

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF RAJA GOUKHOTHANG GUTE FOOTBALL MEMORIAM, 2018 ON 22ND JUNE, 2018 AT LAMKA PUBLIC GROUND, CHURACHANDPUR.

Shri V. Hangkhanlian, Hon'ble Minister (Agriculture),

Shri J.C. Ramthanga, Principal Secretary (Co-operative),

Shri Shyam Lal Poonia, District Magistrate, Churachandpur,

Dr. Thangchinkhup Guite, Chairman, Ropiang Foundation Trust & Chief of Sialbu Village,

Friends from Media,

All the Invitees,

All the participating teams,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasant experience for me to visit this district for the first time and to be present here at the Closing Ceremony of Raja Goukhothang Guite Football Memoriam, 2018. I convey my heartiest greetings to you all. The Ropiang Foundation Trust has taken the initiative for organizing this football tournament which has been going on since 19th May, 2018 and today is the closing function. The Trust deserves all praise for their untiring endeavour. It is such interest shown by the people of the state at all levels that Manipur is better known now as the powerhouse of sports. Most recently also, our tiny state was represented by 8 (eight) players in the national team which participated in the Under-17 FIFA World Cup. The sportspersons of the state continue to have a significant presence in the national teams in different disciplines.

As you are all aware, this Tournament is a cultural-cum-sports initiative by the Ropiang Foundation Trust in memory of Raja Goukhothang Guite who worked selflessly to develop games and sports particularly among the tribal communities in the hills of Manipur. The basic objective of games and sports is to inculcate sportsmanship among the boys and girls and help in

forming their character in order to become good citizens. It teaches them the habits of observation, obedience and self-reliance while promoting their physical, mental and spiritual development in the true spirit.

During the past months, I have had occasions of visiting some of the districts in the state. I find tremendous enthusiasm for games and sports among the youth everywhere. It can be said that there is no necessity of creating sports consciousness among the youth in Manipur. They are born sportsmen and athletes. If we only provide them with adequate infrastructural facilities and give them incentives with a little more thrust to sports activities in rural areas, the adventurous and energetic youths of Manipur with so much pep and vigour in them will shine as distinguished and excellent sportspersons of National and International stature more than ever. This has been amply demonstrated by the fact that Manipur has produced a number of Olympians, International and National players in different disciplines despite limited facilities. It is in recognition of the sports potential in the state that the Central Government has brought the National Sports University to Manipur. With the establishment of the National Sports University, the sports scenario in the state will only get better.

It is heartening to learn that 24 teams participated in the tournament. After the competition, some of you must be pleased with the result while some might be disheartened. Here, I would like to reiterate that game is not all about winning but also of taking part; the essential thing in life is not conquering but fighting well. I would like to console those who have faced loss in this tournament not to be disheartened but strive more so that you can succeed next time. Further, if you had fought well, there is no reason to be sad; you should hold your head high as you have fought well.

I congratulate the successful team as well as those who had participated without winning, because you all have made contribution

towards the success of the tournament. I would also like to compliment the officials who had conducted this tournament as without them, there can be no tournament. To all those who had worked silently without rewards, I congratulate you all. I am confident that with the enthusiasm of the Trust and the encouragement from the well-wishers and supporters, the tournament will scale greater heights in the times to come.

With these words, I, once again, congratulate the team Champion for their success and also thank the organizers for inviting me to this memorable function.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.