

RAJ BHAVAN , TAMIL NADU – PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

Thiru. R.N. Ravi, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, felicitated Thiru. Seeni Viswanathan, on being conferred Padma Shri award for his contribution on compiling of Mahakavi Subramania Bharathiar's literary works in chronological order at the felicitation ceremony of Padma Shri Recipient Thiru. Seeni Viswanathan at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mylapore, Chennai today (18.02.2025).

Governor Ravi felicitated Thiru. Seeni Viswanathan, who has been nominated for the Padma Awards 2025. His 23-volume research on Bharathiar has been instrumental in preserving Mahakavi's works. On behalf of Tamil Nadu, he thanked Hon'ble Prime Minister, Thiru. Narendra Modi, for conferring the Padma Shri, recognizing Thiru. Seeni Viswanathan's immense contribution to Tamil literature and National heritage.

Governor Ravi highlighted Mahakavi Bharathiar's pivotal role as a fearless freedom fighter, poet, and cultural icon, who fiercely championed India's independence, Tamil identity, and linguistic pride. He recalled how Bharathiar strongly countered J.C. Rollo, then Principal of Pachaiyappa's College, who sought to impose English by dismissing Tamil as a "vernacular" and unfit for science and philosophy. Bharathiar's intellectual rebuttal

dismantled this colonial mind set, reaffirming Tamil's richness and scholarly depth.

Hon'ble Governor R.N. Ravi emphasized that Mahakavi Bharathiar lives in the hearts of the people, yet his legacy is being undermined by a chauvinistic ecosystem in Tamil Nadu, which seeks to erase his contributions through active indifference and passive hostility. He pointed out that this ecosystem feels insecure discussing Bharathiar because he envisioned an inclusive Bharat, spoke of the harmony between Kashi and Kanchi, and championed the Vedas—ideas that contradict the divisive narrative promoted by the same ecosystem.

Lamenting the absence of dedicated efforts on Bharathiar in state universities, the Governor mentioned that when a Bharathiar Chair can be established at Banaras Hindu University under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, why do no such initiatives exist in Tamil Nadu? He mentioned that despite vice-chancellors expressing willingness to take up such initiatives, they face severe pressure and threats.

Governor, criticizing the hollow rhetoric of those who claim to uphold pride in Tamil language and culture but don't make any efforts contributions, the Governor asserted that true reverence lies in preserving and promoting Tamil's rich literary heritage. Given this situation, the Governor called upon society to take

ownership of Bharathiar's legacy, ensuring that his ideals remain a guiding force for future generations.

Highlighting Raj Bhavan's initiatives, he spoke of installing Bharathiar's statue, organizing state-level essay competitions, and renaming Durbar Hall as Bharathiar Mandapam under the leadership of the Hon'ble President of India. Reaffirming that Bharathiar belongs to all of Bharat, he stressed the importance of translating his works into Indian languages.

On this event, Padma Shri Dr. Nalli Kuppusamy Chetti, Dr. Vaidhya Subramaniam, Vice-Chancellor, Sastra Deemed University, Dr. Sudha Seshayyan, Director, Sastra Deemed University, Thiru. V.R.Kannan, President, Bharat Vikas Parishad, Chennai, Thiru. Vanavil K.Ravi, Vanavil Foundation, Thiru. Ma.Ki.Ramanan, Founder & Secretary, Thiruvottiyur Bharathi Pasarai, Thiru. Prabhakaran, President, Vallalar 200, and other dignitaries were present at the function,

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Sd/-

Raj Bhavan, Chennai.

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