

Venkaiah stresses Aadhaar's importance

Says it has a role in reining in corruption and helping the public avail of govt schemes

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Even as he contended that on-line transactions were the future, Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu said on Tuesday that the Aadhaar system would rein in middlemen and corruption and help citizens avail of various government schemes.

Speaking at the 90th anniversary celebration of the Andhra Chamber of Commerce here, Mr. Naidu referred to the Direct Benefit Transfer scheme launched by the Centre and said: "Aadhaar is very much required to eliminate middlemen. It will eliminate corruption. We should really strengthen this. [I] am happy [that] more than 100 crore people have already enrolled."

Stating that industries and agriculture were "the two eyes" of the country, the Vice-President said growth should be inclusive.

Expressing his disapproval of the concept of the government investing in businesses, he said that the government should instead focus on infrastructure, roads, electricity, drinking water, drainage and food.

Though the government was initially into business



Gracing the occasion: Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu, second from left, releasing a souvenir to mark the 90th anniversary of the Andhra Chamber of Commerce in Chennai. ■ V. GANESAN

soon after independence, it was gradually easing out of business since it was incurring losses, he said, adding, "The government has no business to be in business."

Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit, Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar, the President of the Andhra Chamber of Commerce, V.L. Indira Dutt and the Chairman of the Apollo Hospitals, Pratap C. Reddy, were present on the occasion.

The Vice-President handed over the 'Excellence in Business Award' to chartered financial analyst Vanitha Datla and the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' to music director and singer Vande

Mataram Srinivas, besides releasing a souvenir to mark the 90th anniversary of the Andhra Chamber of Commerce.

Emphasising the importance of one's mother tongue, Mr. Naidu said, "Everybody should master their mother tongue. Make your children also speak in their mother tongue."

'Help the needy'

Stating that the public should come forward to help those in need, Mr. Naidu said that people should be broad-minded, should develop social consciousness and care about their country.

He was speaking at the

birth anniversary celebration of social activist Nirmala Deshpande at the Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya Samithi.

Mr. Naidu participated in the re-dedication of the renovated statue of Thakkar Bapa and laid the foundation stone for the Didi Nirmala Deshpande Nilayam Ladies Hostel, built under the Harijan Sevak Sangh and sponsored by the Shree Geeta Bhavan Trust.

Humanitarian awards were distributed to over 30 recipients, who had helped the Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya Samithi rebuild its facilities, which were affected by the floods in 2015 and the cyclone in 2016, as well as expand the facilities.