

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE 74<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF FLAG HOISTING DAY OF INA ON 14<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2018 AT INA MARTYR'S MEMORIAL COMPLEX, MOIRANG, BISHNUPUR DISTRICT.

Hon'ble Minister (Art & Culture), Shri L. Jayantakumar Singh,  
Hon'ble MLA, Shri P. Sharatchandra Singh,  
Shri M. Lakshmikumar Singh, Commissioner (Art & Culture),  
Shri Chandra Kumar Bose, Grand Nephew of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose,  
Members of the INA Advisory Committee,  
All our brave ex-servicemen who are present here,  
All the distinguished invitees,  
Friends from Media,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am privileged to be here for the 74<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Flag Hoisting Day of INA. The occasion evokes a deep feeling of pride in me because the INA traversed through this state on its historic campaign to free India from the British on the call given by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. The tri-colour flag of India was first hoisted on this soil on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April, 1944 and it marked the beginning of the end of the British Rule. Subhas Chandra Bose and his INA became household names throughout the country for the way the patriotic passion was ignited. His patriotic fervour was the compelling source of inspiration for the people struggling for the cause of the motherland. This occasion carries a special meaning for me as my grand uncle, Maulana Abul Kalam Saheb was also a freedom fighter for India's Independence, a contemporary of Subhas Chandra Bose. Celebrating this historic occasion in the complex of INA Memorial has made it special and I congratulate the organizers for this initiative.

The INA or the Indian National Army was founded in the year, 1942 composed of the Indian Prisoners of War of the British Indian Army captured

by Japan in the Malayan Campaign and the Singapore theatre. The next year in 1943, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose declared INA as the Army of the provisional Government of free India.

This 74<sup>th</sup> Anniversary also reminds us of Netaji's clarion call 'Delhi Chalo' at Singapore on October 21, 1943. Slogans in pre-independence period reverberated with great themes like Purna Swaraj, Quit India, 'Do or Die' and 'Delhi Chalo'. A slogan is successful when it is able to tap the collective consciousness of a people and raises mass enthusiasm to a cause. Seen in this perspective, Purna Swaraj, Quit India, Do or Die or Delhi Chalo touched a sensitive chord as every Indian wanted to be free from the British Rule. Netaji's 'Delhi Chalo' and his great tribute to the nation, 'Jai Hind' played their role. Indian National Army under the heroic leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was a living symbol of the passion and fearless spirit that united the entire Nation. As founder and Head of State of the Provisional Government and Azad Hind Fauz, he galvanised the entire nation through his fierce nationalism.

Moirang has remained of great historical significance in India's Freedom struggle as it was made the Advanced Headquarters of the Provisional Government of Free India. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of April, 1944, Col. S.A. Malik, Commander of the Bahadur Group planted the Tri-colour Flag at Moirang Kangla along with Manipuri freedom fighters like Shri Mairembam Koireng and Shri Hemam Nilamani of Moirang and declared it as a liberated zone. Many Japanese officers and soldiers also witnessed this birth of the Indian nation. The INA Martyrs' Memorial Complex here stands tall with the saga of valour and sacrifices made by the liberation Army of Netaji.

The role of the natives of Manipur in the freedom struggle was no less significant and deserves accolades of the highest order as most of the battle that the INA fought took place in Manipur. A number of Manipuris also laid down their lives in the course of freedom struggle. When all the surrounding

villages of Moirang stood liberated for three months from the yoke of the British and allied forces, the supply of ration for about one lakh Indo-Japanese forces during the wartime was no small contribution of the Manipuris. Generations of Manipuris down the years take pride and cherish the roles their forefathers played in India's freedom struggle.

Netaji lives on eternally in every Indian's mind. Let Subhas Chandra Bose's life and that of other freedom fighters continue to be a beacon to all Indians, lighting up the path they follow. Let us rededicate ourselves to the freedom of our country that they held so dear. With these words, I, once again, express my deep pleasure in attending this 74<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Flag Hoisting Celebration of INA and thank the organisers for inviting me.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.