

RAJ BHAVAN, TAMIL NADU - PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF TAMIL NADU THIRU.R.N.RAVI
INAUGURATED 'KAMBAR VANAM' AND INTERACTED WITH
TAMIL SCHOLARS AT GOVERNOR'S THINK TO DARE
SERIES - 18 ORGANISED AT BHARATHIAR MANDAPAM,
RAJ BHAVAN, CHENNAI, TODAY (14.06.2025)

Thiru. R. N. Ravi, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu inaugurated 'Kambar Vanam' at Raj Bhavan, Chennai, today (14.06.2025). Governor participated as chief guest at Governor's "Think to Dare Series-18: Interaction with Tamil Scholars" organized at Bharathiar Mandapam, Raj Bhavan, Chennai.

Hon'ble Governor in his presidential address during interaction with the Tamil scholars said, "I am very happy to welcome all the eminent scholars who have dedicated themselves to the service of Tamil Thaai - either through their scholarly publications or by their tireless efforts in promoting the language. Tamil is the oldest living language in the world and one of the richest in terms of literature. It is spoken by more than 100 million people, and rightfully stands as a language of immense pride and glory. Bharat is proud of Tamil.

This ancient and rich language endured significant hardship during British colonial rule. There was a deliberate attempt by the British to suppress mother tongues, including Tamil. They dismantled the traditional education system, disrupted local industries, and imposed heavy taxes on agriculture, making it unaffordable for farmers to sustain their livelihoods. Industries were forced to shut down, and many youth were pushed into company jobs. English education became the only viable path forward, and schools established by the British did not

encourage the learning of Tamil. Through this education system, they subtly propagated the idea of British superiority.

Language is not just a medium of communication - it is a carrier of culture and identity. At that time, the government directed district collectors to submit detailed reports. These reports classified students into four categories: Brahmins, Vaishyas, Shudras, etc. In most schools, Shudra students were the majority. There was no concept of untouchability in education until the British introduced a sense of inferiority among communities.

Around 1920, after the First World War, political parties began addressing public gatherings in English. This led to the rise of the Swadeshi Movement, which soon extended to the realm of language, particularly Tamil. Numerous powerful Tamil writers emerged during this period. T.K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar was one such figure who campaigned vigorously for Tamil. There's even a saying that when the British first encountered bananas, they didn't know how to eat them! All mother tongues originate from the heart. T.K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar often said, "Kamban knew the heartbeat of Tamil." If you keep reading a word repeatedly, you begin to feel the pulse of the language - because it lives in the heart.

Tamil society was vibrant and culturally rich. The revered Tamil Thatha (U. V. Swaminatha Iyer) rediscovered and preserved many ancient literary works and passed them on to future generations. Bharathi was a champion of the Tamil language. Kalki Krishnamurthy was not only a freedom fighter but also a great advocate for Tamil. Figures like Jaganathan, Vinayagam Pillai, and T.S. Rangarajan followed in the footsteps of the Tamil renaissance. After independence, this momentum continued for a while, but eventually it slowed down. The British had by then firmly established English as the only medium for scientific education. When they claimed that Tamil was incapable of

expressing scientific knowledge, it was Bharathi who gave a powerful rebuttal. But sadly, we have not fully realized his vision to this day.

Sometimes, people try to compare Tamil literature with English literature. I find this disturbing. We must not compare Thiruvalluvar with Shakespeare - this mindset must end. In early 2023, when I started learning Tamil, I suggested that professors begin translating engineering and medical textbooks into Tamil. We must never let down Mahakavi Bharathi. The legacy of the Tamil language must be carried forward with pride and purpose. Unfortunately, there is still a belief in the superiority of English. This must change. Every one of us must take responsibility for restoring pride in our mother tongue. Learning other languages is not wrong, but we must first take pride in our own.

The beauty of Bharat lies in its many mother tongues. Each language must be allowed to blossom, and Tamil must lead the way. We have been encouraging more people across the world to learn Tamil. We have introduced Tamil in the North-Eastern states, and young boys from those regions are now coming to Tamil Nadu for work, embracing the language and culture.

Bharat is the mother of democracy, and the glory of the Tamil language must rise to its rightful heights. The National Education Policy now emphasizes learning in one's mother tongue. Learn English - but do not consider it superior. Learning becomes easier and more effective when done in the mother tongue. We are committed to taking Tamil to the world.

On this occasion, Justice Thiru. V.Ramasubramanian, Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission, Marabin Mayinthan Thiru. Muthiah, State General Secretary, Vettri Tamilar Peravai, Prof. Gnanasambandam, renowned speaker, Tamil poet Thiru. Viveka and Thiru. Pattukottai Prabakar, Tamil writer delivered special addresses and shared their thoughts.

Governor felicitated Justice Thiru. V.Ramasubramanian, Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission and 21 eminent Tamil scholars and personalities, Thiru. G.Gnanasambandan, Marabin Myindan Thiru. Muthaiah, Dr.Pon Sankara Pandian, Vice-President Delhi Kalai Ilakiya Peravai, Thiru. P.Bala Murugan, President of Senthamil Solvendhar Peravai, Bahrain, Uratha Sindhanai Thiru. Udhayam Ram, Kavingar Thiru. Viveka, Kavingar Thiru. Snehan, Thiru. Badruddin Abdul Majeed, Thiru. Lakshmi Nathan, Tmt. Nalini Kumar, Thiru. Seenivasan N, Kutch Tamil Welfare Association, Thiru. R Mukunthan, Thiru. Black Pandi (a) Lingeshwaran, Director Thiru.Vasanth, Ervadi Thiru. S.Radha Krishnan, Director Thiru. Yaar Kannan, Director Thiru. Rasi Alagappan, Dr. Ravi Tamilvanan, Thiru. Siva Guru Nathan, Ms.J. Indumathi and Thiru. P.Saravanapandi for their distinguished service to Tamil language during the function. He also felicitated 14 participants of Tamil debate and competitions.

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Raj Bhavan, Chennai-22

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