

## Educational institutions must provide varied & rich learning experiences to students: Vice President

Vice President's Secretariat

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## Addresses Platinum Jubilee Celebrations of Rouzathul Uloom Association

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The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that educational institutions must provide varied and rich learning experiences to students. He was addressing the Addresses Platinum Jubilee Celebration of Rouzathul Uloom Association at Farook College in Kozhikode, Kerala today. The Minister for Local Administration, Kerala, Shri K.T. Jaleel and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

The Vice President said that we need to lay a strong foundation in the early years of schooling in order to become lifelong learners. What is important is the ability to be curious, to observe, analyze, synthesize, draw conclusion, test hypothesis, and advance continuously the frontiers of knowledge, he said.

The Vice President said that educational managers, teachers and researchers should help build a system that has "equity" and "quality" as the two guiding principles. He further said that each child is important for us and each moment we spend with the child and young person is precious. It has tremendous potential - potential to inspire, the potential to catalyze creative, positive thinking, the potential to change individuals, families and countries for the better, he added.

The Vice President said that education is an emancipatory tool and it liberates us from dependence, restores self-confidence and enhances self-esteem. If we don't expand access to good education, we shall have widening gaps between different sections of our society which might negate economic progress, he added.

Following is the text of Vice President's address:

"I am privileged to be among the finest creative minds of the world assembled here for this inaugural function of the 8<sup>th</sup> Theatre Olympics at this historic Red Fort. The journey from [Delphi \(Greece\)](#) in 1993 to Delhi in 2018, completes 25 years and we are proud to host this important cultural event at this momentous time.

Art and cultural ties have united humanity from time immemorial. Ancient civilizations like the Greek, Roman, Babylonian, Egyptian and Indus Valley civilizations have enriched the cultural capital of the world. There is a fascinating diversity in the themes and presentation but the emotions conveyed appeal to all human beings across the globe.

The seven colours of the rainbow are different and beautiful but underneath the difference is a common origin. Which is why art has united and connected various cultures and continents.

The theatre Olympics is yet another initiative to connect countries and cultures and enrich our collective consciousness. Since it started in Delphi in 1993 and now it is being held in the equally historic city of Delhi, let me recall the great contribution made by two of the most ancient cultures in the world. Greek culture is replete with great philosophers like Plato, Socrates and Aristotle as well as dramatists like Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides. Theatre was an important and integral part of Greek civilization. Around the 4th century BC regarded as the [Golden Age](#) of Greek drama, the centre-piece of the annual festival “Dionysia” was a competition between three tragic playwrights at the [Theatre of Dionysus](#).

Ancient Indian civilization also had a grand tradition of performing arts.

Bharata Muni’s Nya stra written around 5<sup>th</sup> century BC is an ancient encyclopedic treatise on the [performing arts](#). Drama, in this ancient Sanskrit text, is an art to represent every aspect of life and imitate what happens in the lives of people (Avasthanukrutir Natyam) in order transport the audience to a state of joyful consciousness.

As the commentator Abhinavagupta says, the performing arts temporarily suspend us from the ordinary world and takes us into another parallel reality full of wonder.

In the Indian thought, life is an integrated whole into which Dharma (Righteousness), Artha (Wealth), Kama(Desire) and Moksha (Emancipation) are inextricably interwoven.

Similarly, there are nine aesthetic experiences called “Nava rasas” which can transform the inner state and where the beauty of art lifts us into higher consciousness.

From amateur village clubs to professional theatre groups, from folk and tribal theatre to highly sophisticated modern and post-modern theatre, India has witnessed a distinctive theatre tradition, dominating the society’s cultural space. The theatre traditions of our country are our culture’s enduring legacies. Our theatre is one of the oldest in the world, going back to 2500 years. Coming down to the present from the ancient times, the common roots of our apparently different genres of theatre tell the story of a cultural synthesis which distinguishes our civilization. Regardless of our diversities of language, religion or region, theatre in India is a common form of performing art and all states have a rich history of theatre tradition.

In fact, diversity has been the defining feature of our country’s reality. Play wrights and artistes, writers and poets have captured the essence of this reality in their creative pursuits in the past and, continue to do so today. This has given a distinct identity to Indian creativity. And, this Theatre Olympics showcases and celebrates our unique cultural identity.

Theatre, as I understand, is a powerful medium, where the practitioners may use different locales and different languages, to convey an idea, to entertain or enlighten and focus on a societal issue. The theatre performers have the power to transcend regional and cultural barriers and address the larger humanity. Often, the themes such as poverty, hunger, oppression, atrocities, wars and displacements which are common to all societies capture the imagination of the theatre directors. I feel that these themes could be creatively used through theatres to bring about social change and transformation by retrieving hope from hopelessness, optimism from despair and joy from seemingly endless sorrow.

Sisters and Brothers,

Art is a mirror of the society and is reflection of the lives of people. It is a creative transformation of the stories of ordinary lives into an extraordinary art form.

Art forms touch human hearts like no other impulse. It can produce different aesthetic responses in the viewers. It can move them to tears, make them laugh heartily, make them feel angry about an issue, make them feel disgusted about some reality. There are a whole lot of emotions it can generate. However, art is an expression of certain values inherent in a culture.

There are certain values that are universal like the desire for friendship, yearning for peace and harmony. Art can help us to sublimate many raw emotions or as the Greek dramatists called it, undergo "catharsis" in which our thoughts get purified. The Indian tradition also emphasized the need for art to keep in view the impact which should serve the larger objective of "good to humanity" (Vishwa shreyah kaavayam).

Sisters and Brothers,

It is a matter of great happiness that the Logo of this Theatre Olympics has been designed as "Flag of Friendship". It brings to my mind a beautiful song composed by a contemporary Indian Saint, Paramacharya Chandrashekhara Saraswathi and which echoes the timeless Indian vision of the whole world as one family.

"Maithreem Bhajatha Akhila Hrith Jethreem"

(Cultivate Friendship and Humility, which will conquer the Hearts of Everyone)

This is a message that India has been giving the world for many centuries. It is probably a message that is most relevant in a world that is torn with narrow, fractured vision. I am hopeful that the theatre Olympics will keep the flag of peace and friendship flying high and melt the hardened, icy hearts and flood our world with the rejuvenating rivers of love and oceans of compassion.

I welcome all the artists from around the world and I am hopeful that you will share with each other different facets of your artistic excellence and take away pleasant memories of your stay here.

My compliments to the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, and the country's premier theatre institute, the National School of Drama and its Chairperson, the distinguished playwright and theatre director, Mr. Ratan Thiyam, for organizing this mega theatre event.

My greetings to all the theatre personalities present here from as many as 35 countries participating in this theatre extravaganza.

Thank You, Jai Hind!"

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