

Speech by Dr. Vipula Kaluarachchi, Senior Medical Officer in Charge, Emergency Treatment Unit, Colombo South Hospital at the Annual Inter House Sports Meet of S. Thomas' College, Bandarawela held on 8th February, 2019

The acting Headmaster, Ven. Philip Nesakumar, Members of the Staff, Distinguished Guests, Parents and Young Thomians.

It is a great privilege and honour for me and my wife to be here at the Annual Inter House Sports Meet of STC Bandarawela.

Young Thomians, permit me to recall my good old days at STC. I still can remember in 1976 as a six year old child when I stepped into the Blanchard Dormitory. There were nearly 1000 students and out of that approximately 600 students were boarders. The Headmaster was Mr. S.L.A. Ratnayake. He was a strict disciplinarian and a great administrator as well.

When I reflect on the years gone by and think of our beloved teachers one fact strikes me deeply. Teaching was their profession but it was also their mission. They not only taught us but taught us with love and understanding. Some of them are still here and I would like to thank them from the bottom of my heart. Thank you dear Mr. Nellihela, Mr. Manchanayake and Mr. Lal.

We had pupils from all nine provinces belonging to the four main races and they embraced the four main religions in the country. There was no favourism. All students were accepted and respected irrespective of cast, religion or background. I am proud to say that our school is a multi-cultural, multi religious, well reputed boys school that provides equal opportunities to all. Dear Thomians take this opportunity that STC offers you. ***Appreciate one another and live in unity and harmony.***

Dear Thomians it's very important to have dreams. You need to set them sky high. ***Dreams are not those which come while we are sleeping, but dreams are those which don't let you sleep before fulfilling them.***

The word impossible should not exist in your dictionary. Nothing seems impossible until you start doing it.

I am sure you have all heard of Wilma Rudolph. She was a polio patient and almost a cripple as a child, but as a young girl she became the World's fastest running woman by winning three gold medals for 100m and 200m relay at the Olympic Games in 1960, but how? The word impossible was not in her dictionary. She and her wonderful mother ***cut off the first two letters of the word impossible and made it all possible.*** By years of medical treatment and ***hard work, practice and more practice Wilma was able to move around, and then walk, then run, and then run faster.*** Finally run to be that great Olympic Athlete. So if Wilma can why can't you? Young Thomians the world is yours. ***You have only got to make the impossible – possible.*** I must express my deep sense of appreciation to the past Headmasters, Teachers and Minor Staff for the work they have done to maintain the high standard of the Thomian Spirit to make S. Thomas' what it is today. Ladies and Gentlemen I am very happy to note that my Alma Mater has grown from strength to strength. I would like to congratulate the Headmaster, Teachers and Support Staff for their great service and commitment.

I take this opportunity to convey my heartiest congratulations to the parents as well. Your support, patience and guidance have helped your children to advance in this crucial phase of life.

Finally my special congratulations to the winners and I wish all young Thomians every success in your future.

My special thanks go to my class mate Nishamani Ratnayake and College mate Bertram Weerakoon for their great service to the school.

Before I conclude I would like to thank the Headmaster and the Management for having us here today.

Thank you,