



SPEECH DELIVERED BY
Selvi J JAYALALITHAA,
HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU
ON THE VALEDICTORY FUNCTION OF THE
4TH ALL INDIA POLICE COMMANDO COMPETITION
HELD ON 27.I.2014
AT THE JAWAHARLAL NEHRU INDOOR STADIUM,
CHENNAI



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Hon'ble Ministers of the Government of Tamil Nadu, Members of the Legislative Assembly,

Mrs. Sheela Balakrishnan, Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu,

Mr. Apurva Varma, Principal Secretary, Home Department, Government of Tamil Nadu

Mr. K. Ramanujam, Director General of Police, Tamil Nadu,

Mr. Malay Kumar Sinha, Additional Director, Intelligence Bureau, representing the Chairman, Central Co ordination Committee of the All India Police Duty Meet,

Thiru S.George, Commissioner of Police, Chennai,

Thiru Sanjay Arora, Additional Director General of Police - Operations,

Officers and Men and Women of the Police Force,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

“It gives me great pleasure to be here today at the valedictory function of the 4th All India Police Commando Competition for the year 2013, to felicitate the winners and to give away the awards and encourage those who have not won. The atmosphere here is electric and the exhilaration is palpable and infectious. I am reminded of the words of Swami Vivekananda - I quote: “My countrymen should have muscles of iron, nerves of steel and a mind made of such stuff of which thunder bolts are made” - Unquote. The sight of young men and women powered by the drive to serve their Country and stalking out challenges and forging the will to dare, makes our spirits soar.

This arena brings people from different cultural backgrounds together. Sports essentially denote participation and inclusion. Sports activities bring individuals and organisations together, highlighting commonalities and bridging cultural and ethnic divides. The easy and inherent characteristic of sports of bringing people together, salvaging their strength, reinforcing their resolve to succeed and chartering a unique course for those who are involved makes it a powerful weapon. Sports provide a forum to

hone skills like discipline, confidence and leadership and strengthen core principles like acceptance, co-operation and respect. Sports expound the value of effort and teach the participants how to manage victory as well as defeat. These fundamental elements of sports make them a viable and practical tool to attain the goal of national development. Many of the core values inherent in sports are compatible with the principles necessary for development and peace, such as fair play, co-operation, sharing and a healthy respect for opponents. The life skills learned through sports help empower individuals and enhance psycho-social well-being like increased resilience, self-esteem and connection with others. Events like this competition inculcate a sense of oneness among you and fire the competitiveness in you to excel in whatever you do. Sport is a great unifying force and the Police need continuous reassessment and reassurance in terms of their mental and physical fitness. These events will help to test their physical agility, mental resilience and serve to enhance these traits which are crucial to policing and indicate their relative levels, urging further accomplishment.

The All India Police Sports Control Board and the Co-ordination Committee of the All India Police Duty Meet, sponsor the conduct of seventeen professional and sports competitions for Police Forces across the country every year, each event being hosted by a different Police Force. These competitions include the Police Duty Meet, Shooting and Commando championships which test skills relating to Police functioning in addition to general events like athletics, aquatics, equestrian sports and various individual and team games.

The Police Commando concept is relatively new. The concept of having an elite commando unit as part of a regular Police Force was first established in the United States in 1967, when the Los Angeles Police Department setup a specialised 'unit' or a Special Weapons And Tactics team (SWAT) tasked to respond to critical situations. These men were skilled in tackling special situations involving hostage rescue, counter terrorism, search and rescue, plus a host of other specialized tasks which a regular Police Force is not equipped for. So effective have these units been, that today, almost every Police Force in the world has a SWAT team and their basic roles remain the same.

The All India Police Commando Competition is one of the latest additions to the annual Police Sports calendar. It has been included, considering the importance of counter-terrorism skills in the current scenario where terrorism and extremism are emerging as serious threats to internal security. In order to upscale our capabilities to deal with and do away with this menace, it is imperative that all States have a force of well-trained and equipped Commando Units. Most States have raised Commando Units and these outfits need to be kept fighting fit by constant training and upgradation of skills and tactics. The developments in terms of upgradation of skills have to be in line with the expectations of the public at large, as the Police are the most visible and much required public service, involved in safeguarding the lives of the people. Most of the Commando Units are comprised of personnel better trained, better equipped, well led and more motivated components within their respective Forces. Specific needs dictate special dispensations. However, my endeavour as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has been to raise the level of training, equipping, leadership and motivation of the complete Police Force, rather

than to create an odd island of excellence in a sea of mediocrity. Yours is a call to a service that requires extreme commitment and demands excellence at all times. Rest assured that you will always enjoy the utmost public gratitude and deepest respect as you take your professionalism to higher levels in terms of integrity, ethics and discipline.

