

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF TWO DAYS STATE LEVEL YOUTH CONVENTION, 2017 AT G.M. HALL, IMPHAL ON 4TH MAY, 2017

Hon'ble Mr. Justice, N. Kotiswar Singh ji, Judge, High Court of Manipur,

Distinguished Invitees,

Friends from Media,

All the participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me at the outset extend a hearty welcome to all the young men and women who have assembled here from different parts of the state to attend the Two Days State Level Youth Convention, 2017 on the role of Youth in Socio-Economic Development.

Manipur, as you all are well aware, is a beautiful state with different indigenous tribes living in harmony side by side with nature. The state is known for peaceful co-existence, tolerant attitude and unique hospitality of the Manipuri people. Hence, it is significant and appropriate that this Youth Convention is being organized and I strongly believe that this Convention will surely deliberate and come up with a roadmap for a more meaningful role of the youth for the socio-economic development of the state.

Here, I intend to remind you, young men and women, that the youth in India comprises 27.5% of the population. Youth if properly trained is an asset for the country but if not, can create multifarious problems. The youth of the country and the state have done everyone proud with their achievement. In the present times, India is considered the youngest nation with the world's maximum number of people being in the age group of 25-30 years. This, I would say, is enormous human resource and this needs to be tapped properly to yield the best results. It is also true that as people and society prosper and

as materialism takes centre stage, our values and morals come under severe onslaught from consumerism and globalisation. We have serious drug problem, crime against women and so on. Hence, to nurture the youth to make them responsible and productive citizens is the need of the hour.

My dear young friends, this Youth Convention, organized by Service Bridge Agency is in the right direction and it has done a commendable job in uniting the youth of different parts of the state on a single platform. Such Convention should also be organized at different parts of the state spreading the right message and infusing the right spirit, the spirit of love, peace, compassion, hard work and commitment in youth for the socio-economic development of the state.

It is a matter of great satisfaction to know that the State Government has already framed Manipur State Youth Policy from the year, 2011 in which important objectives were highlighted such as to foster among the youth a spirit of national consciousness; fight against all forms of substance abuse; to provide the youth proper educational training opportunity to equip them with working skills for employment and self-employment opportunities including financial assistance. In addition, thrust areas of the Policy are Youth Empowerment, Inter-sectoral approach and Information & Research Network. Manipur State Youth Policy elaborately highlights privileges of the youth, responsibilities of the youth. More importantly, key sectors have also been identified such as Education, Training and Employment, Health, Environment, Sports and Recreation, Arts and Culture, Science and Technology, Civics and Citizenship. I am fully confident that the State Government will ensure to get implemented in letter and spirit what has been visualized in the State Policy.

My dear young friends, today, I will take this opportunity to mention a few words about the effects of drugs among the youth in the country. Drugs

addiction is worrisome. The worst thing about being addicted to drugs is that it affects the youth in a major way. We have seen the impact of drug use in communities and the sheer desperation of parents to rescue their children from this scourge. Peer influence and depression are the major causes and before one knows it, one gets addicted, loses control of self and ultimately pushes own future into dark. I would like our youth to stand up against the scourge of drug abuse, which is detrimental to the prospects of our young generation. We should strive to save our fellow youth imprisoned by this vice of drug abuse.

Another area of concern is the trust deficit between the Government and the various Civil Society Organisations working in this area. The Government perceives the CSOs in this area as those who want to garner funding while criticizing the Government. The CSOs on the other hand see the Government as corrupt and biased with a tendency to approach the matter in a lethargic manner. The immediate need is to thrash out the trust deficit and come together to realise the goal. Conflict between the various stakeholders will bring nothing but chaos because even if 1% of the youth goes astray, it will be a very serious social problem, impacting both governance and the economy.

With these words, I again wish you all the very best in future and wish the Convention a grand success. I thank the organizers for inviting me to this very meaningful function and look forward to meeting you again.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.