and refuge. Bharat, that is India, has given solace to all those who came to her, just like a Mother who feeds the children that run to her seeking comfort in her company. The country has managed to absorb the cultures of all those who came to her and those who were already a part of her and enmeshed them into a culture based on tolerance, brotherhood and patience.

When I see the nationalists in this function I am reminded of the legends of Indian history who stood shoulder to shoulder with fellow Indians wearing the badge of freedom fighters without allowing any barriers of caste, creed, language or religion to divide them. They fought against British rule under the common banner that united them all and that banner was Indian nationalism.

I recognize that this is a moment of privilege for me to be able to talk about Mother India to an audience that takes pride in being her sons and daughters.

The freedom movement teaches us the examples of nationalist men and women who fought against the scourge of British rule. Begum Hazrat Mahal of Lucknow fought against the East India Company and recaptured Lucknow from them after a valiant struggle. For this she joined hands with Nana Fadnavis and participated in the First War of Indian Independence and this strengthened her hands in being able to keep the British at bay.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan also known as Badshah Khan was a nationalist Muslim who was a close friend of Gandhiji. He founded the Khudai Khidmatgar movement during the freedom struggle and was vociferous in his opposition to the partitioning of India. He was decorated with a Bharat Ratna by the Indian Government in recognition of his services to the nation. Let me also recount to you the contribution of A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, a son of the soil who was also decorated with the Bharat Ratna. A scientist, a patriot and a Statesman Dr. Kalam's outstanding contribution lay in his pivotal role in India's Pokhran II nuclear tests and in the development of missiles to carry nuclear warheads. Widely known as the peoples President Dr. Kalam ascended to the high office of being the President of India in 2002 where he served for a full term of five years. His integrity and simple lifestyle, his patriotism and selfless service to the nation endeared him to the people of India.

I have mentioned about the lives of three nationalist Muslims who achieved greatness in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries by virtue of their services to the nation. Their lives serve as an inspiration for many more millions of people to follow in their footsteps.

Islam means submission to the will of God and obedience to His Law. It underlines peace, purity, submission and obedience.

The verses of the Quran lay emphasis on the importance of being kind, compassionate, benevolent and highlight the value of the quality of forgiveness. Eid-ul-Fitr marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan and the beginning of the month of Shawwal in the Islamic calendar.

How we see God is a direct reflection of how we see ourselves. If God brings to mind mostly fear and blame, it means there is too much fear and blame welled up inside us. If we see God as full of love and compassion, so are we full of love and compassion.

What is needed is a fellow feeling between the different types of religion. This should be a fellow feeling which springs from mutual esteem and mutual respect. Mutual hatred and violence between conflicting groups of persons from different religions is the most futile thing in the world.

The Quran clearly states that there shall be no compulsion in religion and that people of all faiths shall achieve salvation provided they follow God's guidance and perform constructive deeds.

The Vedantic philosophy of India also visualises the human race as Vasudeiva Kutumbakam, or belonging to a single family of God, a message that finds echo in the Quranic concept.

India is united by bonds of culture and thought that are thousands of years old. Just as all the rivers flow into the ocean, the prayers of all religions reach God. Religion should not be used to build walls between people.

Religions provide as with festivals of merriment and joy. Whether it be Eid or Divali or Christmas the festival is characterized by sweets, new clothes, prayers, celebrations and brother hood (bhai-chaara). India is probably the only country in the world which declares a public holiday for festivals of Hindus, Muslims, Christens, Sikhs and Jains etc. without discrimination. Probably in no other country do people of religions other than that of the majority receive with freedom and protection to practice their faith as in India I am sure that all of you agree that for this, we need to salute our constitution and our constitution makers for their foresight and nationalistic vision.

The need for a nationalistic outlook is very important in the globalizing world of today. As nations work together for a better tomorrow, every nation is simultaneously trying to get a better deal for its own citizens so that they receive a larger share of the cake. In the background of this global scenario, this is the time for all Indians to come together to contribute their best for the

nation. If a Bakht Khan could fight alongside a Mangal Pandey in the First War of Indian Independence and an Asaf Ali could participate with the same vigour in the Quit India Movement as a Usha Mehta. I am sure that all of us today can follow in their footsteps to make our nation great.

For the joyous occasion of Eid I had conveyed my message to my Muslim brethren and I wish to convey the same today. Let us promote communal harmony in society by adopting the path of prayer, kindness and generosity. The future is bound to be bright and marked by peace, progress and prosperity. My heartiest greetings and best wishes to all Muslim brothers and sisters of Tamil Nadu including those assembled in the audience today, on the occasion of the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr. May we all work together to make our nation great.

Nandri Vanakkam. Jai Hind....