

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT TRIBAL YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP
CONFERENCE, 102ND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF NAWA FOUNDER
PADMASHRI DR.S.NARASIMHAN AND EXHIBITION ON 62 YEARS OF NAWA
ORGANISED BY NILGIRIS ADIVASI WELFARE ASSOCIATION
AT RESOURCE CENTRE FOR TRIBAL CULTURE (RCTC),
UDHAGAMANDALAM ON 20.05.2019 AT 11.30 A.M**

Thirumathi. J. Innocent Divya, I.A.S.,
District Collector,
The Nilgiris

Dr.Rajalakshmi Subramanian,
President,
Nilgiris Adivasi Welfare Association

Thiru. M. Alwas
Secretary,
Nilgiris Adivasi Welfare Association

**Distinguished Invitees
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It gives me great happiness to be here at the 'Tribal Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Conference' which is being held to commemorate the 102nd Birthday Celebrations of the Founder of the Nilgiri Adivasis Welfare Association, Padmashri Dr. S.Narasimhan. 'NAWA' this association is called in short was founded in 1958 by him with the objective of working for the welfare and development of the tribal communities living in the districts of Nilgiris, Coimbatore and Erode in Tamil Nadu and in the neighbouring districts of Karnataka and Kerala.

The origin of the Association has an interesting tale to narrate. After Dr. S. Narasimhan, completed his Licentiate in Indian Medicine from the Kilpauk Medical College, he was residing in Ooty, where his father was a

teacher in High School. One day when a woman from the nearby tribal hamlet approached him for help, he attended to the delivery successfully. This incident resulted in the founding of NAWA by Dr. Narasimhan on 20th May 1958.

NAWA thereafter established daily clinics, hospitals, creches and nutrition centres in various parts of the Nilgiris. Subsequently Nutrition schemes were expanded to include programmes in the fields of education, economic development, awareness building and tribal integration, thereby benefitting the tribes of this district considerably.

Among the tribes of Nilgiris, which constitute nearly 5% of the district's population, 6 groups find special mention as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Communities. They are the TODAs, a pastoral community, KOTAs, a community traditionally engaged in carpentry and blacksmithy, IRULAs, who are traditionally collectors of minor forest products and are now engaged in agriculture work involving tea, coffee, spices etc., KURUMBAs, traditionally Healers and honey hunters, PANIYAs, who are mainly engaged in agriculture and KATTUNAIKAs who are traditional forest dwellers and familiar with wildlife forest trails etc. It is necessary to ensure that these vulnerable tribes are given special attention to ensure smooth merger with the mainstream population.

Many are the organisations and personalities who are working hard to ensure that this becomes a reality. I am happy that NAWA has started the practice of honouring such individuals who have contributed in a large measure for tribal upliftment.

Today 10 individuals and institutions have been recognized for their services for tribal welfare.

Dr. K. Ramasamy, Medical Director, NAWA has greatly contributed to improving the health of tribal people.

Mr. K. Vijayakumar, Director Education, NAWA has spent 41 years for the cause of tribal upliftment.

Mr. Jayaraj, who has greatly contributed to infrastructure development activities for the Tribal Community is another award winner today.

Mr. Na. Mathavan, Director, Resources, NAWA has been a successful fund raiser for the welfare of tribal communities.

Mr. K.V. Karthik Kumar B.E., a progressive entrepreneur from the Kota Tribes of the Nilgiri,

Mr. Manithers Kuttan, a farmer and a hotelier from the Toda Tribe of the Nilgiri,

and

Mr. Sudaroli Sundaram who started an NGO to work for Irula Tribes of Villupuram and Vellore District, have also been honoured today.

The Trusts like Save Poor Lives, The Nilgiris, Anjanagiri Trust, The Nilgiris and Common Indians, Tiruppur who by their contribution to overall development of the Tribal people of Tamilnadu, have been rewarded for their services.

Three books on tribal development, namely 'Kanaga Oli', 'Models in Tribal Development' and 'NAWA in 60 years of Medical service and research in Sickle Cell' have been released today. The book 'Kanaga Oli' is a compilation of 11 traditional tribal stories. These stories have been

transmitted orally by ancestors from generation to generation and depict the culture, tradition and life style of the Nilgiri Tribes. The stories are compiled in the tribal colloquial language and with colourful pictures which kindle the imagination and curiosity of the children. I congratulate Smt. Poovizhi, The Principal of Victoria Armstrong Memorial School and the teachers who compiled these stories into a book.

The book “Models in Tribal Development” narrates the various models created by NAWA for income generation, education, child development and rehabilitation of bonded labourer. The book will be certainly useful for the creation of successful tribal development organizations in the future.

NAWA has been taking basic medical health care to the remotest tribal hamlets in the Nilgiris. For the last 60 years NAWA has also addressed the problems of the dreadful disease Sickle Cell Anaemia. The book, “60 years of medical work and Sickle Cell Anaemia Research” narrates the various health and medical care programmes of NAWA. I appreciate Dr.K. Ramasamy, M.B.B.S., Director of Medical, NAWA for his praiseworthy publication.

The Central and State Government are implementing various welfare schemes to ensure the all round development of the Scheduled Tribes.

These include a number of projects for housing, drinking, water facilities, sanitation, access roads and community halls which have been successfully completed in tribal villages.

For promoting education among tribal Scheduled Tribe communities, the Government of Tamilnadu is also running 24 Government Tribal

Residential Schools and one Ekalavya model school in the Nilgiris. Tribal students also receive free education in Professional courses for which the Government provides a total subsidy. Even recently the Government has sanctioned the construction of 300 houses in Gudalur block in one village panchayat alone.

It is important that these and other facilities are fully utilized by tribal communities, using them as rungs of the ladder to move up socially and economically in society. I will also advise the administration to pay greater attention to the provision off civic amenities in localities inhabited by tribals.

Today's function is certain to serve as an inspiration for many welfare minded organisations and well intentioned individuals to dedicate themselves in greater measure for the welfare of the tribals. Individuals like Dr. Narasimhan whose memory we are paying tributes to, today have shown us the way. As you are all aware he was decorated with the Padmashri and the B.C. Roy award for his work. Let many more follow in his footsteps and win laurels for themselves and the state.

I wish them all well. My special words of appreciation and greetings are reserved for the office bearers of NAWA who have taken painstaking efforts in the field of tribal upliftment. I am sure that their efforts will be rewarded with bountiful success. May the blessings of God be showered on them in abundant measure.

Nandri.

Jai Hind.