

**Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit Inaugurated the
"123rd FLOWER SHOW 2019" at Government Botanical Garden,
Udhagamandalam.**

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu inaugurated the 123rd Flower Show, at Botanical Garden, Udhagamandalam today (17.05.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "It gives me immense pleasure to be here today for the inauguration function of the 123rd Flower Show, the annual festival of colours and gaeity in Ooty.

Rightly termed as the "Queen of the Hills", this headquarters of the Nilgiri district, to which tourists come in large numbers presents a breath taking experience of biodiversity. Its charming valleys, lakes and rivulets, the rolling grasslands and sun soaked hills provide a feast to the eye and comfort to the senses. The Nilgiris – the blue mountains, which are a part of the Western Ghats enjoy the fame of being India's first biosphere reserve.

I am informed that there are more than 30 places, of interest for the visiting tourist.

The Doddabetta peak, the Ooty lake, the Pykara lake, Dolphin's nose and Avalanche are among some of the finest attractions which leave an indelible imprint on the mind of every tourist.

The Nilgiri Mountain Railway (NMR) a UNESCO declared heritage site is another unique experience. The quaint toy train made its first journey up from Mettupalayam at the foothills of the Nilgiris to Ooty 120 years ago, in 1899. The Swiss Locomotive Works which laid the railway track worked on the project for more than 40 years.

The Mudumalai sanctuary located 29 Km from here boasts of wild life such as the elephant, the gaur and chital, the Nilgiris Tahr, the sloth bear and the tiger and the leopard. There are also over 250 species of birds in the reserve forest area and this includes rare birds such as the Indian white rumped vulture the long billed vulture, the Great Indian Hornbill, blue throated flycatcher and the scarlet Minivet.

It is indeed a matter of pride and happiness that the people of Nilgiris district have played host to this flower show for several decades, thus exhibiting their love for nature and their appreciation of beauty. A thing of beauty is a joy for ever said Keats. And here in the Nilgiris district amidst the panorama of natural greenery and the myriad colours the joy that fills one's mind is indeed unique and special.

This well known and prestigious Flower show is being organised every year. The show enjoys international recognition both in terms of its antiquity and stature and flaunts the beauty of nature in all its colourful versatility.

The Government Botanical Gardens where the flower show is being held has a sprawling expanse of 22 hectares and attracts around 30 lakh tourists every year. It hosts an enormous collection of over 2000 species of flora.

It was established with seeds and saplings brought from all over the world. The Nilgiris Agri-Horticultural Society and Mr. Tremens in particular were responsible for initiating the practice of holding the Flower Show every year during the month of May.

The Flower show was started with the objective of promoting interest and knowledge of horticulture and gardening and to encourage aesthetic talents in beautifying the home and the community. The first flower show was conducted in 1896. To commemorate the Centenary flower show the Government Rose garden was established in 1995 and it houses around 4000 varieties of roses attracting 10 lakh tourists every year. It was awarded the Garden of Excellence by the World Rose Society Osaka, Japan.

It is the enormous variety that makes the Ooty flower show an unique event. There are more than 150 varieties of cut flowers, various kinds of tropical and temperate vegetables and tropical and temperate fruits on display here. The Floral decorations, Indian and Japanese flower arrangements, Vegetable carvings, Flower Rangoli, Bonsai etc., are other major attractions. The displays at the stalls of the large private and public gardens also provide an unmatched treat to the visitor.

Imported flowering plants from Holland like the Tulip, and exotic orchids, form an important tourist attraction this year. The Oriental lily, Chrysanthemum, Gerbera, Balsam, Gypsophila, and numerous other varieties have also been exhibited.

The 30,000 potted flowering plants that have been specially prepared for the Flower show are sure to enthrall the visitor.

To mark the 150th year of district formation, in September 2018, the district of Nilgiris has been declared to be an organic district. A district level committee has been formed under the chairmanship of the District Collector and an organic society called THOFA duly registered.

Flower shows such as this help people to appreciate the value of Nature and teach them to treasure our resources preserve them and hand them over to succeeding generations in a manner that benefits mankind.

All of nature is special, precious and amazing Being able to experience the wonderful beauty of nature is a special blessing. We often tend to take for granted all that we receive from Nature.

Mahatma Gandhi, in his writings mentioned, "Nature has enough to satisfy every man's need but not enough to satisfy every man's greed". The earth gives us the air we breathe, the water we drink, the sun light we enjoy, the fire that helps us in cooking our food, the trees that give shade and oxygen, etc. These are examples of Mother Nature's blessings to mankind. It is important that we recognize this and take steps to carry forward these blessings of Nature to our succeeding generations.

Our ancestors knew the practice of sustainable development. That is the reason India has had a continuing civilisation for more than 5000 years. The agricultural practices were sustainable. The needs of the people were limited and contentment was the principle that was admired, appreciated and propagated.

In the last 200 years, we have had many technological innovations that have improved the standard of living. The use of electricity, use of vehicles for transportation and the use of gadgets to improve communication have definitely helped to make our living conditions better. But it is important to draw the line so that we do not exceed limits.

Today the use of petrol and petroleum products, the use of plastics and the mindless dependence on artificial chemicals have resulted in serious environmental damage. That is why the nations of the world have been engaging themselves in the task of controlling carbon emissions.

Let me therefore conclude by calling upon every, well intentioned person to take a pledge to reduce our levels of consumption, recycle resources and promote the use of renewable sources of energy so as to make the world a better place for the present and the future".

On this occasion, Thiru. R. Rajagopal, I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary to Governor, Thiru.Gagandeep Singh Bedi, I.A.S., Agricultural Production Commissioner, Principal Secretary to Government, Dr.N.Subbaiyan, I.A.S., Director of Horticulture and Plantation Crops, Thirumathi. J.Innocent Divya, I.A.S., District Collector, Nilgiris, Thiru. K.Periaiah I.P.S., IG of Police, West Zone, Thiru. G.Karthikeyan I.P.S., DIG of Police, Coimbatore Range Thirumathi. D. Shanmuga Priya, Superintendent of Police, Thiru. Amar Kushwaha, I.A.S., Project Director Special Area Development Programme and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai -22

Sd/-

Date : 17.05.2019

Joint Director (PR)