



सत्यमेव जयते

Speech of Hon'ble Governor of Andhra Pradesh  
Sri Biswa Bhusan Harichandan  
participates as Guest of Honor  
at the interaction with Telugu literacy scholars along with  
Hon'ble Vice President of India  
at Nellore on January 21, 2020.

Hon'ble Vice President of India Sri M. Venkaiah Naidu Ji, eminent literary scholars of Telugu language, Guests on the dais, Ladies and Gentlemen.  
ANDARIKI NAMASKARAM.

It gives me immense pleasure to be amongst the galaxy of Telugu literary scholars, here at Nellore.

It is through the classical language manuscripts and ancient scriptures that people identify themselves and are connected to their past as these literary manuscripts offer an insight into the culture and traditions of those times.

It is a matter of pride that the Telugu language has more than 75 million speakers across the world and among the Dravidian languages, Telugu is spoken by the largest population. After Hindi and Bengali, Telugu is the third most spoken of all the Indian languages.

After 218 CE, the Satavahana dynasty was succeeded by the Ikshvakus. Although only three kings ruled in this dynasty, they commanded the love and affection of the people. Even today, anything very old is referred by Telugu people as 'that from the time of Ikshvakus.'

The first written materials in the language date from 575 CE. Telugu literature began in the 11th century with a version of the Hindu epic Mahabharata by the writer Nannaya.

The first Telugu grammar, Andhra shabda chintamani, was written in Sanskrit and is said to have been composed by the same author.

Telugu as a literary language has a great measure of interaction with Kannada; their scripts also have a common stage of evolution. There were several Shaivaite poets who wrote in both Telugu and Kannada. The Vijayanagar king Krishna Devaraya was a patron of both Kannada and Telugu poetry. Consequently, there are extensive lexical borrowings between Telugu and Kannada.

The powerful trend towards increasing Sanskritization of scriptures was reversed by the Chola kings who ruled from Renaadu, corresponding to the modern day Kadapa, Eastern Chittoor, Southern Nellore and surrounding areas. They broke with the prevailing trend and introduced the tradition of writing Royal proclamations in the local Telugu language.

The earliest available inscription containing Telugu sentences comes from these Chola kings and is dated to be from 573-576 CE. Their act of patronizing Telugu over Sanskrit had caught on and other kings in the Telugu land had begun to follow their lead. The first available Telugu inscription in the coastal Andhra Pradesh comes from about 633 CE, followed by the Chalukya kings of Telangana region.

The period of 12th to 14th Centuries is considered to be a glorious era in the history of Telugu language. After the Kakatiya kings, Telugu was supported by the Reddi kingdoms in central coastal districts during the 14th and 15th Centuries, who are credited with nurturing the great Poets Errana and Srinatha.

Vijayanagara empire that followed, saw the development of all the four southern languages for several centuries. The script used for Telugu during this time is very similar to the modern day written script.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Christian Missionaries started writing and publishing books in Telugu. About half a dozen Telugu works were published in Europe at that time. A French missionary by the name of Le Gac discovered manuscript of Vemana's poems and sent it to the library of Louis XV. Another Frenchman Abbe Dubois had found this manuscript, translated it into French and published, which is considered to be the first ever translation and publication of a Telugu work of literature into a western language.

C.P. Brown, an English employee of the British East India Company and eminent scholar played a significant role in adapting Telugu to the printing press by publishing several Telugu literary books.

Brown's grammar, certainly one of the best grammar books of Telugu, appeared in 1840 and his dictionaries were published in 1854, which are consulted as standard reference books even today.

As described by the great emperor Sri Krishna Devaraya, "Desa bhasha landu Telugu lessaa", which means Telugu is the most versatile language he had ever come across.

Rabindranath Tagore is said to have stated that Telugu is the sweetest of all (Indian) Languages. Famous Tamil poet Subramanya Bhaarathi had sung "Sundara Telunginil Pattisaithu" which means "Sing in beautiful Telugu".

In most of the South India, many bhajans and songs are sung in Telugu such as renowned Thyagaraja keerthanas are in Telugu only.

In 16th Century, the Italian explorer, Nicolo di Conti, recognised the similarity between Telugu and Italian, called Telugu as the "Italian of the East".

I wish the sweetness of Telugu language will be further enhanced with more patronage of the language and more literary works brought out by the modern poets.

I thank the organizers for giving me the opportunity to participate in this programme.

Jai Hind