

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF THE "OIL & GAS CONSERVATION AWARENESS DRIVE (SAKSHAM - 2018)" ON 16/01/2018 AT IMPERIAL HALL, HOTEL GRANDE, IMPHAL.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning to you all.

I am happy to be here in this inaugural function of "Oil & Gas Conservation awareness drive (Saksham - 2018)" which is being organized jointly by the Petroleum Conservation Research Association under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India and the State Level Coordinators of Oil Industry.

The primary objective of organizing the event is to spread the message of conservation of petroleum products for energy security, sustainable development and environment protection of our country, which also has a direct impact on the growth and economy of our country. In other words, Energy Efficiency is the lowest cost option with no adverse environmental effects. Down the ages, the march of human progress has been extensively linked with this wealth underneath the earth's surface. This year, " Saksham – 2018" is being observed throughout the country from 16th January to 15th February, 2018, during which efforts will be made to sensitize the masses about the ill effects of polluting fuels, benefits of shifting to cleaner fuels and above all efficient utilization of petroleum products for a sustainable development.

Along with fast paced development, the consumption of petroleum products is also increasing rapidly, while the reserves are static and fast depleting. One must also remember that it took millions of years for the decomposed organic materials to form the natural oil resource underground. More consumption also spells collateral damage on the environment due to emission of harmful particles in the atmosphere.

The availability and production capacity of crude oil in India is far less than the demand and millions of metric tons of crude oil have to be imported every year from other countries. The import of petroleum products has a direct impact on our economy and it impinges deeply into our foreign exchange reserve. This dependency on other oil producing countries is expected to rise in the future with crippling effect on our economy unless drastic measures for conservation are taken up.

Another issue that should engage our attention and perhaps, more worrisome is the carbon dioxide emissions while using petroleum products, which not only exacerbate global warming but also have adverse impact on the environment. Air pollution in the big cities of the country is common knowledge. Pollutants like Carbon Dioxide and other derivatives present in the air are posing real health hazards. Recently we have heard of the use of 'Anti Smog Gun' in Delhi which is used to spray atomised water into the air in order to bring down the pollution levels. Such pollution level is happening not only in India but also in other parts of the world. Another ominous phenomenon taking place is the melting of the ice in the Antarctica and this is bound to have far-reaching consequences. Global warming and climate change through anthropometric influence is an issue which is on the top of the global agenda.

Because of all these negative fallouts, conservation of petroleum products is of paramount importance, as human beings also cannot do away with the use of these materials at the present technology level. This is especially more so for developing countries like ours which depend on imports. Thus, the need of the hour is to conserve petroleum products to the maximum extent, by way of optimum use, use of alternate sources of fuel and by putting into practice every possible fuel saving method, be it in transport or domestic or other sectors. In a few words, Oil & Gas Conservation means their better and more efficient use with regard to economic, social and environmental costs, resulting in higher efficiency, minimization of wasteful practices and protection of the environment.

All of us can contribute to the efforts towards self-sufficiency in petroleum sector and also to the efforts of environment protection by following every little conservation activity in our day to day life. Some of the simple conservation tips which we can put to everyday use in areas such as transport sector are driving at 45 kmph, switching off your engine for stops beyond 15 seconds, using car pools, checking tyre pressure regularly, cleaning Air Filter regularly, using brakes only when needed and planning your route especially in crowded areas. More and more could also be encouraged to use public transport. In our country where there is overwhelming number of vehicles, such self-discipline will have material effect. Likewise, in domestic sector – using only high efficiency ISI approved gas or kerosene stove, using Pressure Cooker to cook faster and save fuel, lighting your stove only when you are ready with all ingredients, and so on are of considerable help.

Solar energy is the cheapest and endless natural source of energy and fortunately India is blessed with plenty of sun light. As early as 1980's, I formed a Science Forum of Parliament to focus the attention of the Members of Parliament on alternate source of energy to conserve oil and natural gas. I was an enthusiast of solar energy and in 1985, my house was the first to have solar panels for domestic power generation. I have solar panels installed at the Raj Bhavan for domestic power generation. I am planning to increase its number. Ideally, solar energy should be given top priority over other sources of energy and used wherever possible.

I thank the organizers for inviting me to this important function of the Nation and wish 'Saksham – 2018' a grand success.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.