

Giving and its joy get an all-round view

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An ensemble of personalities from varied fields of expertise — from entrepreneurship to civil service, private executives to those from the judiciary and medicine — came on a common platform to extoll the virtues of giving, as part of the Joy of Giving Week celebrations on Tuesday.

The event was the launch of the campaign Kind People, Happy City, at the Winners Bakery in Alwarpet, which was a platform to reach out to people to make donations for the lesser fortunate.

Speaking on the occasion, A Sankara Narayan, Chairperson, the Banyan's Board of Trustees, spoke on the enormity of the task of helping the poor, the destitute and the mentally ill. "No single body or organisation can find a solution to the problem; even the concerted efforts of many bodies in cooperation can barely scratch the surface. We can help sensitise others about the problems faced by the mentally ill."

It was time for M Mahadevan entrepreneur and founder of Oriental Cuisines, to go down memory lane as he described the hardships he had to undergo when he arrived in the city about 30 years ago. "We must bridge the gap between hunger and hope," he said. N K Ranganath, MD, Grundfos Pumps India Pvt Ltd said, "The purpose of corporates is not just to make money. Society needs to be paid back."

According to Srimathi Shivashankar, AVP - Diversity and Sustainability, HCL Technologies, the habit of giving needs to be integrated intrinsically with the society. "Giving leads to happiness which in turn increases the morale of humanity," she said.

Kannagi Packianathan, Secretary, Differently-abled Welfare Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, felt that the problem needs to be tackled with proper counseling. "To address the problem of the homeless, one must go into why it happens. Children grow up these days with reduced parental attention," she elucidated.

About its social aspects, R Natraj, Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission, said in a lighter vein that happiness will result in lesser work for the police department. Arathi Madhusudhan, volunteer of the Joy of Giving Week, spoke of how the event has grown in volume over the years.

Prabha Sridevan, chairperson of the Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB), said "The poor seem more wretched than they were about three decades ago; this must serve as a wake up call for society."