The honour of organizing the All-India Police Commando Competition for the year 2013 has been assigned to the Tamil Nadu Police. This will be the 4th edition of the competition. I am informed that the previous three competitions were hosted by the Border Security Force, Assam Rifles, and the Rajasthan Police. This year, we have received entries from 23 teams from the major Central Para Military Forces and other State Police Forces. Earlier, the focus was on anti-extremist operations in rural and jungle areas, as the majority of insurgencies were in outlying areas. After the terrorist attack at Mumbai in 2008, an urgent need to develop specialization in fighting in built up and closed areas, has arisen. I have been informed that the format of the competition tests a commando team for endurance, physical and mental

strength, co-ordination, firing skills, knowledge of tactics, planning, and capability to operate in compact small teams. A team consisting of 22 personnel is put through a gruelling schedule of fast runs, obstacle courses, reflex shooting, and operations in urban and jungle scenarios. The team has to complete all the events within 4 hours and 45 minutes. This, indeed, is a test of endurance – both physical and mental, and I congratulate the winners and all the teams who have participated in these events for their sheer fortitude, grit and determination.

As this competition also involves participation in simulated urban and jungle operations, it provides an arena to all the Forces to validate their procedures, tactics, techniques and equipment. This, simultaneously, facilitates Commando Forces to learn from each other and upgrade themselves, both in the use of technology and human resources. Abraham Lincoln once said, “If you give me six hours to chop down a tree, I will spend the first four sharpening my axe.” This is exactly what we are expected to do, in forming a highly competent team of committed commandos. Our commandos are the axe. The conduct

of more such competitions and skill upgradation are the needs of the hour.

It gives me great satisfaction that the Tamil Nadu Police are hosting the event at the Tamil Nadu Police Academy at Oonamanchery, in Chennai. I have sanctioned 94.75 Lakh rupees for this event. New infrastructure, including obstacle courses, system of baffles for the range, and electronically controlled targets, has been created at a cost of 50 Lakh rupees. These will be permanent additions to the infrastructure of the Academy, for training in obstacle courses and shooting. I am happy to learn that the Tamil Nadu Police are the first to use an electronically controlled reflex shooting range in the competition. We have always been forerunners in the Country, in the use of specialized techniques and equipment. I believe that the contours of internal security are undergoing rapid and unprecedented changes and we cannot afford to be complacently under-equipped. In all my tenures as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, I have never stinted on welfare measures for the Police, and I have ensured that the Tamil Nadu Police get the best state-of-the-art infrastructure, coupled with the latest equipment, and constant training and orientation

to perform. Our Commando Units are exposed to techniques of Unconventional Warfare, including extraction, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, evasion and escape, and other activities of covert or clandestine nature. Similarly, combat terrorism activities, including the process of anti-terrorism, counter-terrorism, recovery of hostages or sensitive material from terrorist organisations, attack on terrorist infrastructure, and reduction of vulnerability to terrorism are essentially imparted to these commandos, to counter the myriad forms of terror rearing its ugly head from time to time.

The Tamil Nadu Police, endowed with unfettered professional freedom in my Government, have always risen to the challenges confronting them, and

I am proud of them. The manifestation of sound leadership and best training practices have resulted in producing a highly professional and strongly motivated public safety corps. Martin Luther King once said, and I quote “the ultimate measure of man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and discomfort” - Unquote. Just as fire refines a precious metal, so too, challenges will strengthen and chisel you all

into even better officers. A solid demonstration of professionalism and deep sense of responsibility in the realm of public safety, was witnessed in the recent arrest of Fakruddin in the operation at Puthur, in which two of his associates were arrested without any loss of life. This is proof beyond doubt that our Commando outfit is one of the best in the country. I have personally congratulated 260 personnel involved in the operation, giving away cash rewards ranging from 1 lakh rupees to 15 lakh rupees, apart from the grant of accelerated promotion to 20 Police personnel.

I have been consistently encouraging and motivating Police personnel to excel in all sporting events. I have enhanced the prize incentives given to Police personnel who win laurels for the State. The prize amounts for winners of gold medals, silver medals and bronze medals in the All India Police Sports events were raised ten-fold to 5 lakh rupees, 3 lakh rupees and 2 lakh rupees respectively. In addition, when the Tamil Nadu team gets the winners' trophy or the runners-up trophy, each member of the team is awarded 50,000 rupees and 30,000 rupees respectively.

The nature of your job entails a great amount of personal sacrifice and hard work. More than the thrill of adventure, financial benefit, better perks, or the prospect of faster promotions, the one common thread that binds you all together is your commitment to defend and protect Society. A Policeman / Policewoman is a peacetime soldier, always at war. I commend your courage, commitment and dedication as you continue to work to make the community safe. Your passion and conviction make your lives better lived. I congratulate all the participating teams and each and every member of the various teams, for the spirit you have displayed in participation. I extol the winning teams, and their members for their excellence in training and motivation and encourage you to continue the winning streak. For those who have not won, nothing is lost. You will return stronger and more determined to conquer the victory stands.

I wish each and every Policeman / Policewoman in these grounds, a long, glorious and rewarding career in the service of the people, and the Nation.

Thank you.”
