

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR ON THE OCCASION OF THE MANIPUR STATE KALA AKADEMI AWARD PRESENTATION CEREMONY ON 28TH JANUARY, 2018 AT MAHARAJ CHANDRAKIRTI AUDITORIUM, IMPHAL.

Shri L. Jayantakumar Singh, Hon'ble Minister (Arts & Culture), Manipur,
Distinguished Fellows and Awardees,
Distinguished Guests,
Secretary, Manipur State Kala Akademi and other officials of the Akademi,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to be here with you for the Award Presentation Function of the Manipur State Kala Akademi. Let me first congratulate all the Akademi Awardees for the year 2014 and wish them the very best in their future endeavours.

Manipur or 'the jewelled land' is known to the outside world for its rich art and cultural heritage. While Raas Leela, the classical Manipuri dance is world famous and has put Manipur on the cultural map of the world, the Manipuri Nata Sankirtana, the ritual singing, dancing and drumming has been included in the representative list of UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage of humanity. Owing to the large number of communities in the state, with each having its own distinctive dance, music and dress, the cultural mosaic of the state is extremely colourful. While the Hills take pride on their own distinct heritage, the Valley is enriched by a harmonious blend of the pre-vaishnav and vaishnav traditions making it a unique flavour.

Like in other parts of the country, royal patronage was the mainstay for sustenance and promotion of various forms of arts. However, things changed after India attained Independence and the state had to step in to fill the gap. The Manipur State Kala Akademi was established by the Govt. of Manipur in the year, 1972 as an autonomous and the only cultural agency of the Government for promotion of and coordinating all the activities relating to

Dance, Drama, Music, Literature, Fine Arts and other different fields of arts and culture.

Since its inception, the Manipur State Kala Akademi has been making sustained effort for promotion, preservation and propagation of Manipur's rich cultural tradition within as well as outside the state. The Akademi with its different units has been organizing various cultural festivals pertaining to different art forms of folk and classical of both the hills and the valley. The Akademi also holds several promotional activities such as conferences, seminars, workshops as well as literary programs, memorial lectures and exhibitions.

The Akademi has been honouring every year outstanding scholars, writers, artists and artistes in the fields of Music, Dance, Drama and the native theatrical tradition of Shumang Leela, Tribal culture, other forms of Art, Fine Arts and Literature by conferring Fellowships and Awards. These awards symbolize not only the highest standard of excellence in the respective fields but also recognition of individual works of the highest professional accomplishment. The Akademi is presenting the Akademi Awards for the year, 2014, on this occasion, to 27 Awardees including 2 Fellows and 6 Young Talent for their outstanding contribution in their respective fields of Dance, Music Theatre, Shumang Leela, Thang Ta, Tribal culture, other forms of Art, Traditional, Theatre, Literature, Mime and Fine Arts.

I am confident that the efforts of the Manipur State Kala Akademi will make a substantial impact on the preservation, promotion and propagation of the rich cultural traditions of the state and at the same time provide necessary encouragement to the scholars and artistes. I congratulate once again all the award winners and hope that they will continue to excel and achieve more laurels in the times to come.

Thank you.

Jai Hind.